

DAILY DEVOTIONS AND PRAYER

For Individuals and Families

This order of prayer may be used as a guide for daily devotion time and prayer for individuals and families.

In group settings, one person may read the words in regular type and the others may respond with the words in bold type. Prayers that are in bold type are to be prayed by all.

The sign of the cross † may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea;

hear me and answer me.

Evening, morning, and noon

I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.

Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you;

He will never let the righteous fall.

Psalm 55:1–2a, 17, 22 NIV

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

A hymn or psalm may be sung or spoken.

A reading from the weekly lectionary is read.

The Apostles' Creed is confessed.

(The Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers, and other prayers may be found in the back of this book.)

Lord's Prayer

Prayers for others and ourselves

Concluding prayers:

Heavenly Father, send Your Holy Spirit into our hearts to direct and rule us according to Your will, to comfort us in all our afflictions, to defend us from all error, and to lead us into all truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

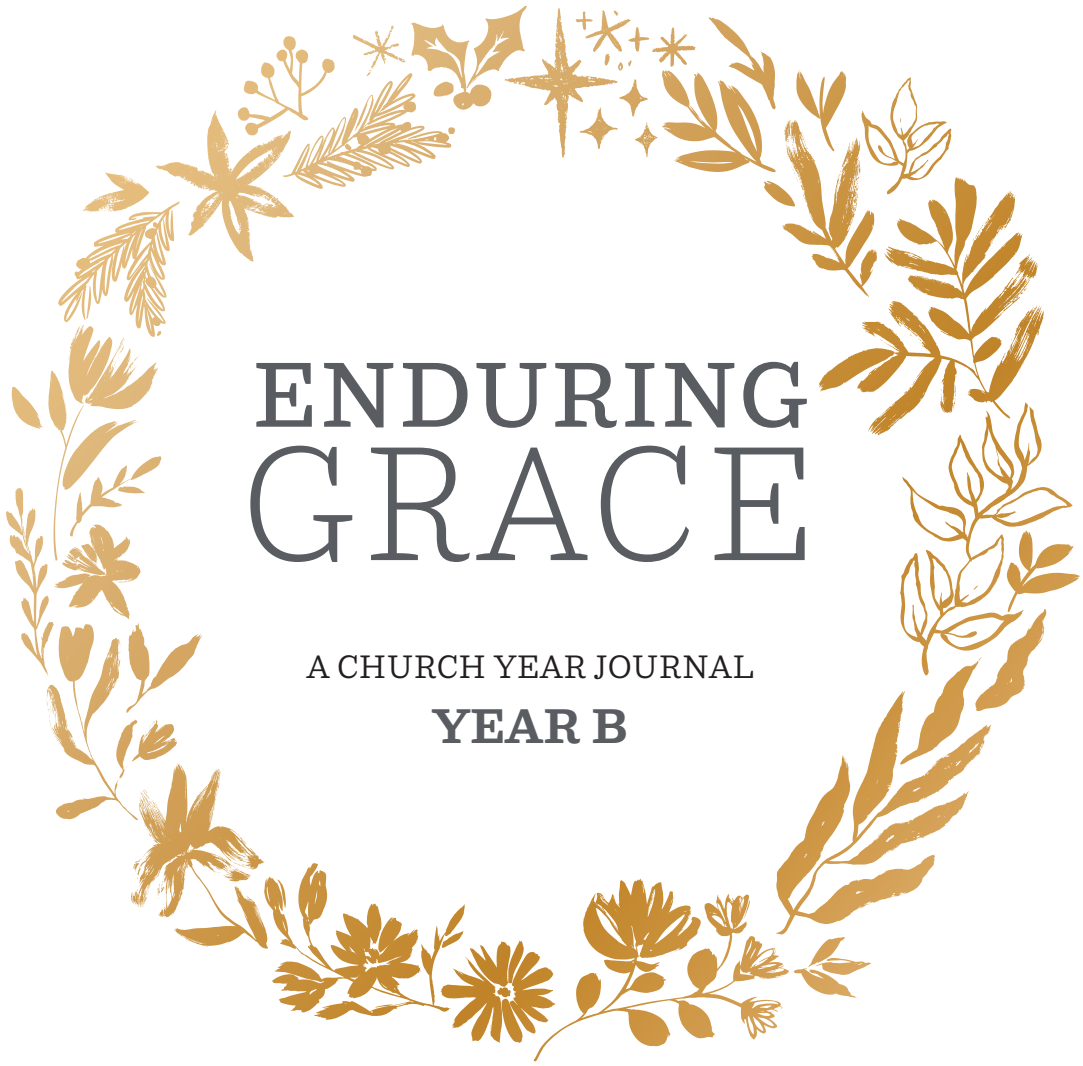
Amen.

Luther's Morning or Evening Prayer

Let us bless the Lord.

Psalm 103:1

Thanks be to God.



ENDURING GRACE

A CHURCH YEAR JOURNAL
YEAR B



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HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

Dear reader, God’s Word is a precious gift, given to us by God Himself “so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). In the Divine Service, we receive God’s good gifts through the Word and Sacraments: the strengthening of faith, the forgiveness of our sins, and life everlasting. Through these gifts, the Holy Spirit equips us to live out each week in love and service to Him and to others. The Spirit continues to work in our hearts and lives throughout the week as we spend time in the Word and daily prayer. *Enduring Grace: A Church Year Journal* was created to help you engage more deeply with the weekly lectionary readings through reflection and prayer.

This journal contains the Scripture readings for every Sunday of the Three-Year Lectionary, Year B. You may choose to prepare for the upcoming Sunday by engaging with the readings during the week leading up to each Sunday or review the lessons in the week following to continue reflecting on the Scripture passages you heard in worship. Consider identifying a particular time in your weekly schedule to dedicate to Scripture reading, journaling, and prayer. This will help you form a consistent habit of being in the Word throughout the week.

The following features have been included to enhance and guide your devotional time:

- Order of Prayer
- Suggestions for prayers for a variety of occasions
- Old Testament, Epistle, Gospel, and Psalm readings for each Sunday
- Space for journaling, making notes, and recording prayers
- The Collect and a suggested theme of the readings for each Sunday
- An introduction to each season of the Church Year
- Descriptions of fourteen festivals of the Church Year
- A hymn and reflection on the hymn for each season and festival
- Introduction to the Church Year and the Three-Year Lectionary

GETTING STARTED

Each Church Year calendar cycle begins with the First Sunday in Advent. If you are beginning this book in Advent, you can simply turn to the first pages.

If you are beginning at another time of the year, you can find the correct page by noting which Sunday of the Church Year you last observed at church, by asking your pastor, or by consulting a calendar for Year B of the Three-Year LCMS Lectionary. Note that not all the Sunday readings contained in this journal will be celebrated in a given year. Because the principal celebration of Easter is a movable date, the date of Easter determines much of the Church Year. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls in the seventh week before Easter. The Ascension of Our Lord occurs on a Thursday, forty days after Easter Day. The Day of Pentecost is seven weeks, or the fiftieth day, after Easter. An early celebration of Easter will allow for more Sundays after Pentecost. A later Easter means there will be more Sundays after Epiphany.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH YEAR AND THE THREE-YEAR LECTIONARY

WHAT IS THE CHURCH YEAR?

At its heart, the Church Year tells a story—the true story of the life and work of Jesus Christ. It takes us on a journey through His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. The life of the church is centered around the life of Christ. As we celebrate each part of His life, we are reminded of God’s great love for us in Jesus, our Savior.

Celebrating faith events around a calendar isn’t new. In Old Testament times, God commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover and other festivals each year as a remembrance and celebration of His gifts, promises, and blessings. Early Christians adapted some of the Jewish festivals, recalling historic events that were important to their faith. Christians also added their own unique celebrations, which revolved around events in the life of Jesus.

Many Christian church bodies today continue to follow the Christian calendar for several reasons:

- The Church Year helps us remember God’s great acts of salvation, the historic events that are important to our faith.
- We use the times, seasons, and celebration days of the Church Year as teaching moments to tell and retell the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- The Church Year reminds us that this life is not all there is; we eagerly anticipate the day when Christ will come again and establish the new heavens and the new earth.

WHAT IS A LECTIONARY?

A lectionary is a collection of Scripture readings, or lections, for the Church Year. Early Christians kept the Jewish practice of reading portions of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, adding readings from the Gospel and the Epistles as time went on. Through the years, various patterns of reading Scripture were established in different places. As the Church Year seasons and festivals developed, the patterns shifted from sequential readings of Scripture to readings that aligned more closely with the Church Year.

The readings in this lectionary journal are part of a three-year lectionary that has roots in historic lectionaries and the Revised Common Lectionary. The Gospel readings for each year (A, B, and C) focus on Matthew, Mark, and Luke respectively. The Gospel of John is interspersed throughout. The Gospel sets the theme of the day. The Old Testament Reading often connects with the Gospel and may have a prophetic or Christological import. The Epistle sometimes coordinates with the Gospel and sometimes reads through a letter sequentially. The Psalm complements and is a response to the Old Testament or First Reading.

Historically, lectionaries were beautifully decorated books. The artistry of these books conveyed the incomparable richness of the words of God contained therein. As you read, journal, and pray over the biblical texts in this lectionary, may the Spirit strengthen your faith through our God’s precious, saving Word.

SUNDAYS AND SEASONS OF THE CHURCH YEAR

THE TIME OF CHRISTMAS

Advent Season

First Sunday in Advent **B/V**

Second Sunday in Advent **B/V**

Third Sunday in Advent **B/V**

Fourth Sunday in Advent **B/V**

Christmas Season

The Nativity of Our Lord **W**

First Sunday after Christmas **W**

Second Sunday after Christmas **W**

Epiphany Season

The Epiphany of Our Lord **W**

The Baptism of Our Lord **W**

Second Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

Third Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

Eighth Sunday after the Epiphany **G**

The Transfiguration of Our Lord **W**

THE TIME OF EASTER

Lenten Season

Ash Wednesday **V/BK**

First Sunday in Lent **V**

Second Sunday in Lent **V**

Third Sunday in Lent **V**

Fourth Sunday in Lent **V**

Fifth Sunday in Lent **V**

Holy Week

Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion **V/S**

Holy Thursday **W/V/S**

Good Friday **BK**

Easter Season

The Resurrection of Our Lord **W/GO**

Second Sunday of Easter **W**

Third Sunday of Easter **W**

Fourth Sunday of Easter **W**

Fifth Sunday of Easter **W**

Sixth Sunday of Easter **W**

The Ascension of Our Lord **W**

Seventh Sunday of Easter **W**

Pentecost **R**

THE TIME OF THE CHURCH

The Season after Pentecost

The Holy Trinity **W**

Second through Twenty-Seventh

Sundays after Pentecost **G**

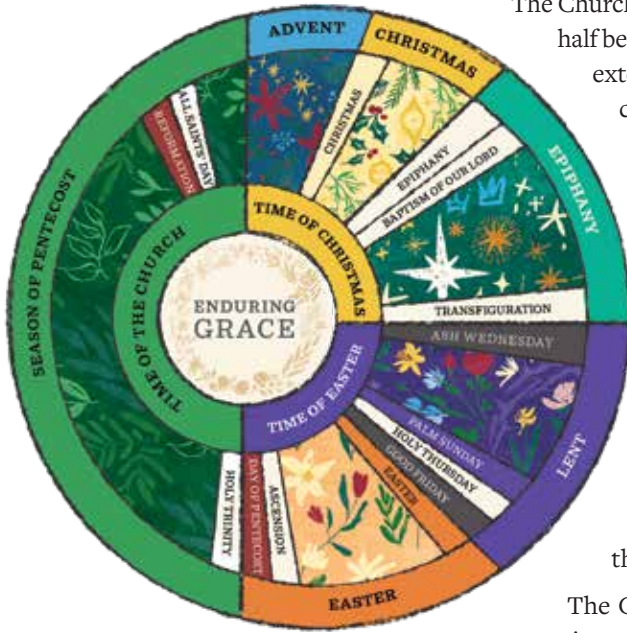
Reformation Day **R**

All Saints' Day **W**

The letters indicate the suggested colors:

B = blue, BK = black, G = green, GO = gold, R = red, S = scarlet,
V = violet, W = white

THE CHURCH YEAR CALENDAR



The Church Year calendar has two halves. The first half begins with the First Sunday in Advent and extends through the Day of Pentecost. We call this the “festival” half, since during this time we celebrate the festivals that commemorate important events in the life of Christ. Throughout this half of the year, we are reminded of what God the Father has done and continues to do for us through His Son. The “nonfestival” half of the year begins on Trinity Sunday and continues through the Last Sunday of the Church Year. The second half of the year focuses on the life of the church as it is strengthened daily by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

The Church Year is also divided into three sections: the Time of Christmas, the Time of Easter, and the Time of the Church. Each “time” includes smaller units called “seasons.” Within each season, we celebrate special days called “feasts” or “festivals,” such as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost.

The Time of Christmas includes the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. The Time of Easter includes the Lent and Easter seasons. And the Time of the Church includes the Season after Pentecost. These three Times illustrate the work of the Holy Trinity. And though the three persons of the Trinity do not work separate from one another, it can be helpful to think in the following way: In the Time of Christmas, we remember how the Father sent His Son, Jesus, into the world. The Time of Easter focuses on Jesus’ Passion, His sacrificial death, and His glorious resurrection. The Time of the Church, the season after Pentecost, proclaims the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the church.

For centuries, the church has used colors and symbols to help teach about the seasons and festivals of the Church Year. The cycle of colors and customs associated with each season and festival helps proclaim the message of the readings and events in the Church Year.

A companion book, *Enduring Grace: A Church Year Journal for Kids, Year B*, is available for families to use alongside this journal. Reflections on lectionary readings, discussion prompts, Bible illustrations to color, and space for journaling will help kids and families connect and interact with God’s Word as they encourage one another in the faith.

For more on the Church Year and the lectionary, see “The Church Year,” pages 181–262, in *Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Services* © 2022 Concordia Publishing House.

THE ADVENT SEASON



Advent marks the beginning of the Christian Church Year. Advent begins the fourth Sunday before Christmas, or the Sunday closest to the Festival of St. Andrew (November 30), and ends with midday prayer on December 24. During the time of Advent, many churches add midweek evening services that focus on reflection and preparation to receive God's promise of a Savior.



The word *Advent* comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming.” The four weeks of Advent are a time of reflective preparation for Christ’s first coming as a baby in the manger at Bethlehem. But we also look ahead to Christ’s second coming, when He will return in glory and take all believers to be with Him forever.

During the Advent season, we prepare to receive Jesus, the hope of the world. The color of Advent is violet or blue. Violet represents royalty and repentance, and blue symbolizes anticipation and hope.

Many congregations use the custom of the Advent wreath to mark the progress of the four Sundays leading to the celebration of Christmas. An Advent wreath has four candles—three violet or blue and one pink—one for each week in Advent. Each week, an additional candle is lit, and our anticipation grows as we look forward to Jesus’ coming.

COME, THOU LONG- EXPECTED JESUS

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver;
Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

REFLECTION ON THE HYMN

This brief yet potent hymn text provides comfort to those who pray for strength, consolation, and deliverance. Jesus comes as Israel's strength, as the hope of all the earth, as the desire of every nation, and as the joy of every heart. Our Messiah comes for all people and fulfills the prophecies of bringing His kingdom near and reigning within all believers through His Spirit. Find comfort, you who are imprisoned in fear and sin—Jesus has come to set you free! Just as God's people once yearned for Jesus to come, we continue to yearn for Him to come again. There, we will find rest when Christ brings us to His throne! This hymn was among the first of thousands written by Charles Wesley, and it points us to Jesus' mission and message: The kingdom of God is at hand! Jesus came to defeat the devil and to reclaim all creation under His own authority. One day, He will bring His victory to a complete realization when He returns as king and rules in peace and love forever.

REFLECTION & NOTES

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

OLD TESTAMENT READING

ISAIAH 64:1-9

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
and that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome things that we did not look for,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
From of old no one has heard
or perceived by the ear,
no eye has seen a God besides you,
who acts for those who wait for him.
You meet him who joyfully works righteousness,
those who remember you in your ways.
Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.
But now, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Be not so terribly angry, O LORD,
and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people.

EPISTLE

1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL

MARK 11:1-10

When they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’” And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

PSALM

PSALM 80:1-7

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your might
and come to save us!

Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!

O LORD God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh among themselves.

Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!

THE COLLECT

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

THEME OF THE READINGS

The Advent season beckons the Lord to rend the heavens and come down, permeating humanity with His almighty incarnation, laying waste our sin and unrighteousness. As God’s people, we can do no more than plead for mercy. Through the grace of Christ Jesus, we are declared guiltless. Therefore, we echo with the myriad of saints who eagerly anticipate the coming of Christ, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”

REFLECTION ON GOD’S WORD

PRAYERS

PRAISE & THANKSGIVING | REQUESTS & INTERCESSIONS

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

OLD TESTAMENT READING

ISAIAH 40:1-11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;

say to the cities of Judah,
 “Behold your God!”
 Behold, the Lord God
 comes with might,
 and his arm rules for him;
 behold, his reward is with him,
 and his recompense
 before him.
 He will tend his flock like
 a shepherd;
 he will gather the
 lambs in his arms;
 he will carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead those
 that are with young.

EPISTLE

2 PETER 3:8-14

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the

coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

GOSPEL

MARK 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
 who will prepare your way,
 the voice of one crying in
 the wilderness:
 ‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
 make his paths straight,’”

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes

he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

PSALM

PSALM 85

LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you covered all their sin.
You withdrew all your wrath;
you turned from your hot anger.
Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away your indignation toward us!
Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?
Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.
Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way.

THE COLLECT

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

THEME OF THE READINGS

Behold, God comes, unleashing undeserved comfort and pardon to His people. This sure word of promise stands forever. Like a thief, the Lord returns unannounced, eager to grant salvation and peace to those who are repentant. As John the Baptist proclaimed a Baptism of repentance, so also the church continues to baptize with water, that repentant faith may abound, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION ON GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS

PRAISE & THANKSGIVING | REQUESTS & INTERCESSIONS