

Season of Pentecost

Crafting the Liturgy — Seasonal Planning Page

The season after Pentecost, often referred to as Ordinary Time because of the (ordinal) numbering of the Sundays, is a time of slow and steady growth in faith. Throughout the season, we hear stories of Jesus' life and ministry and ponder his great teaching parables. Over the course of this summer, the lectionary draws on Paul's letter to the Romans, which is instructive to the Christian faith in very powerful ways.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SEASON

The following are some ideas for helping to make the season distinct and memorable. Congregations are free to adapt these suggestions, or follow the local customs of the congregation.

Preparing the Worship Space

In this late spring and summer season, there are many lovely fresh flowers and plants that could be used to adorn the worship space. Since Ordinary Time is a season of growth and renewal, the visual aspect of living foliage lends itself well to the themes of rejuvenation and rebirth.

Liturgical Color

The color for the season of Ordinary Time is green, except for the days of Pentecost (red) and the Festival of the Holy Trinity (white).

Liturgy

Use the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise during Ordinary Time.

For the Gospel Acclamation, consider using a contemporary hymn such as, "Thy Word" (CCLI# 14301), or "Ancient Words" (CCLI# 2986399). If your congregation is used to using a contemporary acclamation, switch to one of the more traditional ones in the LBW. By mixing it up a bit, worshippers tend to pay more attention, rather than going through the liturgy by rote.

The Creed

Use the Apostles' Creed for this season after Pentecost, except for Trinity Sunday when you could use the Athanasian Creed. On the SOWeR page for May 31st, you will find a print-ready copy of the Athanasian Creed, as well as a version of it that is broken into parts and can be said as a litany.

The Proclamation of the Word

Consider preaching a sermon series on Romans beginning on June 7 and ending on September 13.

Consider These Words About the Liturgy

(From Rev. F. H. Knubel, Introduction to "A Manual on Worship" by Paul Zeller Strodtach, 1946, Mullenberg Press, Philadelphia.)

The fellowship of ideal worship is greater than the whole company of Christians now upon earth. We may know ourselves as one in our praise of the Lord with the saints of all the ages. There is unity with those who now worship Him in heaven. This is the powerful thought in the Te Deum: "Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy Glory. The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee. The noble army of the Martyrs praise Thee. The holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee."

- Think about how the liturgy has grown through the centuries, handed down from one generation of believers to the next and tested by time.

REMINDERS FOR THE SEASON

- ✘ Mother's Day is May 10th this year. We have so much to be grateful for in terms of the women in our faith lives: mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, mentors, and teachers.
- ✘ Memorial Day in the US is Monday, May 25th. Be sure to remember those who have died in service to our country during worship on May 28th.
- ✘ Pentecost is often the day of Confirmation for many congregations. There is a preformatted Confirmation Rite that can be printed for use on the Liturgies and Services page of SOWeR.
- ✘ If you change the time of summer worship services, be sure to advertise and get the word out early. Communication is key to helping folks remember that the schedule is altered.
- ✘ Consider starting a midweek worship service just for the summer so that those who spend weekends away from home can stay connected to the local congregation.
- ✘ With longer days and school not in session, this is often a time of more relaxed schedules. Take advantage of this shift by offering parishioners additional opportunities for Christian fellowship and growth. This can take place in many ways, so be creative! Consider a post-worship potluck picnic in the park one Sunday, a special monthlong late-evening Bible study just for high school youths, a midsummer water fun event for the church's elementary-age crowd (water balloons, Slip 'n' Slides, etc.), hosting a community ice cream social followed by a hymn sing, etc. Plan easy-to-commit-to events, and encourage all participants to invite a friend or two.

COMMEMORATIONS

May 24: Esther (c. 486 - 465 BC), Queen of Persia and Medes

June 14: Elisha (c. 910 BC - c. 800 BC), Prophet

June 28: Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130 AD - c. 202 AD), Pastor

July 30: Dr. Robert Barnes (1495 - July 30, 1540), confessor and martyr

August 20: Samuel (c. 1070 BC - c. 1012 BC)

August 27: Monica (332 - 387 AD), mother of St. Augustine of Hippo

LESSER FESTIVALS

June 11: St. Barnabas, apostle

July 2: The Visitation

Day of Pentecost

May 24, 2026

The Day of Pentecost (Year A)

Fifty days after Easter, the Holy Spirit rushed into the disciples' dwelling place and filled them with the power of God. They were called to continue what Jesus had begun when he was among them — the same calling to which we have been called: Go and share the Good News! Teach, serve, love, and attend to the needs of all who are lacking, suffering, or lost. This is the way of Christ.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Numbers 11:24–30

Eldad and Medad Prophecy

The Lord took some of the power of the Spirit from Moses and shared it with seventy men in the Israelites' camp so they would share the job of prophesying to the people the Word of the Lord. There were two men outside of the camp who had been given the Spirit, and they prophesied but did not stop like the others. Not understanding that this was a good thing, Joshua asked Moses to make them stop.

Psalm 25:1–15

In You, Lord, I Put My Trust

The psalmist proclaims his trust in the Lord. He waits and longs for the wisdom for God, who leads the humble in his ways.

Second Reading: Acts 2:1–21

The Day of Pentecost

As followers of Christ from all over gathered together after his ascension into heaven, the Spirit came to them as tongues of fire and a mighty wind. All were amazed at how everyone understood everything that was said, even things not spoken in their own language. This was the beginning of the Church of Christ.

Gospel Reading: John 7:37–39

Come to Me and Drink

On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to remember what God had done for his people in Egypt, Jesus spoke to his followers about the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised the disciples that anyone who believed in him would have living water flowing from them. This Living Water was nothing less than the Spirit of the Living God.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Red

During the Season of Pentecost:

• Use both the Kyrie and the Hymn of Praise on Pentecost Sunday.

• If it is not Confirmation in your parish, use the Nicene Creed.

Consider doing a reading of the lesson from Acts 2 in another language (or many other languages) at the same time the English version is being read. This calls to mind the first Pentecost, when everyone heard the Word in their own language.

If it is Confirmation in your parish, be sure to invite sponsors, mentors and godparents to participate in the blessing of the confirmand.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness	---	684	---	396	---	---
Gracious Spirit, Hear Our Pleading	---	687	---	401	---	---
Come Down, O Love Divine	508	---	501	804	---	---
O Day Full of Grace	161	---	503	627	165	165
Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord	163	---	497	395	166	166
Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling	523	---	650	582	---	---
Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise	---	801	680	826	41	41
We All Believe in One True God	374	---	953	411	---	---
Holy Spirit, Truth Divine	257	---	---	398	---	web
I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me	---	673	---	860	---	---

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The Reclaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

1,000 Tongues
(CCLI# 7065020)
King of Kings
(CCLI# 7127647)
Fresh Wind
(CCLI# 7166857)
Rest On Us
(CCLI# 7126736)
Fall Like Rain
(CCLI# 7214412)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

The Holy Trinity

May 31, 2026

Festival of the Holy Trinity (Year A)

At creation God made all that exists out of just his spoken word. He made human beings in his own image and put them just below the angels in a special place in creation as caretakers of the world. When Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection, he entrusted them with a special and particular calling — to share the Good News of Christ with the world he loves and make disciples to do the same.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Genesis 1:1—2:4a

God Created the Heavens and Earth

In six days, God created the heavens, earth, seas, and all creatures and called them good. When he created humankind in his own image, he called them very good. He gave to the first humans dominion over all that he had made and entrusted to them the care and stewardship of the creation. On the seventh day, God rested.

Psalm 8

God's Name is Praised Above the Heavens

The psalmist sang of the beauty and wonders of God's creation. Who is man that such a Creator would pay any mind to him? Yet God has given him a special place in the created order, just below the angels but above all creatures. His name is to be exalted!

Second Reading: Acts 2:14a, 22–36

Peter Proclaims Christ

Peter preached the story of Jesus to the Jews who gathered around him. He pointed to King David's words about Christ long before Christ came to earth in his humanity. All who gathered that day were witnesses to Christ's resurrection and sending of the Holy Spirit. The last days had arrived, and the apostles had work to do in the name of the one who is the hope of Israel and the whole world.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:16–20

Disciples Return to Galilee

As directed, the eleven remaining disciples returned to Galilee, where Jesus came among them. By all authority bestowed upon him, Jesus sent his followers out into the world to make disciples of all nations, teaching and baptizing them in the name of the Triune God. He promised to be with them always, even to the end of the age.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

• Use the Kyrie and Hymn of Praise for Trinity Sunday.

• Use the Athanasian Creed on Trinity Sunday. A print-ready PDF copy can be found on the Pentecost Seasonal page of SOWeR.

Consider using the Common Doxology as a blessing today as we remember the Mystery of the Holy Trinity.

God's name is praised above all names. In contemporary Judaism, just as in ancient Israel, the Lord's name YHWH is never spoken aloud out of reverence. Instead they say "ha-shem," which means "The Name." How is God's very identity embodied in a name?

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty	165	---	507	413	10	10
O Trinity, O Blessed Light	275	---	876	571	---	---
Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise	526	---	802	834	40	40
Holy God, We Praise Your Name	535	---	940	414	13	13
God Whose Almighty Word	400	---	---	673	---	---
Now the Silence	205	---	910	460	---	---
Lord, I Lift Your Name on High	---	---	---	857	25	25
Go, My Children, With My Blessing	---	721	922	543	53	53
O Day of Rest and Gladness	251	---	906	521	---	web
Let Us Break Bread Together	212	---	---	471	83	83

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW=Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV=With One Voice, ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB=The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC=The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Holy, Holy, Holy (CCLI# 1156)
God of Wonders (CCLI# 3118757)
King of Kings (CCLI# 7127647)
Indescribable (CCLI# 4403076)
All Creatures of Our God and King (CCLI# 3608102)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 2

June 7, 2026

Second Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 5 (Year A)

God has given us knowledge through his Word. In his Word God shares with us his expectations through the giving of the Ten Commandments. God also bestows his promises on us in that same Word. The Holy Spirit calls us to repentance, to turn away from our sin and return back to God and his will for our lives. Jesus came to save sinners, not the righteous, because none of us is righteous without Jesus Christ.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Hosea 5:15–6:6

Israel is Unrepentant

Hosea urges the people to repent and turn away from false idols. God desires only our faith and obedience, fearing and loving him so that we will strive to keep his commandments.

Psalm 119:65–72

Give Me Knowledge

God's Word gives us knowledge and guidance for this life. The psalmist states the trials of this life often lead us to look to God's Word for comfort and understanding. In so doing, we gain insight into God's will for our lives.

Second Reading: Romans 4:13–25

Faith Counted as Righteousness

God promised Abraham that he would bless Abraham with many descendants (as numerous as the stars). In so doing, God would bless all nations through Abraham and his offspring. Abraham believed and trusted in God's promise. God will strengthen our faith, too, just like he did with Abraham.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 9:9–13

Follow Me

It would have been greatly shocking to those who heard Jesus' teachings that he would sit down and break bread with sinners, like tax collectors. Jesus does so, not because tax collectors and sinners are worthy, but rather because *he* is gracious and merciful. Jesus invites sinners to follow him, and he wants to include us in his kingdom, just as he invited Matthew to follow him and join together in Jesus' ministry.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

• In Ordinary Time, use either the *Kyrie* OR the *Hymn of Praise*.

• Use the *Apostles' Creed*.

In his first of his 95 theses, Martin Luther stated, "Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, when He said 'Repent', willed that the whole life of believers should be repentance."

Repentance involves change, and it's not only about sorrow for sin. It means turning from it and being transformed in our lives by the renewing of our minds. We need repentance constantly. John the Baptizer was instrumental in preaching the need for repentance. The blessings we receive are life-giving and life-saving.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Jesus Calls Us; o'er the Tumult	494	---	---	696	184	184
Chief of Sinners though I Be	306	---	611	609	187	187
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy	290	---	---	588	186	186
Lead on, O King Eternal!	495	---	---	805	---	---
Faith of Our Fathers	500	---	---	812	216	216
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	315	---	700	631	14	14
Will You Come and Follow Me	---	---	---	798	---	---
I, the Lord of Sea and Sky	---	752	---	574	---	---
Healer of Our Ev'ry Ill	---	738	---	612	---	---
How Firm a Foundation	507	---	728	796	191	191

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Brokenness Aside
(CCLI# 5881109)
There Will Be a Day
(CCLI# 5322390)
O Come to the Altar
(CCLI# 7051511)
Build My Life
(CCLI# 7070345)
I Will Wait for You
(CCLI# 7118914)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 3

June 14, 2026

Third Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 6 (Year A)

Trusting in the Lord for all our needs can be one of the hardest aspects of faith because we are so used to toughing it out for ourselves. But from the beginning, God assured his people that he would take care of his treasured people and provide for their every need if they would just obey his voice. Jesus did the same when he sent his disciples to heal. They were to take nothing extra with them, but to trust in him.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Exodus 19:2-8a

Israel: A Holy Nation

Moses was called up to the mountain by God, who had a message for Israel at the foot of the mountain. God told Moses to remind His people of what he had done for them in Egypt, that they are to obey his voice and are his treasured possession. God renewed his covenant with them and declared them a holy nation.

Psalm 100

God is Faithful

The psalmist urged the people to be joyful, for the Lord himself made them his sheep and they belong to him. His goodness and mercy are everlasting and his faithfulness endures forever.

Second Reading: Romans 5:6-15

Christ Died for the Ungodly

God showed his love for us in that even though we were stricken by sin and chained by death, Jesus died on the cross for us, the unworthy. Because through Jesus we have been reconciled to the Father, we can rejoice and be exceedingly glad.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-20)

Laborers are Few

As Jesus made his way around the countryside, he came across many who were in need of healing and compassion. He gathered and cared for them like a Good Shepherd and taught his disciples to do the same. After he called the disciples to follow him, Jesus gave them authority to heal and cast out demons in his name. He instructed them to take nothing with them but to rely on the goodness of those they met along the way. In this way, they learned to trust in God's provision.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

• In Ordinary Time, use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.

• Use the Apostles' Creed.

Today is Fathers Day. Give thanks for all who serve as male role models in our lives, not just those who were responsible for our conception and upbringing. Just as God is faithful, we give thanks for all the faithful men who contributed to forming and shaping us as children of God.

Remember in the prayers for today those who labor to support families, communities, and the church. We are all called to work together for God's Kingdom, and that happens in many different ways.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	481	---	711	789	205	205
God of Our Fathers	567	---	---	---	5	5
Sing to the Lord of the Harvest	412	---	893	694	262	262
Take My Life and Let It Be	406	---	783	685	233	233
What a Friend We Have in Jesus	439	---	770	742	223	223
Be Thou My Vision	---	776	---	793	230	230
Give Me Jesus	---	777	---	770	214	214
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name	328	---	549	634	16	16
Sent Forth By God's Blessing	221	---	643	547	58	58
Lord, Dismiss Us With Your Blessing	259	---	924	545	54	54

*The hymns suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The Reclaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."*

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Jesus, Friend of Sinners (CCLI# 6093697)
Father, I Adore You (CCLI# 26557)
Lord, Send Me (CCLI# 1565660)
Send Me Out (CCLI# 5621778)
I Will Follow (CCLI# 5806878)

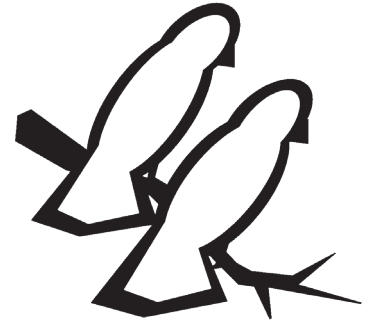
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 4

June 21, 2026

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 7 (Year A)

Persecution for faith in God is inevitable. No one who follows Jesus in obedience will be spared the attacks of the enemy, Satan. Even so, those who love Christ are commissioned to go and share the good news without fear, for they will be protected by the Father in heaven who values them above all else. A life of discipleship is a risky one, but through a life in Christ we find true and abundant life.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-13

Jeremiah is Humiliated

The prophet Jeremiah spoke emotional words to the Lord, saying, "You have deceived me!" He was mocked in public for proclaiming the Word of the Lord and struggled to stick with his calling from God. God would not let him go, however; the Lord came to his aid and put his enemies to shame.

Psalm 91:1-10 (11-16)

My Fortress and Refuge

The psalmist sang of the protection and care of the Lord, who sheltered him from his enemies. In the shadow of the Lord there is refuge, he sang, and by His hands he delivers his servant from destruction and death.

Second Reading: Romans 6:12-23

Beware of Those Who Cause Dissensions

Paul warned the Roman Christians to look out for those among and around them who would put temptations in their path. These are people to avoid because they lure others into evil and disobedience to Christ. Stick to what is good and innocent, and thereby you will faithfully serve the Lord, Paul said.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:5a; 21-33

Disciples Will Be Hated

Jesus sent his twelve disciples out with instructions and warnings about how the world would treat them. Because they were coming in his name, he said, they would be persecuted. He promised them that even though this would happen, they had nothing to fear because every hair on their heads was known by the Father. Proclaim the good news for all to hear, he said, and gain your life!

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

• In Ordinary Time, use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.

• Use the Apostles' Creed.

Many families will be heading out of town on vacation. Consider providing them with some devotions for their journeys. Vacation is a great time for families to set aside time to be together in the Word. Print some resources off of SOWeR and encourage families to reflect together on long car rides or at the beach.

Check out www.holyfamilytime.com for more family discipleship resources from the NALC and Sola Publishing.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
If You Will (But) Trust in God to Guide You	453	---	750	769	222	222
Children of the Heavenly Father	474	---	725	781	201	201
Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty	250	---	901	533	46	46
Blest Are They	---	764	---	728	---	---
Blest Be the Tie that Binds	370	---	649	656	48	48
Come Follow Me, the Savior Spake	455	---	688	799	---	---
A Mighty Fortress is Our God	229	---	657	504	169	169
Every Time I Feel the Spirit	---	---	---	---	---	web
Where True Charity and Love Abide	---	665	---	642	---	---
When Peace Like a River	346	---	763	785	224	224

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW=Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV=With One Voice, ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB=The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC=The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

No Longer Slaves

(CCLI# 7030123)

Whom Shall I Fear (Angel Armies)

(CCLI# 6440288)

My Grace

(CCLI# 4415813)

Who You Say I Am

(CCLI# 7102401)

More Than Conquerors

(CCLI# 7014648)

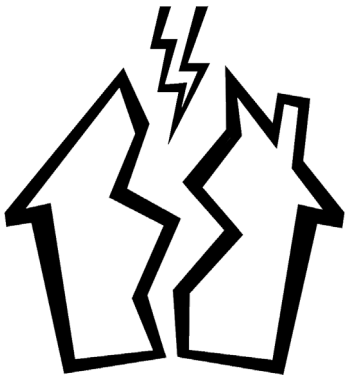
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Pentecost 5

June 28, 2026

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 8 (Year A)

Peace and conflict are major themes in the Scripture readings for today. The prophet Jeremiah insists that true peace comes only through the Lord. Jesus warns his followers that they will seek peace, but by following him, they will more likely experience conflict. Knowing that we are sinners who have been forgiven gives us peace in our hearts, even as our discipleship in the world may bring about suffering.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Jeremiah 28:5-9 **Differing Prophet Opinions**

The prophets Jeremiah and Hananiah disagreed over the nature of what was coming for the exiles and what was the true path to peace. While Hananiah predicted a rapid and easy peace, Jeremiah insisted that peace will only come through Israel’s repentance and God’s forgiveness. Time, said Jeremiah, would reveal the true prophet.

Psalms 119:153-160 **Give Me Life**

The virtues of following God’s laws and precepts are extolled as the psalmist asked for God’s reviving power in his life.

Second Reading: Romans 7:1-13 **Law Shows Our Sin**

Paul used the analogy of marriage to explain to the Roman Church what it meant to have died to the law through the body of Christ and now belong to Christ. The Law is holy and not sin, but knowledge of the law is what brings about an awareness of our sinfulness.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:34-42 **Warning and Hope**

Jesus told the disciples that his ministry — and that of the disciples who would participate in it — would be fraught with opposition and division. Conflict would touch their closest relationships as the call placed upon each of their lives drew them closer to Christ and away from what once was important. Jesus also promised that those who welcomed his disciples would be given a heavenly reward. Serving the lowliest of people is as simple as giving a cup of cool water.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

- In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles’ Creed.

Following Jesus is not a venture that was promised to us to be free from strife or conflict. On the contrary, he warned us that troubles would come when we followed after him. Some excellent modern examples of disciples who had strife in their lives because of following Jesus might be mentioned today:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer
Martin Luther King Jr.
Billy Graham
C.S. Lewis
Mother Teresa
Oscar Romero

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus	487	---	685	802	---	---
God of Grace, God of Glory	415	---	850	705	---	---
When Peace Like a River	346	---	763	785	224	224
When Morning Gilds the Skies	545	---	807	853	---	---
Where Charity and Love Prevail	126	---	845	359	---	---
Just As I Am, Without One Plea	296	---	570	592	193	193
Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus	389	---	660	---	78	78
Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life	429	---	---	719	---	---
Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word	230	---	655	517	71	71
O Christ, Our Hope	300	---	553	604	---	web

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles
Living Hope (CCLI# 7106807)
I’ll Serve You (CCLI# 1319304)
How Beautiful (CCLI# 443594)
It is Well (Through it All) (CCLI# 7021972)
Peace (CCLI# 5720246)

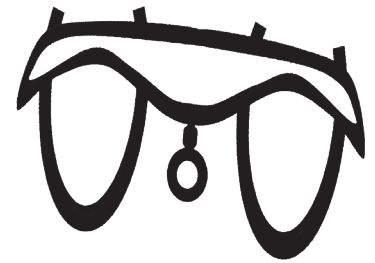
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 6

July 5, 2026

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 9 (Year A)

Human life is filled with burdens of many kinds. We are captive to our sinful natures, which cause us, as St. Paul says, to do the things we do not want to do. With God on our side, we are promised to have One who will look out for us, who will free us from our burdens. Jesus promises all those who are weary and heavy laden with stress, conflict, suffering, and the pains of life that he will give us rest.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Zechariah 9:9-12

Coming King of Zion

When the Israelites returned from Babylon and their situation of captivity, they found more difficulties at home. In this landscape fraught with religious, economic, social, and political issues, God pronounced his glorious vision of Israel's future: God would act on their behalf and send a new King to save them.

Psalm 145:1-14

Great is the Lord

The Lord is gracious and merciful, the psalmist wrote, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. This psalm of praise to the Lord extols the wonders of God's mercy and the works of God's hands.

Second Reading: Romans 7:14-25a

Nothing Good Dwells in the Flesh

Paul described the conflict within him concerning following the law and giving in to sin: He does things that he does not want to do but is unable to do the good he would like to do. The flesh is held captive to sin, but the mind and heart are slaves to the law of God. We are rescued from this inner conflict by Christ our Lord.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:25-30

Perfect Rest in Jesus

The yoke that connects two evenly matched animals together makes their tasks much easier to accomplish. Jesus, who is stronger than we are, invited those who were weighed down with the burdens of life and sin to come to him, and he would place his yoke upon them. Those who did so would discover the gentle and humble nature of our Lord, whose yoke was easy and burden light.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

• In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.

• Use the Apostles' Creed.

Luther wrote about the Third Commandment (Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy):

"We should fear and love God so that we do not despise his Word and the preaching of it, but acknowledge it as holy, and gladly hear and learn it."

Encourage the worshiping community to keep the Sabbath, paying attention to their deep need to rest in the Lord who calls us to come to him and will carry our burdens.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Lord of All Hopefulness	469	---	738	765	200	200
Jesus Shall Reign	530	---	832	434	268	268
Day by Day	---	746	---	790	210	210
Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling	---	734	---	608	177	177
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say	497	---	699	332	241	241
Jesus, the Very Thought of You	316	---	---	---	---	web
O Day of Rest and Gladness	251	---	906	521	---	web
How Great Thou Art	532	---	801	856	26	26
He Leadeth Me	501	---	---	---	232	232
Father Most Holy	169	---	504	415	---	---

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Cry Out to Jesus
(CCLI# 4586106)
Be Still My Soul
(CCLI# 6534077)
My Yoke is Easy
(CCLI# 436147)
Come to Me
(CCLI# 4991461)
Run to the Father
(CCLI# 7133494)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 7

July 12, 2026

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 10 (Year A)

Themes of growth and abundance abound on this Sixth Sunday after Pentecost. The Word of God goes forth continually, reminding God's people that they are beloved, chosen, and cared for without fail. Because of his great love for humanity, God provides beauty to enjoy and hope in the midst of suffering. Some will hear this word of promise, and it will grow like a seed planted in fertile soil.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13

You Will Go Out With Joy

Isaiah declared that God would rescue the Israelites from exile and bring them home. God's word is true and will not return empty, the prophet declared. It will accomplish all that the Lord has in mind, as the journey home will be a path through the desert transformed into paradise.

Psalm 65: (1-8) 9-13

God of Our Salvation

The psalmist praised the Lord for providing such abundance. The creation is evidence of God's generosity: rivers, pastures, and wagon tracks overflow with the abundance of God. Hills, meadows, and valleys raise a shout and sing for joy.

Second Reading: Romans 8:12-17

Heirs with Christ

Paul reminded the Roman church that they were adopted as children of God and thus were heirs of the kingdom — joint heirs with Christ. Having been led by the Spirit, they found hope that could sustain and uphold them even in the face of suffering. They were children of God who followed the Lord and listened to his leading.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Parable of the Sower

In this familiar parable, Jesus compared the variety of ways in which hearers respond to the good news of the kingdom of heaven being near. He presented the fate of seeds sown on different types of soil to demonstrate how God's Word is received by various hearers. The parable helped the disciples understand how there can be such different responses to the news of the coming kingdom.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

• In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.

• Use the Apostles' Creed.

Consider using the hymn "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil" as the Gospel Acclamation for this Sunday, to tie in to the Gospel lesson about the different types of soil.

Invite a farmer or gardener to come and talk to young people about soil conditions. How does Jesus relate soil condition to faith sprouting and blooming in our hearts?

Where in the world do people not have enough to eat? Is it because the soil is rocky and infertile?

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
For the Fruit of All Creation	563	---	894	679	---	---
We Plow the Fields and Scatter	362	---	---	680	263	263
When Seed Falls on Good Soil	236	---	---	---	68	68
Shout to the Lord	---	---	---	821	24	24
Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God	---	783	712	---	---	---
When Peace Like a River	346	---	763	785	224	224
You are the Seed	---	753	---	---	---	---
Today Your Mercy Calls Us	304	---	915	---	---	web
The Old Rugged Cross	---	---	---	---	139	139
Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	499	---	686	807	227	227

The hymns suggestions above can be found in: LBW=Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV=With One Voice, ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB=The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC=The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

You Never Let Go
(CCLI# 4674166)
May Your Roots Go Deep
(CCLI# 4707930)
I Am a Seed
(CCLI# 6206408)
Seed to Sow
(CCLI# 483420)
Blessed Be Your Name
(CCLI# 3798438)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 8

July 19, 2026

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 11 (Year A)

Paul uses the image of labor pains to describe how the entirety of God’s creation is stretching and growing. God is birthing something new through Christ Jesus, and the culmination of that will be visible when he returns in glory. Growth can be a hard process, as Jesus teaches his disciples. Good seeds are planted only to be surrounded by weeds sown by an enemy. Even so, God is in control of the creation.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8 **God is the One God**
Isaiah used the backdrop of an imaginary courtroom scene to make the dramatic declaration that the God of Israel was the only God. This affirmation of the supremacy of Israel’s God meant that Israel need not fear.

Psalm 119:57-64 **The Lord is My Portion**
The psalmist entreated God to be gracious to him, asserting the ways in which he has loved God’s word and kept God’s commandments.

Second Reading: Romans 8:18-27 **Eagerly Awaiting Future Glory**
Paul acknowledged that the whole creation is under stress and experiencing the pain of childbirth. He proclaimed that current sufferings are nothing compared to the future glory that will be revealed at Christ’s return. He reminded the Roman Christians that they had hope, and that their hope was in the promised redemption for the children of God.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 **Parable of the Weeds**
Jesus used the parable of the weeds to help his followers understand the reality of the existence of evil in the world. When the landowner was asleep, Jesus taught, an enemy came and sowed weeds with the good seed. Rather than uprooting the weeds as they sprouted, the landowner insisted that they be separated at harvest time. Later, when they were alone, the disciples asked Jesus for the explanation of the parable.

Liturgical Color: Green

- In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles’ Creed.

Consider adding some garden-variety weeds into the flowers on the altar for today and see if anyone notices. (Or put a note in the bulletin explaining they are there, just like in Jesus’ parable.) The weeds pop up among the wheat, but it is not our job to pull them out. God will do this in his time, at the end of the age.

Talk to children about imposters. The weed Jesus speaks about in today’s gospel is called a darnel. It looks like wheat but it isn’t. Why is it hard, sometimes, to figure out who (or what) is from God and who is not?

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Praise and Thanksgiving	409	---	789	689	---	---
Come, You Thankful People, Come	407	---	892	693	261	261
O Holy Spirit, Enter In	459	---	913	786	---	---
Almighty God, Your Word is Cast	234	---	577	516	---	---
Sing to the Lord of the Harvest	412	---	893	694	262	262
For the Fruit of All Creation	563	---	894	679	---	---
I Love Your Kingdom, Lord	368	---	651	---	90	90
Great is Thy Faithfulness	---	771	809	733	211	211
Blessed Assurance	---	699	---	638	190	190
Amazing Grace	448	---	744	779	199	199

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles
One True God
(CCLI# 7052884)
Wonderful Merciful Savior
(CCLI# 106879)
Forever (We Sing Hallelujah)
(CCLI# 7001228)
The Love of the Father
(CCLI# 6635756)
Thrive
(CCLI# 7006228)

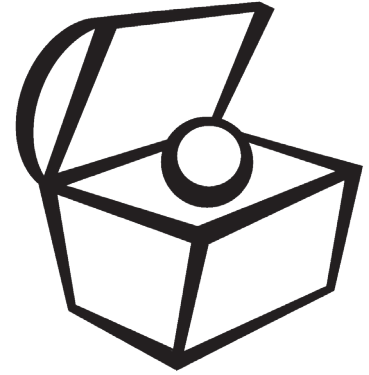
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 9

July 26, 2026

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 12 (Year A)

When God makes a promise, he keeps it for all time. That is evidenced in the Scriptures for today's worship. His love, care, and protection mean that he will never abandon those he calls his own, those he ushers into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus teaches his disciples that this kingdom is often hidden from view, but it is like a priceless treasure that is to be cherished and valued above all else.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Deuteronomy 7:6-9

God is Faithful

God declared the Israelites a holy people, his treasured possession. They were chosen — not because of their great multitude or power and might, but because of God's love and faithfulness to the covenant he made with their ancestors.

Psalm 125

The Lord Surrounds His People

The psalmist wrote that those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people from this time forth and forevermore.

Second Reading: Romans 8:28-39

Nothing Can Separate Us From God

Paul drives home the immensity of the gospel in his elaborate and poetic recounting of the power of the love of God in Christ Jesus over all things in creation, including death. God's power makes everything work together for the good of those who love him, thus fulfilling his purposes for humanity and the entire creation.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 13:44-52

Parables of the Kingdom

Jesus used a series of parables to help his disciples understand the nature of the kingdom of heaven, comparing it to a hidden treasure, a pearl of priceless value, and a fishing net from which the good and bad fish are sorted. These parables point out the fate of the righteous as well as the wicked. Jesus minced no words as he described the eternal punishment in store for those who are evil and defy the will of God in the world.

Liturgical Color: Green

• In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.

• Use the Apostles' Creed.

Talk to children about the promises they've made to others. Have they fulfilled all of those promises? Why do we sometimes promise things we cannot deliver? How is Jesus different? Does he always come through on his promises? (What are the promises Jesus makes to us, by the way?)

Martin Luther often used the word "treasure" in his writings when he spoke about the Sacraments. In what ways are Baptism and Holy Communion precious treasures given to us by God himself?

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
God of Grace, God of Glory	415	---	850	705	---	---
They Cast Their Nets	449	---	---	---	---	---
Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise	526	---	802	834	40	40
We Plow the Fields and Scatter	362	---	---	680	263	263
Jesus, Priceless Treasure	458	---	743	775	39	39
Be Thou My Vision	---	776	---	793	230	230
Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises	---	722	---	535	---	---
All Praise to You, O Lord	78	---	---	---	---	web
What Wondrous Love is This	385	---	543	666	254	254
This is My Father's World	554	---	---	824	34	34

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Diamonds
(CCLI# 7035857)
Stand in Your Love
(CCLI# 7107821)
God Is Love
(CCLI# 7136019)
I Will Wait for You
(CCLI# 7118914)
Yet Not I But through Christ In Me
(CCLI# 7121852)

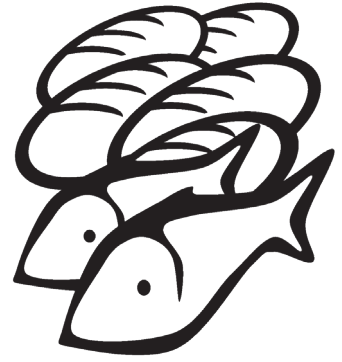
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 10

August 2, 2026

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 13 (Year A)

God's love and devotion for his people are seen clearly in the Scripture lessons for this Sunday: invitations to banquets, covenant promises, a passionate reminder that it is God who calls and adopts. Jesus provides a meal made from meager provisions that overflows into abundance, pointing to God's incredible care for the hungry. As we gather at the Lord's Table, we get to eat, drink, and be renewed again



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5

Come to the Waters

God invited Israel to a grand banquet at which all would eat at no cost, promising an everlasting covenant with the entire nation that included promises previously extended only to kings and their descendants. In response, Israel would serve as a witness to all nations concerning the glory of God.

Psalms 136:1-9 (23-26)

God's Love Endures Forever

The psalmist thanked God for his steadfast love by enumerating myriad ways in which God has displayed his love for his people over time, concluding that God's steadfast love endures forever.

Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5 (6-13)

God Calls His Chosen

Paul tackled the issue of Israel's place in God's saving plan, focusing on their identity as God's chosen covenantal people. He declared that they are recipients of adoption, the Torah, the promises and legacy of the patriarchs, as well as the Messiah through which God is redeeming creation. The word of hope for Israel, and for all who believe, is that it is not up to us to deserve the call; God calls those whom he chooses simply because it is his choice.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 14: 13-21

Feeding the Five Thousand

Jesus fed five thousand followers using five loaves of bread and two fish and ended the meal with an abundance of leftovers. The miracle serves as both a witness to Jesus' identity as the Messiah, the Son of God, and as a foreshadowing of the Last Supper.

Liturgical Color: Green

- In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles' Creed.

Consider baking the bread for communion this Sunday. A change from wafers once in a while can be a reminder of the importance of the Sacrament. You can find a whole-wheat recipe on Sola's worship resource site. This is a great activity to do with young people, as well — use it to teach them about the Last Supper.

Jesus gives us our "daily bread" and supplies all our spiritual needs, too. Who around you is in need of food? Who is in need of spiritual sustenance?

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
O Living Bread from Heaven	197	---	642	542	---	---
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service	423	---	848	712	---	---
Guide Me, Ever Great Redeemer	343	---	918	618	---	---
Praise and Thanksgiving	409	---	789	689	---	---
I Love to Tell the Story	390	---	---	661	265	265
Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness	---	---	849	843	---	---
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy	290	---	---	587	186	186
We Come to the Hungry Feast	---	766	---	479	---	---
Take My Life, and Let It Be	406	---	783	685	233	233
O Christ the Same	---	778	---	760	---	---

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

This I Believe (The Creed)
(CCLI# 7018338)
Come to the Table
(CCLI# 675056)
Take to the World
(CCLI# 3957949)
We Believe
(CCLI# 6367165)
O Come to the Altar
(CCLI# 7051511)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 11

August 9, 2026

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 14 (Year A)

The disciples in their small boat are being thrashed around by a storm, and, seeing Jesus, they cry out, thinking he is a ghost. Peter calls to him and ventures onto the water, but when he takes his eyes off the Lord, he plunges into the waves. Jesus urges us to keep our eyes on him, especially when the storms of life seek to engulf us. It is God who is in charge — the God who made and calms the wind and waves.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Job 38:4-18

God Answers Job

Job made his case to God, saying that he does not deserve to suffer in this way. God heard him out and then spoke the bold truth of who is in charge, citing the creation as God's design and handiwork of which Job had no knowledge or part. These poetic words humble Job and all humanity by explicating our smallness and insignificance in contrast to the creative power and might of God.

Psalm 18:1-6 (7-16)

My Rock and Fortress

The psalmist praised the Lord for being his strength and deliverer. Even though he was near death, when he cried out to God, he was rescued from Sheol. The God of salvation was the psalmist's rock and fortress, his shelter from the storms of life.

Second Reading: Romans 10:5-17

The Word is Near You

St. Paul taught the Roman Christians about faith in Christ, saying that if one believed from the heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, that person would be saved. This good news went out to any who believed, for there were no distinctions between Jew and Greek. Simply by calling on the name of the Lord, one is saved.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 14:22-33

Do Not Be Afraid!

Immediately after Jesus fed five thousand men, plus women and children, he sent his disciples across to the other side of the lake. Jesus sent the crowds away and went to the mountain to pray. Soon after, the disciples' boat was battered by a storm. Jesus approached the boat on the water and called out to them.

Liturgical Color: Green

- In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles' Creed.

What are the storms in life that people face? Luther said that storms and triumphs alternate: "There is comfort in the fact that although life as such is very sad and is truly a sowing in tears, God meanwhile allows no trial to be perpetual but, just as the seasons change, so blue skies always follow a fog, and recreation follows labor." We can find Christ in the trials and in the victory!

As children and teachers prepare to return to school, have a blessing for them during worship. See the Pentecost Seasonal webpage.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms	---	780	---	774	208	208
Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus	487	---	685	802	---	---
Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me	333	---	722	767	249	249
Eternal Father, Strong to Save	467	---	717	756	6	6
Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me	334	---	715	755	220	220
When Peace Like a River	346	---	763	785	224	224
My Hope is Built on Nothing Less	294	---	575	596	192	192
My Life Flows on in Endless Song	---	781	---	763	253	253
Precious Lord, Take My Hand	---	731	739	773	206	206
Have No Fear Little Flock	476	---	735	764	202	202

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW = Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS = With One Voice, ELW = Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB = The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC = The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Way Maker
(CCLI# 7115744)
Praise You in This Storm
(CCLI# 4543620)
It is Well (Through it All)
(CCLI# 7021972)
Mighty to Save
(CCLI# 4591782)
Oceans (Where Feet May Fall)
(CCLI# 6428767)

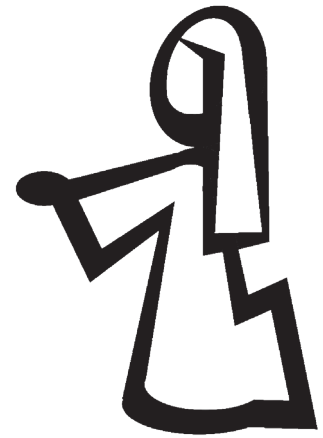
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 12

August 16, 2026

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 15 (Year A)

Themes of inclusion and exclusion are a common thread running through this week's Scriptures. Isaiah prophesies about who is accepted and who is not in God's house, which depends upon obedience to God's law. St. Paul passionately asserts that even though Israel did not believe in Jesus, God will not turn away from his chosen people. Jesus crosses ethnic boundaries to heal a girl from Syrophenicia.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

Reward for Obedience to the Covenant

The prophet spoke the word of the Lord, saying that God's house is to be a house of prayer. This meant that those who followed the Lord's commands would be blessed; their offerings would be considered acceptable.

Psalm 67

Let All the Peoples Praise You

The psalmist asked the Lord to bless the nations and to let his holiness shine on them as he provided a good harvest and judged the people as righteous.

Second Reading: Romans 11:1-2a, 13-15, 28-32

Israel is Not Rejected

St. Paul continued his exhortation on the fate of Israel. God, he said, has not rejected his people. Even though they were disobedient and unfaithful, God would not abandon them. Instead, Christ's death and resurrection opened a way for Gentiles to be included in God's plan for salvation. The gifts and call that come from God are forever. They are irrevocable because of God's faithfulness, not ours.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus and the Syrophenician Woman

Jesus had just instructed his followers that what is unclean is not what is put into one's mouth; instead, it's what comes out of the mouth from the heart. As he went off to Tyre and Sidon, he was met by a Canaanite woman who, in faith, cried out to him to heal her daughter. He tried to dismiss her because of her ethnicity, but her clever retort about dogs getting crumbs from the table won Jesus over. Her demon-possessed daughter was healed immediately, and Jesus praised the woman's faith.

Liturgical Color: Green

- In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles' Creed.

Today would be a perfect opportunity to incorporate a healing ritual into the worship service. After the Hymn of the Day and before the Creed, invite people who desire a blessing to come forward for individual prayer. Anoint them with oil on their foreheads if you so desire.

What is it like to feel excluded? We have all felt that way at some time or another. For many people in our world, feeling that way has become normal. But it's not normal! Jesus calls us to include people because God created and loves every human being.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy	290	---	---	587	186	186
God Whose Almighty Word	400	---	---	673	---	---
Jesus Shall Reign	530	---	832	434	268	268
Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing	559	---	528	886	30	30
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service	423	---	848	712	---	---
Go, My Children, with My Blessing	---	721	922	543	53	53
Healer of Our Every Ill	---	738	---	612	---	---
What a Friend We Have in Jesus	439	---	770	742	223	223
Glories of Your Name	---	---	---	---	---	web
Blest Be the Tie that Binds	370	---	649	656	48	48

*The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The Reclaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."*

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Brokenness Aside
(CCLI# 5881109)
This is Amazing Grace
(CCLI# 6333821)
One Thing Remains
(CCLI# 5508444)
Open the Eyes of My Heart
(CCLI# 2298355)
Hosanna
(CCLI# 4662491)

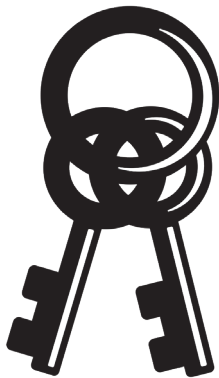
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 13

August 23, 2026

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 16 (Year A)

Peter’s confession of Jesus’ true identity is a confession of his faith. As followers of Christ, we also are called to make public confession of our faith. St. Paul asserts that this is manifested in a transformation of our old selves into people with a mission and purpose in the Body of Christ. He encourages us to stand firm in the face of pressure to conform to the ways of the world, even as the Spirit enables us to serve.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6 The Lord Will Comfort Zion

God reminded Israel from whence they came. They were chosen and descended from Abraham and Sarah, whom God called and multiplied into a great nation. This is good news for those who are in the desert wastelands, those who need comfort, and those who aren’t sure where to turn. God’s salvation is forever.

Psalm 138 A Psalm of Thanksgiving

The Lord would take notice and save the psalmist from whatever he was concerned about. Whether it was an enemy’s wrath, poverty, or trouble, the Lord would rescue the psalmist with his right hand.

Second Reading: Romans 11:33-12:8 Be Transformed

St. Paul offered the church in Rome some fatherly advice for the Christian journey. He urged them to not be conformed to the world or the pressure put on them by the culture that surrounded them, but rather to be transformed by the renewing of their minds that are set on Christ Jesus. Each member of the Body of Christ was given a specific function within the body to be exercised for the good of all.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16:13-20 Peter’s Confession

Jesus had just been tested by the religious leaders, and when he met up with his disciples, he asked them two poignant questions: “Who do people say that I am?” and “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered correctly, even if he only understood for that moment: “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

Liturgical Color: Green

- In Ordinary Time use either the Kyrie OR the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles’ Creed.

Whether we’re conscious of it or not, our words and actions show the world what we believe. Peter’s confession to Jesus that he believed Jesus was the Messiah was a confession of faith. “Who do YOU say that I am?” is a question that each of us must answer on our own, and yet it is likely the most important question we will ever be asked. Consider having worshipers write their own confessions of faith as an exercise in articulating their own beliefs. Collect them and use them in worship at a later date, or print them in the newsletter for all to meditate upon.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Built on the Rock	365	---	645	652	91	91
Christ is Made the Sure Foundation	367	747	909	645	---	---
The Church’s One Foundation	369	---	644	654	88	88
My Hope is Built on Nothing Less	294	---	575	596	192	192
Faith of Our Fathers	500	---	---	812	216	216
Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God	---	783	712	---	---	---
Comfort, Comfort Now My People	29	---	347	256	98	98
Praise and Thanksgiving	409	---	789	689	---	---
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	456	---	709	502	198	198
Will You Come and Follow Me	---	---	---	798	---	---

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles
Christ in Me
(CCLI# 6256719)
Christ Be Magnified
(CCLI# 7139866)
Take My Life
(CCLI# 1617154)
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)
(CCLI# 6016351)
Cornerstone
(CCLI# 6158927)

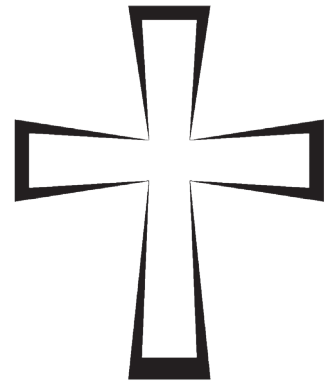
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Pentecost 14

August 30, 2026

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 17 (Year A)

Life in Christ is not an easy way to live. On the contrary, to be a disciple of Jesus is a costly endeavor! It means being tested and tried, it requires great patience and perseverance, and it means acting the opposite of what our most basic instincts compel us to do. Instead of being vengeful, it means forgiving. Instead of fussing and fighting, it means living in harmony with fellow believers.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Jeremiah 15:15-21

Your Words Became a Joy to Me

The prophet Jeremiah asserted that the Lord knew his case and what his enemies had done to him. Jeremiah was getting impatient and pleaded with the Lord to come to his rescue. But the Lord answered: "If you will be patient and return to me, you will be the one to share my Word." The people would fight against him, but the prophet would not be moved.

Psalm 26

Test Me and Try Me

The psalmist sang to the Lord, asking him to judge his faithfulness. He asserted that he had been true to God and that God should test him and try him to assess his faithfulness. "I do not sit with men of falsehood," claimed the psalmist. Instead, he kept his eyes on God's steadfast love and mercy.

Second Reading: Romans 12:9-21

Paul's Advice for Communal Life

Paul advised the Christians in Rome to be loving to one another — not a fake love that was in word only, but a genuine love that sought not to punish or get revenge. We are called to live in harmony with one another and to seek to outdo one another by doing good.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16:21-28

Denial of Self and Following Jesus

Jesus explained to his disciples what following him meant: denial of self, and taking up the cross and following. This means leaving behind our own wants and desires, putting ourselves last so that we can be a part of his kingdom.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Green

During the Season of Pentecost:

- Use either the Kyrie or the Hymn of Praise.
- Use the Apostles' Creed.

Labor Day is tomorrow in the United States. An important theme for today's worship might be the vocation of our baptism and how it fits in with our daily labor. Work is sacred and holy when it is done to care for families and communities, when it is done with integrity and honesty. It has greater meaning for us when it is done with an awareness that our work serves our neighbors and honors God.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
The Old Rugged Cross	---	---	---	---	139	139
Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross	---	---	---	335	140	140
Lift High the Cross	377	---	837	660	269	269
Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word	230	---	655	517	71	71
Now Thank We All Our God	534	---	895	839	50	50
Praise and Thanksgiving	409	---	789	689	---	---
Blest Be the Tie that Binds	370	---	649	656	48	48
Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love	---	765	---	708	---	---
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service	423	---	848	712	---	---
In the Cross of Christ, I Glory	104	---	427	324	138	138

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW = Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS = With One Voice, ELW = Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB = The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC = The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

I Will Follow
(CCLI# 5806878)
Trading My Sorrows
(CCLI# 2574653)
Don't Grow Weary
(CCLI# 1175263)
Lead Me to the Cross
(CCLI# 4785828)
Mighty To Save
(CCLI# 4591782)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.