

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

Second to Last Week of the Church Year

November 17, 2024, through November 24, 2024

Life Thoughts-- Abortion and euthanasia idolize (Exodus 32:4) death. They surrender to grief as if we have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). But we delight that Jesus has already swallowed death (1 Thessalonians 4:14) and sanctified human life from fertilization to forever. We may resist using death as a solution to suffering. And we can invite others to rejoice in the blessings of life He brings (Luke 17:21)! *Prayer: Lord Jesus, lead us to receive every life as a gift and every neighbor as a privilege. Amen.*

Stewardship Thoughts-- 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – “**But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.**” Christians are different from unbelievers. Our trust in Christ changes us. Our hope in Christ means that we don’t grieve in the same way that unbelievers grieve — we know what comes after death. We don’t treat our time or money in the same way as unbelievers either. We start each week with a sacrifice of our time as we come to the Lord’s house to hear His Word and receive His Sacraments. And we also set aside a generous, first-fruits proportion of our income for the support of the Lord’s work in His church. Our faith changes us and our actions ... we don’t do anything as others do who have no hope.

Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate. Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Psalm 46:4

“There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.”

Read or Chant Psalm 102:1-13

The Sacrament of Baptism—Second Part

What benefits does Baptism give? It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are these words and promises of God? Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16)

Day	Bible Stories for Daily Devotions	Second Reading
Sun., Nov. 17	First Lesson, 2nd to Last Sunday of the Church Year—Luke 17:20-30	Exodus 32:1-20
Mon., Nov. 18	Blessed is the servant—Matthew 24:29-51	Daniel 11:36-12:13
Tues., Nov. 19	In the resurrection—Matthew 22:23-33	Ezekiel 38:1-23
Wed, Nov. 20	He must rein until the last enemy is destroyed—1 Corinthians 15:11-34	Ezekiel 39:1-29
Thurs, Nov. 21	Exhort one another every day—Hebrews 3:7-4:13	Isaiah 43:14-25
Fri., Nov. 22	The city whose builder and maker is God—Hebrews 11:8-16	Isaiah 33:17-24
Sat., Nov. 23	Let us be grateful—Hebrews 12:18-29	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Sun., Nov. 24	Gospel Lesson, Last Sunday of the Church Year—Matthew 25:1-13	Isaiah 65:17-25

Pray the Collect for Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity:

Almighty God, we implore You, show Your mercy to Your humble servants that we, who put no trust in our own merits, may not be dealt with after the severity of Your judgment but according to Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Personal Prayers and Petitions

Lord's Prayer

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Luther's Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Hymn of the Week

Preserve Your Word, O Savior

LSB 658

1 Preserve Your Word, O Savior,
To us this latter day,
And let Your kingdom flourish;
Enlarge Your Church, we pray.
O keep our faith from failing;
Keep hope's bright star aglow.
Let nothing from truth turn us
While living here below.

2 Preserve, O Lord, Your honor,
The bold blasphemer smite;
Convince, convert, enlighten
The souls in error's night.
Reveal Your will, dear Savior,
To all who dwell below,
Great light of all the living,
That all Your name may know.

3 Preserve, O Lord, Your Zion,
Bought dearly with Your blood;
Protect what You have chosen
Against the hellish flood.

Text: Andreas Gryphius, 1616–64; tr. William J. Schaefer, 1891–1976, alt.

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Be always our defender
When dangers gather round;
When all the earth is crumbling,
Safe may Your Church be found.

4 Preserve Your Word and preaching,
The truth that makes us whole,
The mirror of Your glory,
The pow'r that saves the soul.
Oh, may this living water,
This dew of heav'nly grace,
Sustain us while here living
Until we see Your face.

5 Preserve in wave and tempest
Your storm-tossed little flock;
Assailed by wind and weather,
May it endure each shock.
Stand at the helm, our pilot,
And set the course aright;
Then we will reach the harbor
In Your eternal light.

Looking forward to the Last Sunday of the Church Year

November 24, 2024

HYMNS: 905, 514, 516, 336

Isaiah 65:17-25

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:1-13