

**Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 8, 2016**

**LUTHERAN**

# **LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY**

**A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.  
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings  
become a part of the rhythms of your life.**

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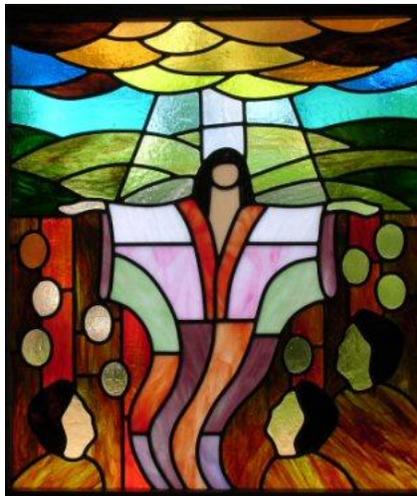
or

**through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,  
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

May 5, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

*(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service at the home of Robert Russo,  
a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com) for details.)*



<http://www.ekklesiaproject.org/blog/2013/05/ascension-and-embrace/>

*Read the article that accompanies this picture – it ties the Boston Marathon terrorist to the Ascension story.*

## **Hymn of the Day**

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB)539 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) Not Listed**

**“Christ is the world’s Redeemer”**

The author of this hymn, St. Columba is the same person for whom the melody to “The King of Love my Shepherd” is named. It was the Hymn of the Week on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter this year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqvnUGOLXlO> Guitar with a “slight” Irish accent.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szOt5Eow4OI> Follow the piano as it plays from the Presbyterian hymnal.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PA93wiNaMyI> From the Concordia Hymn Prelude Series. (Look closely for the organist; he’s at the feet of Jesus.)

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

The Ascension of Our Lord is on Thursday, May 5. The readings for that day are:

Acts 1:1-11, Psalm 47, Ephesians 1:15-23 and Luke 24:44-53

RCL offers Psalm 93 as an alternative

Hymn of the Day LSB 491, “Up through endless ranks of angels”

Visit [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feast\\_of\\_the\\_Ascension](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feast_of_the_Ascension) for detailed information about how the church recognizes “Ascension Day”

**Acts 1:12-26, RCL , RCL Acts 16:16-34** *Return to the Old Testament next week, unless you’re are following the RCL (Genesis 11:1-9, RCL Genesis 11:1-9 or Acts 2:1-21)*

*RCL reading is the Story of Paul and Silas in prison and conversion of the jailer and his family.*

## **Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas**

<sup>12</sup>Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. <sup>13</sup>And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. <sup>14</sup>All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>15</sup>In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, <sup>16</sup>“Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. <sup>17</sup>For he was numbered among us

and was allotted his share in this ministry.”<sup>18</sup> (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong<sup>[b]</sup> he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.<sup>19</sup> And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)<sup>20</sup> “For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

““May his camp become desolate,  
and let there be no one to dwell in it’; *Psalm 69:25*

and

““Let another take his office.’ *Psalm 109:8*

<sup>21</sup> So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, <sup>22</sup> beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”<sup>23</sup> And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias.<sup>24</sup> And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen<sup>25</sup> to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”<sup>26</sup> And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1. [Acts 1:14](#) Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verse [15](#)
2. [Acts 1:18](#) Or *swelling up*

*Memorize verses 23 and 26. You will have memorized all direct Biblical references to Matthais.*

An introduction to the Psalm by Charles Spurgeon.

“A Song of Degrees of David. We see no reason for depriving David of the authorship of this sparkling sonnet. He knew by experience the bitterness occasioned by divisions in families, and was well prepared to celebrate in choicest Psalmody the blessing of unity for which he sighed. Among the "songs of degrees", this hymn has certainly attained unto a good degree, and even in common literature it is frequently quoted for its perfume and dew. In this Psalm there is no wry word, all is "sweetness and light", -- a notable ascent from Psalm 110 with which the Pilgrims set out. That is full of war and lamentation, but this sings of peace and pleasantness. The visitors to Zion were about to return, and this may have been their hymn of joy because they had seen such union among the tribes who had gathered at the common altar. The previous Psalm, which sings of the covenant, had also revealed the centre of Israel's unity in the Lord's anointed and the promises made to him. No wonder that brethren dwell in unity when

God dwells among them, and finds his rest in them. Our translators have given to this Psalm an admirable explanatory heading, "The benefit of the communion of saints." These good men often hit off the meaning of a passage in a few words."

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/treasury-of-david/psalms-133-1.html>

## **Psalm 133, RCL 97 (*Psalm 143, RCL; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b*)**

### **When Brothers Dwell in Unity**

#### *A Song of Ascents. Of David.*

133 Behold, how good and pleasant it is  
when brothers dwell in unity!<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down on the collar of his robes!

<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion!  
For there the LORD has commanded the blessing,  
life forevermore.

1. [Psalm 133:1](#) Or *dwell together*

**Revelation 22:1-6 (7-11)12-20, RCL; Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21** *Final reading from the book of Revelation (Acts 2:1-21, RCL Acts 2:1-21 or Romans 8:14-17)*

### **The River of Life**

22 Then the angel<sup>[a]</sup> showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life<sup>[b]</sup> with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup> No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants<sup>[c]</sup> will worship him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

### **Jesus Is Coming**

<sup>6</sup> And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

<sup>7</sup> “And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

<sup>8</sup> I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant<sup>[d]</sup> with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”

<sup>10</sup> And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. <sup>11</sup> Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”

<sup>12</sup> “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

<sup>14</sup> Blessed are those who wash their robes,<sup>[e]</sup> so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. <sup>15</sup> Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

<sup>16</sup> “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

<sup>17</sup> The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

<sup>18</sup> I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, <sup>19</sup> and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

<sup>20</sup> He who testifies to these things says,

“Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

<sup>21</sup> *The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.*<sup>[f]</sup> Amen. (Verse 21, RCL only.)

1. [Revelation 22:1](#) Greek *he*
2. [Revelation 22:2](#) Or *the Lamb. In the midst of the street of the city, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life*
3. [Revelation 22:3](#) Greek *bondservants*; also verse [6](#)
4. [Revelation 22:9](#) Greek *fellow bondservant*

5. [Revelation 22:14](#) Some manuscripts *do his commandments*
6. [Revelation 22:21](#) Some manuscripts *all the saints*

“Rev. 22:1-20            12 May 2013            “Who’s In, Who’s Out”

...Today’s message is based on the last Word, the last chapter of the Bible, Revelation 22. And because there’s a lot in here—the river of life, the tree of life, the throne of God, the Lamb, the angels, the saints—we might just forget about what’s not there. We know there’s no darkness, no suffering, no pain. But not even in this final glimpse of a glorious heaven we can forget a lot of people are not there. If Jesus’ words are to be trusted, a few people are in, but most people are out! That’s a problem. It’s not something we can dismiss. So on one hand, I want us to be happy and completely certain and at peace that we’re in. But on the other hand, I want us to be so bothered and burdened by the reality that most people are out. If God wants all people to be saved, then so should we...

There’s a point where one is in or one is out. It would seem a good idea to know what exactly makes the difference. The distinction John records for us in Revelation 22 seems to me to be something we have soft-pedaled, if at all. I’m afraid we have let go of it especially since we live in a world where anything goes. Our goal is not be narrow-minded, but to keep on the straight and narrow. After all, God is the judge. Who are we to say who will be in heaven and who won’t be? That’s not our call to make. But we have some pretty clear criteria in the Word. Faith in Jesus is what saves. Lack of faith is what condemns. It’s our privilege to know this and share this so we can believe and live with certainty. In the end, that’s all we can do. We point to the Word, we let God make the call. We didn’t make up the rules, but we don’t get to waive the rules either.

So from Revelation 22, I just want to take a look at two verses—14 and 15. This is about who’s in and who’s out and why that’s the case. “Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood” (v. 14-15). These are pretty broad categories. You may even see yourself in some of them! But the one thing they have in common is that they don’t believe. Their actions are evidence of unbelief. They are outside, not because these sins are beyond the scope of God’s grace, but because they don’t see the need for forgiveness. They are proud of their own deeds. But on the outside there are six categories given--and that “6” is man’s number. I find it very striking that on the inside, it doesn’t describe who the people are or what they are like. But on the inside, there are no categories or lists. It only describes a very important activity. Those on the inside are washing their robes. That’s what they have in common...

In Rev 22, we have people washing their robes. They are washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb. And instead of staining, Jesus’ blood actually cleanses. It makes the robes white and clean. Jesus’ blood washes out the stain. So who are the people on the inside—we are among them. But what’s makes us so special? He’s washed our robes. That’s the difference. And what a difference the blood makes.

We are given the right to the tree of life, and invited to enter through the city gates. It’s the promise of a life that’s far better than this one. Not only is the robe white and washed clean, the robe fits!...

Who do you want to see there? I want to see my family.

“Matt Henry (Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church and School, Lacey, Washington)

<http://www.faithlutheranlacey.org/SermonStudies/05-12-2013%20-%20Whos%20In%20Whos%20Out.pdf>

**John 17:20-26** (*John 14:23-31, RCL John 14:8-17, (25-27)*)

<sup>20</sup>“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup>The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup>I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. <sup>24</sup>Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. <sup>25</sup>O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 12th Chapter”

“Glory to You, O Lord”

“Did you know you are mentioned in the Gospel reading for today? You are. Jesus is talking about you—in fact, he is praying for you—in the passage known as his “High Priestly Prayer” in [John 17](#). In the first part of that chapter, Jesus has been praying for his disciples, the ones he would be sending out soon as his apostles. You know, Peter, James, John, Andrew, Matthew—those guys. But then at verse 20 of [John 17](#), Jesus shifts his prayer to include others, as well. He says: “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word. . .”

OK, let’s pause right there. When he says “these only,” he’s referring to the disciples he’s just been praying for, those who would be his apostles. But then he goes on to say: “but also for those who will believe in me through their word.” And here he is talking about you. Yes, you. For you are among those who have believed in Jesus through the apostles’ word—the inspired witness of the apostles that we find in the New Testament Scriptures. Through the gospel that has been preached to you, through the apostles’ teaching, through the sacraments the apostles were commissioned to pass on to the church from generation to generation—through the apostolic ministry of Word and Sacrament, you and I have come to believe in, trust in, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And so you and I are included in this prayer of Jesus when he prays for “those who will believe in me through their word.” Here in his High Priestly Prayer, “Jesus Prays for Us.” ...

It’s what we see described in the reading from Revelation. The new Jerusalem, the holy city. The river of the water of life, flowing through the city, flowing from the throne of God and of

the Lamb. The tree of life—that tree we were barred from, when we were driven out of the garden after our fall into sin. But when the new day comes, when Christ returns and takes us home to be with him forever, then we will have access to the tree of life, eternal life, ours as a gift. “Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life.” That’s us. We have had our robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, our sins washed away in the waters of Holy Baptism. Therefore, in Christ, we will have the right to the tree of life.

Friends, this is paradise restored—creation restored, and made even better. No more sin or sorrow or death. Only life and abundance and joy. The blessed vision of seeing our Lord Jesus in his glory. The joy of worship around the throne with the whole company of heaven. The heavenly banquet feast. This is what we have to look forward to. This is our hope, our lively hope that animates all our days. We look forward to that day with great expectation. “Come, Lord Jesus!” is the church’s fervent cry. And, dear ones, this will be the ultimate fulfillment of Jesus’ own prayer, his High Priestly Prayer, the prayer he prays for us, that we may be with him where he is. God grant it, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

“Jesus Prays for Us” (Sermon on John 17:20-26, by Pr. Charles Henrickson)

<http://steadfastlutherans.org/2013/05/jesus-prays-for-us-sermon-on-john-1720-26-by-pr-charles-henrickson/>

**“This is the Gospel of the Lord”**    **“Praise to You, O Christ”**

**2001-05-23** — We would **never** be so presumptuous to suggest that Jesus was a Lutheran. Frankly, we’d have a stronger case if the Cana incident had resulted in a nice lager. But we’re pretty sure that John was a Baptist!



*Agnus Day appears with the permission of <http://www.agnusday.org/> ”*

*Today marks the two year anniversary of Living the Lectionary. Thank you to those who have been along since the beginning and to those who have joined since “to make the rhythms of the readings become a part of the rhythms of your life.”*