

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 8 June 26, 2016

LUTHERAN

## LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.  
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings  
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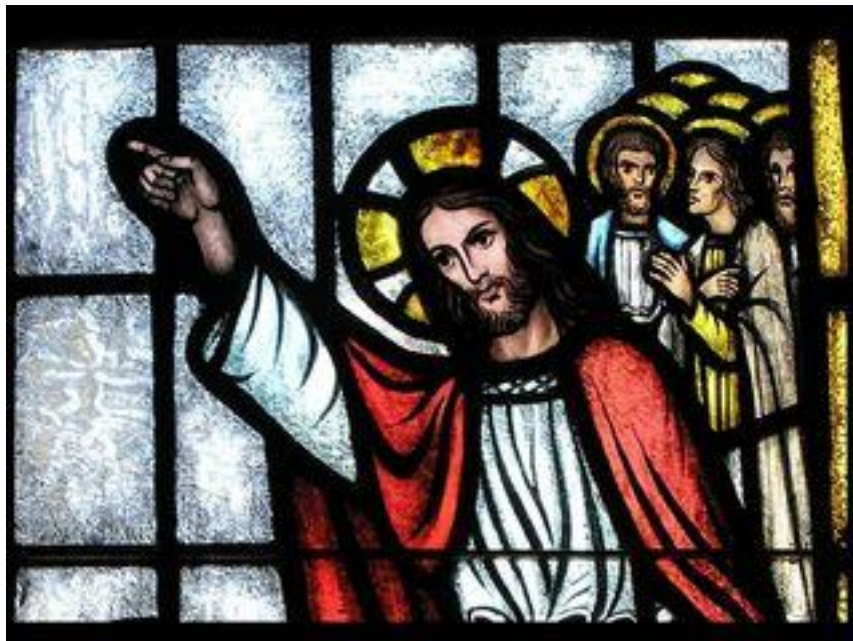
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“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”

June 23, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

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



[http://www.progressiveinvolvement.com/progressive\\_involvement/2013/07/lectionary-blogging-pentecost-7-luke-10-1-11-16-20.html](http://www.progressiveinvolvement.com/progressive_involvement/2013/07/lectionary-blogging-pentecost-7-luke-10-1-11-16-20.html)

### Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 688 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 421

“Come follow Me.” Said Christ the Lord (*The Savior Spake*)”

**“Angelus Silesius**, born in Selisia, in 1624, was the son of a Polish nobleman, and his true name was **John Scheffler**; but he adopted the name Angelus from a Spanish mystic of the 16th century--John ab Angelis--and added the name Silesius, because of his own country”... His father, Stanislaus Scheffler, was a member of the Polish nobility, but had been forced to leave his fatherland on account of his adherence to Lutheranism, and had then settled in Breslau. The son was thus educated as a strict Lutheran...His hymns were mostly written before he joined the Romish Church, and were intended for private devotion; some, however, have been very acceptable for public use. "Several of them are among the deepest and most tender in the German language, and breathe a glowing love to the Saviour."

Excerpts from [http://www.hymnary.org/person/Angelus\\_Silesius](http://www.hymnary.org/person/Angelus_Silesius)

Be careful not to confuse Scheffler the author with Schaeffer the translator.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wLW5ipvaKM> A piano solo that plays the melody.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZ3I72vASgw> Organ with prelude, One LSB Hymn a week.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gF3kZG-VajY> Join the congregation of Chapel of the Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri.

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

**1 Kings 19:9b-21; RCL, 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14 or Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20 (Next Week: Isaiah 66:10-14; RCL 2 Kings 5:1-14 or Psalm 30)**

## The LORD Speaks to Elijah

<sup>9</sup> *There he came to a cave and lodged in it.* And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” <sup>10</sup> He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.”

<sup>11</sup> And he said, “Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup> And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. <sup>13</sup> And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” <sup>14</sup> He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.” <sup>15</sup> And the LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. <sup>16</sup> And Jehu the

son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.<sup>17</sup> And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death.<sup>18</sup> Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

*“Given the historic significance of Horeb/Sinai, it is reasonable for the reader to compare Elijah's experience to that of Moses (Exodus 32-34). For both, forty days is a significant number. Moses did not finally enter the land, even though he did manage to receive God's pledge of God's continuing presence with the people. Similarly, Elijah did not live to experience the destruction of the supporters of Baal (2 Kings 9-10) implied in the anointings he is commanded to carry out (1 Kings 19:15-17). We might also wonder if Elijah's cave is the same as the cleft in the rock in which Moses stood as the LORD passed by. But the similarity is not drawn out. Unlike Moses, Elijah does not intercede for the people. Perhaps the narrator only seeks to evoke the aura of Moses' authority. Elijah is a champion in the prophetic tradition, but there is no template for prophets. Every prophet exercises the office in the particulars of the time and place in which they serve.”*

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=124](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=124) Richard W. Nysse  
Professor of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

## The Call of Elisha

<sup>19</sup> So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him.<sup>20</sup> And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?”<sup>21</sup> And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

1. [1 Kings 19:12](#) Or a sound, a thin silence

“While the shape of the text sets up Elisha to be Elijah's successor, the narrative of Elisha's joining Elijah's service (19:19-21) offers no indication that this induces Elisha. The succession that ties these two men together lies in the power of the verb *halak* (to go). God commands Elijah to go (verses 11 and 15). The second instance of God's command to Elijah in verse 15 includes another imperative *sub* (“return”). In the context of Elisha's request to perform his filial duties (verse 20), Elijah repeats the same construction to him: *לֵךְ שׁוּב* (*lek sub*, “go return”). Finally, Elisha goes. This command to go binds both men together and them to God. They stand in the succession of those who receive the imperative and have responded. But the story of Elijah and its link with Elisha reminds us that even after responding to the command, failure, depression, family ties and social obligations can complicate the ability to readily respond.”

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=633](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=633) Steed Davidson Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill., a seminary of

the Presbyterian Church (USA) and are grounded in the theological thought and church life of the Reformed tradition.

**Psalm 16; RCL, 1 Kings:19:15-16, 19-21 or Psalm 16** (*Psalm 66:1-7; RCL Isaiah 66:10-14 or Psalm 66:1-9*)

**You Will Not Abandon My Soul** A Miktam<sup>[a]</sup> of David.

16 Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

<sup>2</sup> I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;  
I have no good apart from you.”

<sup>3</sup> As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones,  
in whom is all my delight.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The sorrows of those who run after<sup>[c]</sup> another god shall multiply;  
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out  
or take their names on my lips.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;  
you hold my lot.

<sup>6</sup> The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

<sup>7</sup> I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.<sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>8</sup> I have set the LORD always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being<sup>[e]</sup> rejoices;  
my flesh also dwells secure.

<sup>10</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,  
or let your holy one see corruption.<sup>[f]</sup>

<sup>11</sup> You make known to me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

- a. [Psalm 16:1](#) Probably a musical or liturgical term
- b. [Psalm 16:3](#) Or *To the saints in the land, the excellent in whom is all my delight, I say:*
- c. [Psalm 16:4](#) Or *who acquire*
- d. [Psalm 16:7](#) Hebrew *my kidneys instruct me*
- e. [Psalm 16:9](#) Hebrew *my glory*
- f. [Psalm 16:10](#) Or *see the pit*

“Psalm 16 is a very problematic psalm, and for a gaggle of reasons:

1. Most scholars consider this to be a Song of Confidence or Trust like Psalm 23, yet it begins with a very lament-like plea for help in verse 1. Recent scholarship, helpfully, sees this "plea" as a devout desire for *continuing* protection in general rather than a specific request.
2. The intractable verses 3-4 are among the most untranslatable verses in the book of Psalms, if not in the entire Old Testament. Some translations, like the New Revised Standard Version and the Revised English Bible, take "holy ones in the land" and "nobles" as an orthodox community of saints towards whom the psalmist is positively disposed. Other translations, like the New American Bible, the New Jerusalem Bible, and the Jewish Publication Society's Tanak, take them as vile Canaanite deities that the psalmist rejects. It is impossible to decide which is correct. Regardless of one's decision in this matter, the psalmist is clearly opting for Yahweh over other gods.
3. Virtually everyone reads the first word of verse 2 as "I say" (some LXX witnesses, Syriac) despite its clear reading of "you have said" (*amart*) in the Masoretic Text. If the correct reading is "I say," verses 2-4 must be read as a powerful confession of trust. If the correct reading is "you have said," then verse 4 must be seen as the psalmist's coldblooded rebuke of the spineless waffling between someone's alleged trust in Yahweh in verse 2 and their pandering to other "gods" in verse 3. Again, there is no practical way to resolve this enigma.
4. Ever since Peter preached on this text at the first Pentecost (Acts 2), the church has read this psalm as a messianic prophecy of Christ's resurrection. More on this later!
5. The psalm's structure and progression of thought continue to baffle one and all with its obscurity..... [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=439](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=439)

Mark Throntveit **Elva B. Lovell Professor of Old Testament**, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn. I guess from his opening comments, this Psalm could be a week's study by itself.

**Galatians 5:1, 13-25** (*Galatians 6:1-10, 14-18; RCL Galatians 6:1-6), 7-16*)  
*Readings from Galatians will continue through July 3.*

## **Christ Has Set Us Free**

5 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Verses 2-12 is a discussion about circumcision.

<sup>13</sup>For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup>For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>15</sup>But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

## **Keep in Step with the Spirit**

<sup>16</sup>But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are

opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy, <sup>[d]</sup> drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

- a. [Galatians 5:4](#) Or *counted righteous*
- b. [Galatians 5:11](#) Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse [13](#)
- c. [Galatians 5:11](#) Greek *proclaim*
- d. [Galatians 5:21](#) Some manuscripts add *murder*

““Let's be guided by the Spirit!" How are we guided by the Spirit?

**We are guided when we pray.** So, today, I'm challenging you—all of you—all of us—to work on our prayer lives. A few weeks ago, I said to you that I am confident that St. Paul's is being called to a ministry in this community, and that God is gradually revealing what we are being called to do. But the revelation of God's plan for this congregation will only be revealed if we open ourselves to his word—through prayer. Through prayer we gain understanding not only of what God wants of us, but also of why this relationship with Christ matters so much. And once we understand that, it will become oh so apparent why it matters so much that others have the same relationship. Then—then we can be about God's work.”

<http://www.lectionary.org/Sermons/NT/09-Gal/Gal-5.1,13-25-LiveSpirit-Brettell.htm> Pastor Brettell is from St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Fountain Hill, PA. His reflections on his congregation's need to approach in prayer applies to many congregations.

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 9th Chapter

“Glory to You, O Lord”

**Luke 9:51-62** (*Luke 10:1-20; RCL, Luke 10:1-11, 16-20*)

### A Samaritan Village Rejects Jesus

<sup>51</sup> When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup> And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. <sup>53</sup> But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup> And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?”<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>55</sup> But he turned and rebuked them.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>56</sup> And they went on to another village.



## The Cost of Following Jesus

<sup>57</sup> As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” <sup>58</sup> And Jesus said to him, “**Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.**”

<sup>59</sup> To another he said, “**Follow me.**” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” <sup>60</sup> And Jesus<sup>[c]</sup> said to him, “**Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.**”

<sup>61</sup> Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” <sup>62</sup> Jesus said to him, “**No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.**”

- a. [Luke 9:54](#) Some manuscripts add *as Elijah did*
- b. [Luke 9:55](#) Some manuscripts add *and he said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man came not to destroy people's lives but to save them”*
- c. [Luke 9:60](#) Greek *he*

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

“In this passage Jesus sets out on his final journey to Jerusalem.

He has warned the disciples of his impending suffering there (9:21-27, 44-45), but even though they confess their faith in him as Messiah (9:18-20) and see him transfigured with Moses and Elijah (9:28-36), they cannot begin to imagine the horror of Jesus’ last days. But Jesus knows. He has “set his face” toward Jerusalem, meaning unwavering determination.

Normally very accepting of the Samaritans, he shocks his disciples by barely noticing the Samaritans as he heads to Jerusalem, so concentrated was he on his up-coming destiny. The Samaritan villagers “did not receive him because his face was set toward Jerusalem.” Did they reject Jesus, or did they not host him overnight since he “his face was set toward Jerusalem”?

The text doesn’t say, but the disciples take it to be rejection and impulsively ask if they should “command fire” to destroy them -- as if they could even do that! An unknown copier of Luke’s gospel even adds “as Elijah did,” referring to Elijah calling fire upon the soldiers of the evil king Ahaziah, who had ruled the northern kingdom from Samaria (2 Kings 1:10-12).

Jesus uses the occasion to speak about discipleship and about the implications of following him. As the text makes clear, Jesus is speaking to those who are indeed following him, not to potential followers. As he often does, he speaks in hyperboles and exaggerations for emphasis in making his point. He is saying, “Be willing to let go of the past.” You bury the dead and move on. There comes a time when you leave the comforts of home, let go of the doorpost, and move into uncharted waters.

He knows that his disciples will soon be doing exactly that after he has gone. Their lives will be radically and unexpectedly different than anything they had imagined. They will leave behind what they have known and done and go in totally new directions.

What does Jesus mean by saying, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God”? Anybody who has plowed a field knows you have to watch carefully in front of you to keep the furrows straight. Look backward and you will swerve one way or another...

These verses jar us into asking, “How are our lives different as followers of Jesus than what they might have been otherwise?” I remember a bumper sticker asking, “If you were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?” Discipleship means living in ways we might not otherwise live.

The umbrella truth above this whole topic of discipleship is that being a Christian and a disciple of Jesus gives us a whole new identity. We are no longer simply a biological unit on this earth, but a child of the God of the whole universe. We now live knowing that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20). Because our lives are now measured by eternal things, we are “exiles and aliens” in this world (1Peter 2:11)...

Leading adult forums in congregations, one of my faculty colleagues is fond of asking people, “What is God doing in your life these days?” It is a thoroughly biblical question, because we believe God’s Spirit is active within us. Yet the question catches Lutherans by surprise, because we don’t usually think in such concrete ways.

I remember visiting an African-American congregation near our home, where the pastor asked the people, “What’s God been doing in your life lately?” Whereas Lutherans would have sat in shocked silence, the people in this church, probably accustomed to the pastor posing that question often, responded one after another by standing and giving their answers, each followed by a vigorous round of applause.

Whether we think of ourselves as aliens, strangers, nomads, or pilgrims on this earth, it is because we follow Jesus, and that often takes us into new ways of living!”

**Michael Rogness** Professor of Preaching and Professor Emeritus of Homiletic, **Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN** *Michael Rogness wrote last week’s Gospel commentary also. He retired in 2007. Luther Seminary wrote a biographical article about his years of ministry. His closing comment is “As for telling the greatest story ever told, “I would say the best hope would be preaching that has theological depth and integrity and is still interesting and well-delivered. You have to have good theology,” he says. “Preaching is the gospel.”*  
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