

# *Walking Together in the Word*

Devotions on the Weekly Scripture Readings for May 2024

The purpose of the Chapel Devotion Project is to encourage individuals and families to make prayer and devotional time in God's Word a regular part of their daily lives. We believe many good things will come from your intentional study and reflection of God's Word:

- Your relationship with God and with others will grow and be strengthened.
- Study of the Scripture and hymns for the upcoming weekend will enhance your worship.
- You will come to the Lord daily in prayer, bringing your praise, thanks, and requests to Him.

## *How to Use These Devotions*

Each week contains five pages of devotional material. How you choose to use the material is up to you. You could study one reading or one page a day. You might read several portions every other day. You may use the short order of worship provided below. Use the material in the way that best fits you and your family.

### **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
All: Amen.

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **DEVOTION and REFLECTION**

### **PRAYERS and THE 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.

or

#### **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.

Leader: The almighty and merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.  
All: Amen.

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Devotions and supporting material written by Pastor Ted Laesch and Mary Laesch.



# Walking Together in the Word

April 29–May 4, 2024

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, May 5.*

**Easter 6**

## The Gospel: John 15:9–17

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17 This is my command: Love each other.

## Devotion on the Gospel

Speaking to His disciples, Jesus said: “I no longer call you servants . . . Instead, I have called you friends.”

Interesting, isn’t it, that Jesus called these guys His friends. You’ve got Peter, the one who said that he was a loyal friend of Jesus. But when Jesus was arrested, three times he denied that he even knew the Christ. The other disciples all got scared and ran away. And Judas? What a friend he was. He betrays Jesus to His death. Friends? These pride-filled, arrogant, selfish, greedy, sinful people?

But that seems to be how Jesus chooses His friends. He chooses the pride-filled, arrogant, selfish, greedy, sinful people. How do we know that? Because He chose you and He chose me to be His friend. When we look at ourselves we find out that we are no better than those disciples.

But our God looks at us and says: Yes, I know about your sin. I know that you don’t deserve my friendship. I know that you are pride-filled, arrogant, selfish, greedy, sinful people. But I choose you to be my friends anyway. I choose you because I love you so much.

Oh, what a thrill it is to be chosen—to be chosen by God—to be chosen as His friend. Regardless of who we are or how we often we fail Him or what our sin is like. We are chosen. God has come to us. He has loved us. He has chosen us to be His children. And He has made us His friends.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*What does “abide in My love” mean for our daily lives?*

*What, according to Jesus, is the highest expression of love?*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*What was at the center of Peter's message to this gathering of people at Cornelius' house?*

*What is significant about these new Christians asking Peter to stay with them, and Peter choosing to stay, for a few days?*

*Verse to Remember:  
1 John 5:2-3*

*What is the essential characteristic of one who is born of God? How then does this rebirth show itself in a person's life?*

*How does one who is born of God overcome the world?*

### The Second Reading: Acts 10:34-48

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. 36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. 37 You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

39 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, 40 but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. 41 He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. 43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Then Peter said, 47 "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

### The Epistle: 1 John 5:1-8

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

## The Psalm: Psalm 98

Sing to the Lord a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things;  
his right hand and his holy arm  
have worked salvation for him.  
2 The Lord has made his salvation known  
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.  
3 He has remembered his love  
and his faithfulness to Israel;  
all the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.  
4 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth,  
burst into jubilant song with music;  
5 make music to the Lord with the harp,  
with the harp and the sound of singing,  
6 with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—  
shout for joy before the Lord, the King.  
7 Let the sea resound, and everything in it,  
the world, and all who live in it.  
8 Let the rivers clap their hands,  
let the mountains sing together for joy;  
9 let them sing before the Lord,  
for he comes to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness  
and the peoples with equity.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*How does the psalmist describe the saving acts of God on behalf of His people? (verses 1–3)*

*What is our (and all of creation's!) response to God's saving acts? (verses 4–9)*

Sing to the Lord a new  
song,  
for he has done  
marvelous things

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*How does this hymn  
reflect the thoughts of  
the Gospel and Epistle  
readings for this  
week?*

## The Hymn: Love Divine, All Loves Excelling *LSB 700*

Love divine, all loves excelling,  
Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!  
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,  
All Thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,  
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;  
Visit us with Thy salvation,  
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit  
Into ev'ry troubled breast;  
Let us all in Thee inherit;  
Let us find Thy promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning;  
Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith, as its beginning,  
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver;  
Let us all Thy life receive;  
Suddenly return, and never,  
Nevermore Thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,  
Pray and praise Thee without ceasing,  
Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation,  
Pure and spotless let us be;  
Let us see Thy great salvation  
Perfectly restored in Thee,  
Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heav'n we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

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# Faith + Life Connections

Who are your friends? How do you know that they are your friends? By the things they say and do, right? Jesus is your best friend. Do you know why? He loves you so much, He died for your sins on the cross. He is making a place for you in heaven so that you can be with Him forever! What a friend we have in Jesus! *John 15:9-17*

Who does God love? Who does He want to be saved? Everyone! That's what Peter learned in this reading from Acts. The Holy Spirit showed him that God loves all people, not just people who look or speak a certain way. Who can you tell this week that Jesus loves them? *Acts 10:34-48*

How do you show love for God? By obeying His commands and by loving others. That's hard to do all the time. But God promises to help us! His love for us helps us love others.  
*1 John 5:1-8*

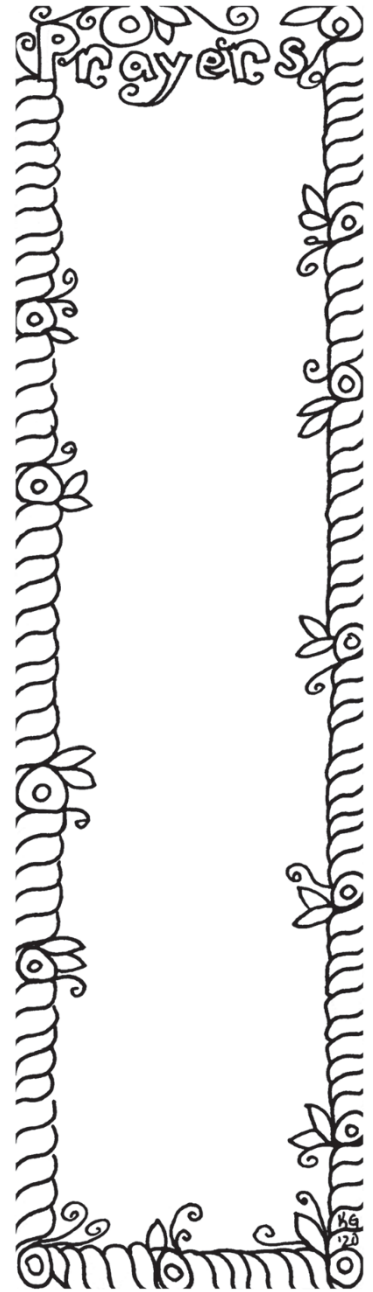
## Memorize:

This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. *1 John 5:2-3*



1 John 5:4

KG 21



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## Devote Yourself to Prayer *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.





# Walking Together in the Word

May 6–May 11, 2024

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, May 12.*

**Easter 7**

## The Gospel: John 17:11–19

I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

13 “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

## Devotion on the Gospel

It was the night that Jesus was betrayed, the night before He died. Jesus was gathered with His disciples in the upper room when He started to pray. You know, you can tell an awful lot about someone by listening to him pray.

Even though Jesus knows exactly what’s going to happen to Him in just a few hours: the arrest in the garden, the ridicule and the whips, then the cross and the suffering and finally, death—even though He knows all of that, He doesn’t pray for Himself. No, He prays for His disciples that night. And He prays for you. You can tell an awful lot about someone by listening to him pray.

He prayed that we would be united in the faith. He prayed that we would taste His joy in His truth. He prayed that we would be in the world to serve, to share, to minister, and to love in His name. You can tell an awful lot about someone by listening to him pray.

As you listen to Jesus pray, you can see His love for you and you can see His joy for you and you can see the hope that He has for you. You can see Him working in and through you. You can see Him building us up and encouraging us and empowering us.

And perhaps as we listen to Jesus pray, the Spirit will work in us so that His prayer becomes our prayer.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*What did Jesus give to the disciples to equip them for their mission? What does He still give to us today? (see verse 14)*

*Why would their (and our) faithful use of the Word bring the hatred of the world? (see John 15:18-25)*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Why was 12 the appropriate number of apostles?

What qualifications were considered to be essential to be nominated to fill Judas' spot? Why do you think these were essential qualifications?

### The Second Reading: Acts 1:12-26

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16 and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. 17 He was one of our number and shared in our ministry." 18 (With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 "For," said Peter, "it is written in the Book of Psalms:

"May his place be deserted;

let there be no one to dwell in it,'

and,

"May another take his place of leadership.'

21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, 22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."

23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

*They all joined together constantly  
in prayer, along with the women  
and Mary the mother of Jesus, and  
with his brothers.*

## The Epistle: 1 John 5:9-15

We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.



## The Psalm: Psalm 1

Blessed is the one

who does not walk in step with the wicked  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
or sit in the company of mockers,

2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and who meditates on his law day and night.

3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—  
whatever they do prospers.

4 Not so the wicked!  
They are like chaff  
that the wind blows away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Verse to Remember:*  
1 John 5:11-12

*John is clear earlier in this chapter that the Holy Spirit testifies that Jesus is the very Son of God who died for our sins. How is that testimony about Jesus a life-changing influence on our lives?*

*Why did John write this epistle? What good did it do for his hearers—and for us today? (see verse 13)*

*What metaphor does the psalmist use to describe one who delights in and follows God's law? (see verse 3)*

*Compare this imagery with what Jesus says in John 15:1-17. What similarities do you see?*

Notes,  
Thoughts,  
Questions

*How does this hymn  
declare the authority  
and divinity of  
Christ?*

The Hymn: Son of God, Eternal Savior

LSB 842

Son of God, eternal Savior,  
Source of life and truth and grace,  
Word made flesh, whose birth among us  
Hallows all our human race,  
You our Head, who, throned in glory,  
For Your own will ever plead:  
Fill us with Your love and pity,  
Heal our wrongs, and help our need.

As You, Lord, have lived for others,  
So may we for others live.  
Freely have Your gifts been granted;  
Freely may Your servants give.  
Yours the gold and Yours the silver,  
Yours the wealth of land and sea;  
We but stewards of Your bounty  
Held in solemn trust will be.

Come, O Christ, and reign among us,  
King of love and Prince of Peace;  
Hush the storm of strife and passion,  
Bid its cruel discords cease.  
By Your patient years of toiling,  
By Your silent hours of pain,  
Quench our fevered thirst of pleasure,  
Stem our selfish greed of gain.

Son of God, eternal Savior,  
Source of life and truth and grace,  
Word made flesh, whose birth among us  
Hallows all our human race:  
By Your praying, by Your willing  
That Your people should be one,  
Grant, O grant our hope's fruition:  
Here on earth Your will be done.

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# Faith + Life Connections

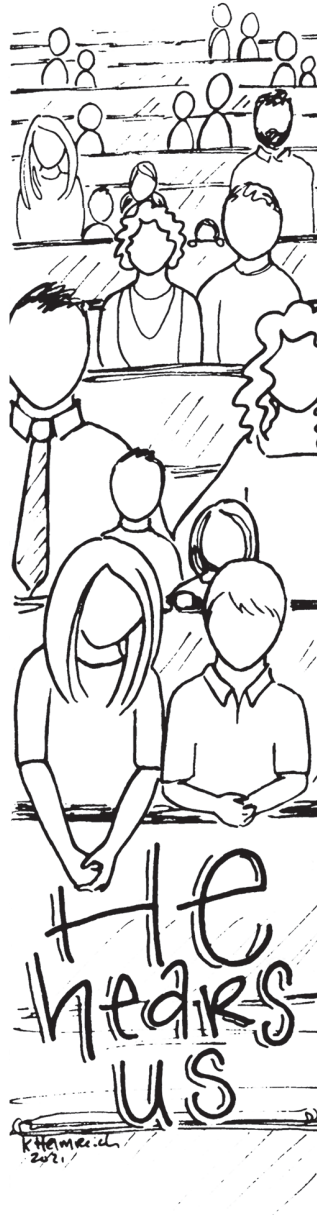
The night before Jesus went to the cross to die for the sins of the world, He prayed for His disciples—and for us! Even as Jesus faced death, He was thinking about you and me. What great love He has for you! Jesus continues to pray to God the Father for us. How can you thank Him today for His love? *John 17:11-19*

After Jesus ascended to heaven, the disciples and other believers got together to pray constantly. Why do you think they did that? Through prayer, they could still talk with Jesus. We can talk with Jesus through prayer too! What will you say to Him today? *Acts 1:12-26*

How do you know if something someone tells you is true? If it's God speaking, you know it's true! God says that He has given us eternal life through Jesus. We can believe it! *1 John 5:9-15*

## Memorize:

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.  
*1 John 5:11-12*



according to  
your will



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## Devote Yourself to Prayer *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.



# Walking Together in the Word

May 13–May 18, 2024

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, May 19.*

## Pentecost

### The Gospel: John 15:26–27, 16:4b–15

When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

4 I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you, 5 but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ 6 Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. 7 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. 12 “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

### Devotion on the Gospel

Grand openings are always big events—fireworks, balloons, social media blitzes—all ways to grab attention. Come, look here! Something new is happening! So it is with Pentecost, the grand opening of the Church as it moves from the 12 disciples gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem, to a movement that has covered the world and includes millions upon millions of people.

Jesus promised those disciples that He would send them the Counselor, the Spirit of truth, and He would testify about Jesus. Jesus never goes back on a promise! On Pentecost Sunday the believers were gathered together when the sound of a great wind and tongues of fire rested on each of them. And then the testimony, spoken in different languages as the Spirit enabled.

He is still sending His Spirit today, you know. We may not hear the wind and see the flames and hear the miraculous multi-language testimony, but the Spirit which was promised to Christ’s church by Jesus is still breathing life into His Church. That Spirit breathes life into dry, dusty bones. He raises us up from sin and death, enlivening and enlightening, calling and gathering His church together.

Remember how Martin Luther describes it? “The Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.”

What a great “grand opening” that will be!

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Another name for the Holy Spirit is “the Paraclete” which literally means “one called to stand beside.” What is the Spirit’s purpose as He comes to stand beside us as our Helper? (see verse 26)*

*Jesus talks of how the Holy Spirit moves to convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. What is the Spirit’s intention in convicting the world in this way?*



## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*This was not the first time that the “breath of God” gave life. Read Genesis 2:7. What similarities are there between this passage and Ezekiel’s vision?*

*What message of hope does God give through Ezekiel’s vision? (see verses 12-14)*

## The Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. 3 He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

I said, “Sovereign Lord, you alone know.”

4 Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! 5 This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.’”

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8 I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

9 Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

11 Then he said to me: “Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’ 12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.

14 I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord.’”

“Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!’”



## The Second Reading: Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. 5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" 13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." 14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 "'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

## The Psalm: Psalm 139:1-12

1 You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.  
2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
3 You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.  
4 Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.  
5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.  
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.  
7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?  
8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.  
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"  
12 even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Why was fire the visible symbol of what was miraculously taking place that day? (see Luke 3:16)*

*What was God's purpose in the gift of tongues on the Day of Pentecost?*

*Verse to Remember:  
Psalm 139:1*

*God knows us perfectly! How does David the psalmist describe this wonderful fact? (see verses 1-6)*

*David confesses that you cannot escape from God. For some this could be a frightening thought. For others it is a blessing. What is it for you? What should it be for all who are God's children?*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*This hymn is an ardent prayer to the Holy Spirit. Sing or speak this hymn as your prayer that the Spirit would dwell in your heart.*

## The Hymn: Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest

LSB 498

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,  
And make our hearts Your place of rest;  
Come with Your grace and heav'nly aid,  
And fill the hearts which You have made.

To You, the Counselor, we cry,  
To You, the gift of God Most High;  
The fount of life, the fire of love,  
The soul's anointing from above.

In You, with graces sevenfold,  
We God's almighty hand behold  
While You with tongues of fire proclaim  
To all the world His holy name.

Your light to ev'ry thought impart,  
And shed Your love in ev'ry heart;  
The weakness of our mortal state  
With deathless might invigorate.

Drive far away our wily foe,  
And Your abiding peace bestow;  
With You as our protecting guide,  
No evil can with us abide.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,  
And You, from both, as Three in One  
That we Your name may ever bless  
And in our lives the truth confess.

Praise we the Father and the Son  
And Holy Spirit, with them One,  
And may the Son on us bestow  
The gifts that from the Spirit flow! Amen.

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# Faith + Life Connections

Who is the Holy Spirit? He is part of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is the one whom Jesus sends to give us faith. The Spirit helps us understand God's Word and He gives us courage to tell others about Jesus. The Holy Spirit gives us words to say when we pray and witness. The Holy Spirit is God!

*John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15*

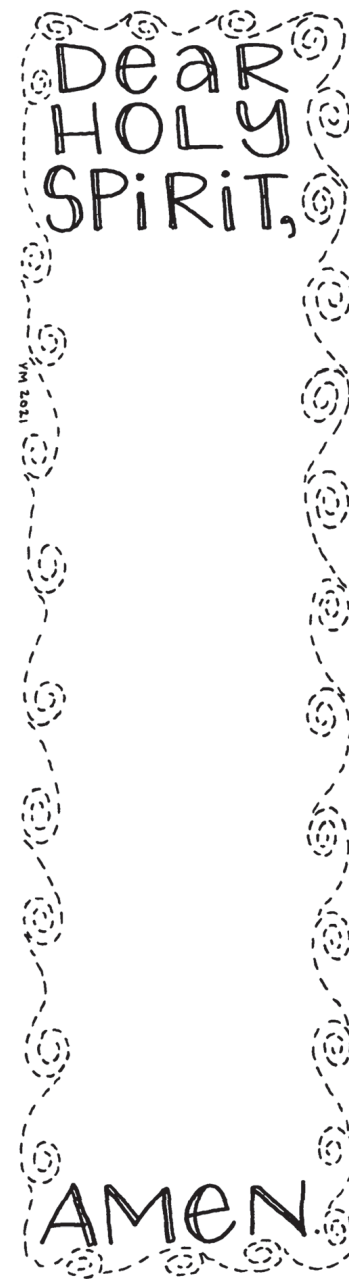
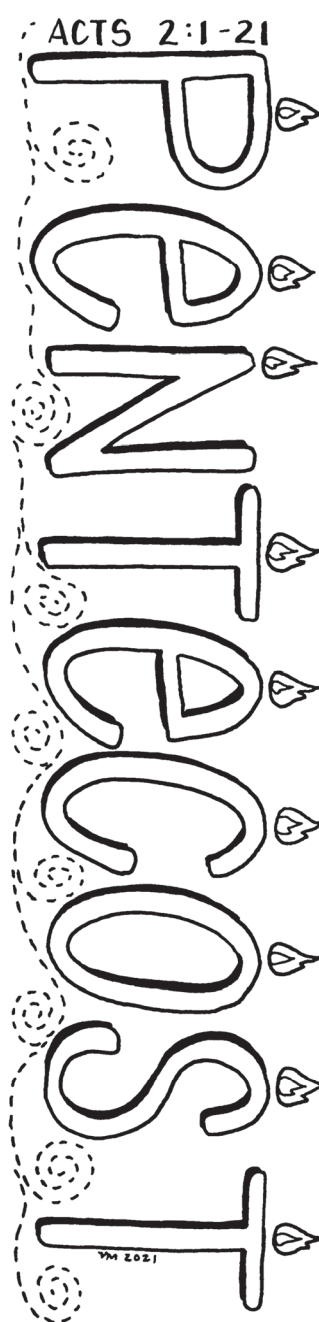
The Bible account of the Valley of Dry Bones is awesome! Scattered dry bones come together to make an army of people! But what does it mean? God was telling His prophet Ezekiel to have hope: God would put His Spirit in His people and they would live again. He gives us His Spirit too, so we can have eternal life with Him.

*Ezekiel 37:1-14*

On Pentecost, Jesus kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples. The Spirit gave them boldness to preach about Jesus, and three thousand people came to faith in Jesus! *Acts 2:1-21*

Memorize:

You have searched me, Lord,  
and you know me.  
Psalm 139:1



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Devote Yourself to Prayer *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.



# Walking Together in the Word

May 20–May 25, 2024

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, May 26.*

**Holy Trinity**

## The Gospel: John 3:1–17

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.” 3 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” 4 “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” 5 Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” 9 “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. 10 “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? 11 Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. 14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

## Devotion on the Gospel

Nicodemus was befuddled. He truly wanted to know, to understand, to get it. But how could a man be born when he is old? It didn’t make sense. For all of his learning and schooling and wisdom, Nicodemus needed to sit at the feet of Jesus to hear about the mysteries of the faith.

It seems that the Bible abounds with these kinds of mysteries. This weekend is Holy Trinity Sunday. Now there’s a mystery! It is one of those biblical truths that we do not understand but we believe only through faith in what the Bible teaches. God is three. God is one. It defies reason. It is a mystery. It is hidden from the eyes of reason and logic, but it is revealed to the eyes of faith.

And we believe it because you read it everywhere in Scripture. It’s in the Old Testament and New Testament, from Genesis all the way through Revelation. There is no question that God is triune—He is the Holy Trinity—our God is one God in three persons. As mysterious and incomprehensible as that is, that is what Scripture teaches. And we don’t know how that is—we just know that it is.

Perhaps, like Nicodemus, this and the many other mysteries of Scripture can befuddle us. We truly want to know, to understand, to get it. But maybe, like Nicodemus, the best place for us to be is to be sitting at the feet of Jesus, hearing about the mysteries of the faith.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*What does it say about Nicodemus that he “was a man of the Pharisees” and he “came to Jesus at night?”*

*Why is rebirth necessary to enter the kingdom of God? (see Ephesians 2:1–5)*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Why was Isaiah immediately filled with woe on seeing this vision of God?*

*How did Isaiah respond? How can his response encourage us?*

*Verse to Remember:*  
Isaiah 6:8

## The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;  
the whole earth is full of his glory."

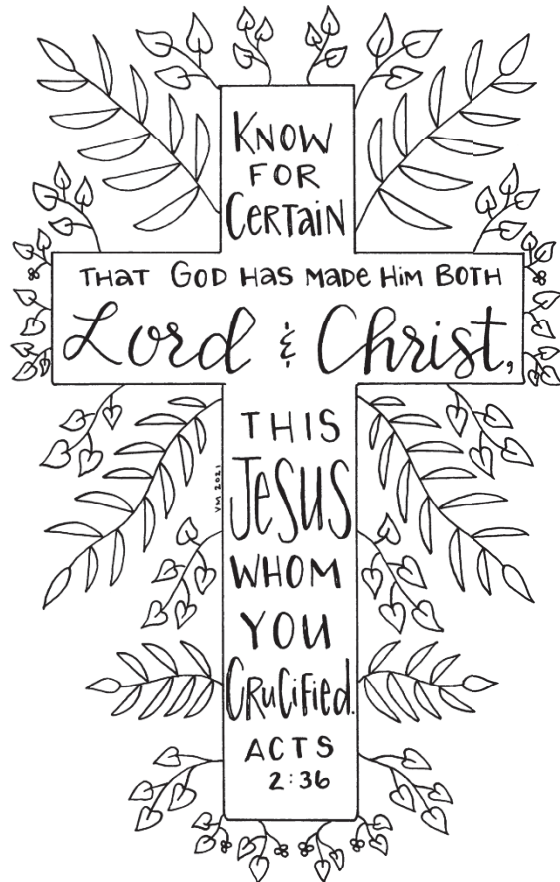
4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

5 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"



## The Second Reading: Acts 2:14a, 22-36

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him: "'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, 27 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'

29 "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

## The Psalm: Psalm 16

Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

3 The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters.

4 The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic.

5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;

the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He makes Lebanon leap like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox.

7 The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning.

8 The voice of the Lord shakes the desert;

the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the Lord twists the oaks and strips the forests bare.

And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

10 The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord is enthroned as King forever.

11 The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*This is Holy Trinity weekend in the church. How do you see the Trinity in Peter's sermon here in Acts 2?*

*Peter urged a response to what he preached that day. How did his closing words apply both Law and Gospel in calling for a response?*

*David the psalmist declares the praise of God in this psalm. As you read it, note why he says we ought to praise our awesome God.*

*"The voice of the Lord" is repeated seven times in this psalm. The number seven often signifies completeness in Bible number symbolism. What is David saying in his repetitive use of this phrase?*



## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*The tune name for this hymn is Nicaea. Nicaea was where a council was convened in 325 A.D. to settle controversy about the Holy Trinity. This council produced the Nicene Creed, which we still confess today. Why is Nicaea an appropriate name for this hymn?*

## The Hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy      *LSB 507*

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,  
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,  
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,  
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,  
Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

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# Faith + Life Connections

John 3:16 is sometimes called "the Gospel in a nutshell." What does that mean? The message of God's great plan of salvation for all people is contained in one small verse: God sent His only Son Jesus because He loves us, and everyone who believes in Jesus will be saved. Memorize this verse today and share it!

*John 3:1-17*

The prophet Isaiah was scared! God Himself appeared to him, and Isaiah knew he was a sinful man. But God touched his lips and took away his sins. God forgives our sins too. He gives us the courage to say, like Isaiah did, "Here I am, send me!"

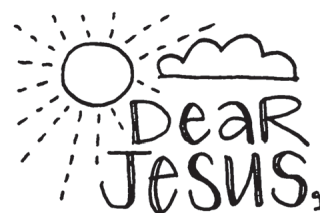
*Isaiah 6:1-8*

God had promised King David that one of his descendants would sit on the throne forever. Who was the descendant? Jesus! Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has risen from the dead to reign forever!

*Acts 2:14a, 22-36*

**Memorize:**

I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8



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