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LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR—PROPER 29

People of His Pasture
November 15, 2020



AS WE GATHER

Today is the Last Sunday of the Church Year. This Sunday is traditionally filled with themes of Christ's roles as King and Judge. But consider these words from Psalm 95: "We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand." We are God's chosen sheep. He is our Shepherd. We follow Him as He goes to seek the lost, bring back the stray, and bind up the injured.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

HYMN

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past" *LSB 733*

- 1 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:
- 2 Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.
- 3 Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.
- 4 A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.
- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the op'ning day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last
And our eternal home! Text: Public domain

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;
People: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Pastor: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving!
People: For the LORD is a great God.
Pastor: Oh come, let us worship and bow down.
People: For He is our God,
Pastor: and we are the people of His pasture,
People: and the sheep of His hand.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Indeed, our heavenly Father has called us to be His people. He has led us to green pastures and still waters. Yet, there have been times when we have treated our fellow sheep with disdain, when we have wandered away from our Shepherd. But our Good Shepherd does not abandon us, and we confess our sins before Him and one another.

Silence for reflection

Pastor: Heavenly Father,
People: we confess that we have wandered away from You. We confess that we have acted shamefully toward our brothers and sisters in Christ. We have sinned in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have failed by our inactivity. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, O Lord, that we might follow You to the green pastures and still waters of everlasting life.
Pastor: Our heavenly Father has heard Your confession and sent His only Son, Jesus, to be our Good Shepherd. Jesus searches for each one of His sheep. He brings back those who have strayed. He binds up the injured. He even lays down His life for the sheep. By Christ's death and resurrection, God forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen. We are sought by our Shepherd. We are forgiven in Christ.

☩ WORD ☩

HYMN

"Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise" *LSB* 680

- 1 Thine the amen Thine the praise
Alleluias angels raise
Thine the everlasting head
Thine the breaking of the bread
Thine the glory Thine the story
Thine the harvest then the cup
Thine the vineyard then the cup is lifted up lifted up.
- 2 Thine the life eternally
Thine the promise let there be
Thine the vision Thine the tree
All the earth on bended knee
Gone the nailing gone the railing
Gone the pleading gone the cry
Gone the sighing gone the dying what was loss lifted high.
- 3 Thine the truly Thine the yes
Thine the table we the guest
Thine the mercy all from Thee
Thine the glory yet to be
Then the ringing and the singing
Then the end of all the war
Thine the living Thine the loving evermore evermore.

4 **Thine the kingdom Thine the prize**
Thine the wonder full surprise
Thine the banquet then the praise
Then the justice of Thy ways
Thine the glory Thine the story
Then the welcome to the least
Then the wonder all increasing at Thy feast at Thy feast.

5 **Thine the glory in the night**
No more dying only light
Thine the river Thine the tree
Then the Lamb eternally
Then the holy holy holy
Celebration jubilee
Thine the splendor Thine the brightness only Thee only Thee.

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SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with You.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24

(God will search for His sheep.)

“For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice. . . .”Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.”

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL

Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5

Vicar: These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

People: **They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

Vicar: Blessed are those whose strength is in You,

People: **in whose heart are the highways to Zion.**

EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 15:20–28

(The last enemy to be destroyed is death.)

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

VERSE

Revelation 22:13

People: **Alleluia. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Alleluia.**

Vicar: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31–46

(The separation of the sheep and the goats)

[Jesus said:] “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Vicar: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Have No Fear, Little Flock” *LSB 735*

1 **Have no fear, little flock;
Have no fear, little flock,
For the Father has chosen
To give you the Kingdom;
Have no fear, little flock!**

2 Have good cheer, little flock;
Have good cheer, little flock,
For the Father will keep you
In His love forever;
Have good cheer, little flock!

3 Praise the Lord high above;
Praise the Lord high above,
For He stoops down to heal you,
Uplift and restore you;
Praise the Lord high above!

4 Thankful hearts raise to God;
Thankful hearts raise to God,
For He stays close beside you,
In all things works with you;
Thankful hearts raise to God!

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SERMON

“The Lord Seeks His Sheep”
Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24

HYMN

“I Know That My Redeemer Lives” *LSB* 461 Sts. 1–4, 8

1 I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living head.

2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
He lives eternally to save;
He lives all-glorious in the sky;
He lives exalted there on high.

3 He lives to bless me with His love;
He lives to plead for me above;
He lives my hungry soul to feed;
He lives to help in time of need.

4 He lives to grant me rich supply;
He lives to guide me with His eye;
He lives to comfort me when faint;
He lives to hear my soul’s complaint.

8 He lives, all glory to His name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same;
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives! Text: Public domain

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Vicar: let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Take My Life and Let It Be” *LSB* 783 vs 1 4 6

1 Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

4 Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect and use
Ev’ry pow’r as Thou shalt choose.

6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee. Text: Public domain

LORD’S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Vicar: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. *Numbers 6:24–26*

People: Amen.

HYMN

“Jesus Loves Me” *LSB* 588

1 Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong. Refrain

Ref Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.

2 Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven’s gates to open wide.
He has washed away my sin,
Lets His little child come in. Refrain Text: Public domain