

**Second Sunday after Christmas (Day) January 3, 2016**

**LUTHERAN**

## **LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY**

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

Available on line at:

[www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies](http://www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies)

or

**through Facebook**

**At either “Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

December 31, 2015 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

*(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship service on Wednesdays, 5:30pm, at the home of Robert Russo, a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com) for details.)*



<http://myspiritualadvisor.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Wheres-Jesus-Craig-McCourt.jpg>

### **Hymn of the Day**

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 410    The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 133**

**“Within the Father’s house”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiFKVVF8I4k> From "One LSB Hymn a Week" Organ prelude plus hymn.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBBBM5mfggg> A little snapper version.

### [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#)

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

The readings continue to show differences with the Revised Common Lectionary, (RCL). Two include options that are from the Apocrypha. Consider the comments about the Apocrypha from a King James website. "The apocrypha is a selection of books which were published in the original 1611 King James Bible. These apocryphal books were positioned between the Old and New Testament (it also contained maps and genealogies). The apocrypha was a part of the KJV for 274 years until being removed in 1885 A.D. A portion of these books were called deuterocanonical books by some entities, such as the Catholic church.

Many claim the apocrypha should never have been included in the first place, raising doubt about its validity and believing it was not God-inspired (for instance, a reference about magic seems inconsistent with the rest of the Bible: [Tobit chapter 6, verses 5-8](#)). Others believe it is valid and that it should never have been removed- that it was considered part of the Bible for nearly 2,000 years before it was recently removed a little more than 100 years ago. Some say it was removed because of not finding the books in the original Hebrew manuscripts. Others claim it wasn't removed by the church, but by printers to cut costs in distributing Bibles in the United States. Both sides tend to cite the same verses that warn against adding or subtracting from the Bible: [Revelation 22:18](#). The word '[apocrypha](#)' means 'hidden.' Fragments of Dead Sea Scrolls dating back to before 70 A.D. contained parts of the apocrypha books in Hebrew, including Sirach and Tobit [[source](#)].

Keep this in mind when reading the following apocryphal books. Martin Luther said, "Apocrypha--that is, books which are not regarded as equal to the holy Scriptures, and yet are profitable and good to read." (*King James Version Defended* page 98.)" <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Apocrypha-Books/>

[In addition to printing these readings](#), a link is given for these two readings if you do not have a Bible that includes them.

**I Kings 3:4-15, (RCL) Jeremiah 31:7-14 or Sirach 24:1-12** (*next week: Isaiah 43:1-7*)

<sup>4</sup> And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. <sup>5</sup> At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." <sup>6</sup> And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him

this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day.  
<sup>7</sup> And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.  
<sup>8</sup> And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude.  
<sup>9</sup> Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?"

<sup>10</sup> It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.  
<sup>11</sup> And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right,  
<sup>12</sup> behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.  
<sup>13</sup> I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.  
<sup>14</sup> And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

<sup>15</sup> And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

### **Sirach 24:1-12**

*24:1 Wisdom praises herself, and tells of her glory in the midst of her people.*

*24:2 In the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth, and in the presence of his hosts she tells of her glory:*

*24:3 "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth like a mist.*

*24:4 I dwelt in the highest heavens, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.*

*24:5 Alone I compassed the vault of heaven and traversed the depths of the abyss.*

*24:6 Over waves of the sea, over all the earth, and over every people and nation I have held sway."*

*24:7 Among all these I sought a resting place; in whose territory should I abide?*

*24:8 "Then the Creator of all things gave me a command, and my Creator chose the place for my tent. He said, 'Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance.'*

*24:9 Before the ages, in the beginning, he created me, and for all the ages I shall not cease to be.*

*24:10 In the holy tent I ministered before him, and so I was established in Zion.*

*24:11 Thus in the beloved city he gave me a resting place, and in Jerusalem was my domain.*

*24:12 I took root in an honored people, in the portion of the Lord, his heritage.*

<http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=11>

**Psalm 119:97-104, (RCL) Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21  
(Psalm 29)**

**Mem\***

- <sup>97</sup> Oh how I love your law!  
It is my meditation all the day.
- <sup>98</sup> Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,  
for it is ever with me.
- <sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers,  
for your testimonies are my meditation.
- <sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged,<sup>[a]</sup>  
for I keep your precepts.
- <sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from every evil way,  
in order to keep your word.
- <sup>102</sup> I do not turn aside from your rules,  
for you have taught me.
- <sup>103</sup> How sweet are your words to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
- <sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get understanding;  
therefore I hate every false way.

a. [Psalm 119:100](#) Or the elders

\* The Modern Hebrew name for this letter is *mem* probably from the word *mayim* meaning "water." The word *mayim* is the plural form of *mah*, probably the original name for this letter, meaning "what." To the Hebrews the sea was a feared and unknown place, for this reason this letter is used as a question word, who, what, when, where, why and how, in the sense of searching for an unknown. [http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/alphabet\\_letters\\_mem.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/alphabet_letters_mem.html)

***Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21***

*10:15 A holy people and blameless race wisdom delivered from a nation of oppressors,*

*10:16 She entered the soul of a servant of the Lord, and withstood dread kings with wonders*

*and signs.*

*10:17 She gave to holy people the reward of their labors; she guided them along a marvelous way, and became a shelter to them by day, and a starry flame through the night.*

*10:18 She brought them over the Red Sea, and led them through deep waters;*

*10:19 but she drowned their enemies, and cast them up from the depth of the sea.*

*10:20 Therefore the righteous plundered the ungodly; they sang hymns, O Lord, to your holy name, and praised with one accord your defending hand;*

*20:21 for wisdom opened the mouths of those who were mute, and made the tongues of infants speak clearly. <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=11>*

## **Ephesians 1:3-14 (Romans 6:1-11, (RCL) Acts 8:14-17)**

### **Spiritual Blessings in Christ**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us<sup>[a]</sup> for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup> which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> making known<sup>[b]</sup> to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

<sup>11</sup> In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, <sup>12</sup> so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

<sup>13</sup> In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee<sup>[c]</sup> of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,<sup>[d]</sup> to the praise of his glory.

### **Footnotes:**

- a. [Ephesians 1:5](#) Or before him in love, having predestined us
- b. [Ephesians 1:9](#) Or he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known...
- c. [Ephesians 1:14](#) Or down payment
- d. [Ephesians 1:14](#) Or until God redeems his possession

The Second Lesson for this Sunday is the first in a series of readings from the Letter to the Ephesians extending over seven Sundays. (*Year B*)

Of the total verses in Ephesians (155), nearly half (75 of them) will be read during these seven Sundays.

Reading Ephesians by way of the lectionary is necessarily selective. What is striking in reading through the assigned texts is that those chosen tend to be the most edifying in terms of theology, which can be expected. In addition, one finds the most general verses in terms of ethical admonitions, leaving aside some of the more specific instructions...

Ephesians is generally regarded as deutero-Pauline -- a letter associated with Paul (he is named as its author at Ephesians 1:1), but more likely the composition of a person who sought to impersonate Paul in a later situation. The arguments leading to this conclusion are well known and can be read in standard introductions to the New Testament and now even in study Bibles that are widely available to the public.

The lesson for this Sunday begins with a lofty doxological statement concerning God the Father (1:3-6). Next, we have a brief characterization of Jesus as the one in whom we have redemption (1:7). In 1:8-10, the author again speaks about God and of what God has done in Christ. Finally, in 1:11-14 the focus is once more upon Christ...

The passage is filled with assertions about God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. In its "God statements," it sets forth an image of God as one who:

- has chosen believers
- has destined them for adoption as his children
- continues to bless them
- showers his grace upon them

He has revealed his will in the sending of Christ, and he seeks to "gather up all things" in both heaven and earth in Christ...

The entire passage is so highly compact that it is a challenge for both the preacher and the hearer. It has to do with a broad range of theological concepts, such as election, revelation, and more broadly, atonement. It even makes use of specific theological terms, such as "redemption" (1:7, 14) and "salvation" (1:13).

A sermon on this passage will have to be limited to a very few of these concepts at best. Moreover, in most parts of the country this text will be read on a rather warm, perhaps hot, day near the middle of July when hearers may not be very receptive to heavy theological terms... (*Remember, he is writing for year B*)

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**Luke 2:40-52, (RCL) John 1:(1-9), 10-18 (Luke 3:15-22, (RCL) Luke 3:15-17, 21-22)**

## “The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd Chapter”

### “Glory to You, O Lord”

<sup>40</sup> And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

#### The Boy Jesus in the Temple

<sup>41</sup> Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. <sup>43</sup> And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, <sup>44</sup> but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, <sup>45</sup> and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> And when his parents<sup>[a]</sup> saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.” <sup>49</sup> And he said to them, “**Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?**”<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>50</sup> And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. <sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

<sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature<sup>[c]</sup> and in favor with God and man.

- a. [Luke 2:48](#) Greek *they*
- b. [Luke 2:49](#) Or *about my Father's business*
- c. [Luke 2:52](#) Or *years*

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

When I was twelve years old, I hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Pretty impressive, eh? No, pretty stupid, actually. Because, at twelve years old, I hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon . . . without telling anyone. Let me explain. This was back in the days of train travel, and my mother, grandmother, sister, and I were taking the train from Chicago to Los Angeles for a family reunion. When we got to Arizona, there was an option to get off the train, get on a bus, and take a day trip to see the Grand Canyon. Which we did. When I saw it, I thought the Grand Canyon was amazing, fascinating! So I started exploring, as twelve-year-old boys are wont to do, and I came across this trail, hugging the side of the canyon and going down. I started walking down it. Fascinating, incredible, I thought! So I kept walking down the trail. And kept walking. Eventually, I ended up at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. And it was 110 degrees. And I was wearing flip-flops. And I had no water. Now I had to get back up,

which looked a little more daunting than going down. And the bus was going to leave at a certain time to go back to the train. Again, I hadn't told anyone what I was doing or where I was going.

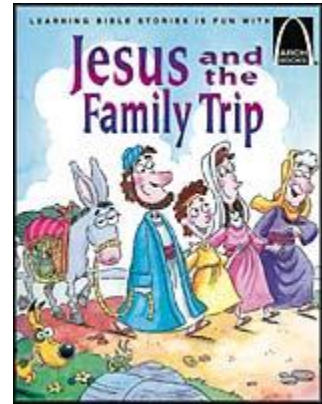
Well, long story short, I did get back up, and we did make the bus and make it back to the train. But you should have seen my mom! She was frantic. She was about to call the park rangers. Needless to say, she was quite upset with me. And justifiably so. Her twelve-year-old boy—yours truly—had done something rather foolish.

In today's Gospel reading, we encounter another twelve-year-old boy who gave his mom quite a panic. They too were on a family trip, and he didn't tell anybody where he would be or what he would be doing, either. So was this boy doing something foolish? No, quite the contrary. In fact, today we meet "A Twelve-Year-Old Boy, Filled with Wisdom." ...

"Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" "I must be," Jesus says. There is a divine necessity about his being there. It has to be. "I must be in my Father's house." More literally, our text says, "It is necessary for me to be in or among the things of my Father." Another way it could be translated is, "I must be about my Father's business." That's what Jesus came to do. He came to do the will of his Father, the heavenly Father, who sent his Son on this giant rescue mission, to redeem all of humanity from the bonds of sin and death." Those are "the things of my Father" that Jesus is all about.

And this redemption is for you, my friends. Jesus did this for you. For you and Mary and Joseph, and all us sinners in need of rescuing. It would take God's own Son to accomplish this, and that is what Jesus has done. And Jesus knew this identity of his, and his mission, from early on. Even as a twelve-year-old boy.

A twelve-year-old-boy, filled with wisdom. Look at how our text today is bracketed. At the start it says: "The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. And at the end: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man." Truly, this is no foolish boy, running off on his own and not telling his parents. No, this is the Son of God, doing the will of the Father who sent him. This is divine wisdom in the flesh. And we do well to find him where he wants to be found. <http://steadfastlutherans.org/2015/01/a-twelve-year-old-boy-filled-with-wisdom-sermon-on-luke-240-52-by-pr-charles-henrickson/> Rev. Charles Henrickson currently serves at [St Matthew Lutheran Church in Bonne Terre, Missouri](http://www.stmatthewlutheran.org/). He is a 1990 graduate (M.Div.) of Concordia Seminary-St. Louis, where he also received an S.T.M. in Exegetical Theology (Old Testament concentration) and is "All But Dissertation" on a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies (New Testament concentration).



The first appearance of the words of Jesus in **red letters** in year C.

Rick and Ted are unable to appear – on line error message. (*Agnus Day appears with the permission of [www.angusday.org](http://www.angusday.org)*)

## THE LUKE CHALLENGE – LECTIONARY YEAR C 2015-16

Challenge yourself to produce a handwritten copy of the book of Luke  
by Christ the King Sunday, November 20, 2016.

It's time to start Chapter Two! "2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered."