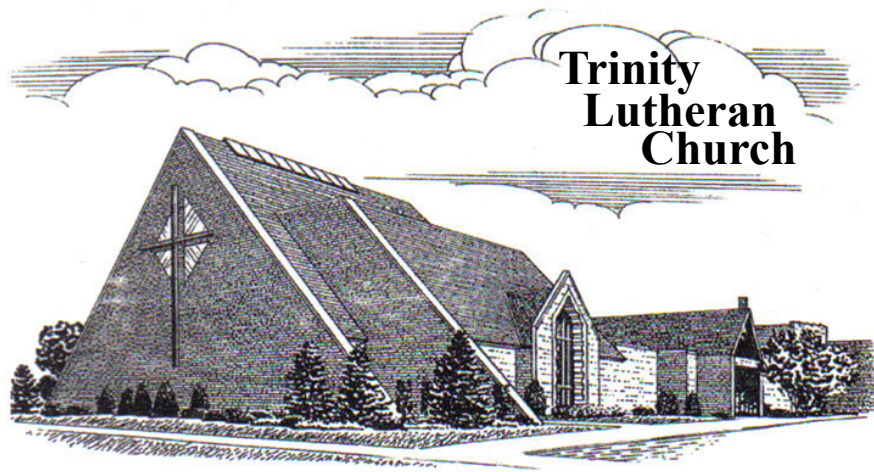


Proper 10



July 6-12, 2026

Weekly Outline

Invocation

L: You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you,

C: because he trusts in you.

L: Almighty Father, Lord of heaven and earth, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us after your great goodness; according to the multitude of your mercies, do away our offenses; wash us thoroughly from our wickedness, and cleanse us from our sins; for Jesus' sake,

C: Amen.

Scripture

July 6 : Isaiah 55:10-13

July 8 : Romans 8:12-17

July 10: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Devotion

Closing Prayer

L: 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.

C: Amen.

Monday

In Deuteronomy, the people stand on the border of the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the Old Testament symbol for blessing and prosperity. With an abundance of wealth all around them, Moses knows that the people will be tempted to forget the lesson they learned in the wilderness: that God is their true source of life. So Moses tells them to remember that "man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord."

In our Old Testament reading, God says the same thing through the prophet Isaiah. God says in verses 10-11, "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth." Like the seeds in the field that require rain from heaven to grow and flourish and produce a crop, human souls are dependent on God. Apart from God, we cannot live. If we do not know God, we cannot know true life. But we cannot know God if he does not reveal himself. Thankfully, he has—through his Word. Just as the body cannot live apart from bread and water, the soul cannot know true life apart from God's Word.

The Word of God gives life because it brings us into relationship with God by revealing God to us. That is why Jesus is called the Word of God in John 1:1. Like the rain that God sends from heaven, Jesus was sent by the Father to give life to the world by revealing God to us (John 6:51). He can do this because he is the Father's only-begotten Son. He knows God, and he reveals God to all who receive him. To know Christ is to know God in the flesh. To know God is to receive the rain of heaven—it is to eat the bread of life—that alone gives true life, life that will never wither, but only be renewed for eternity. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Wednesday

Sin is a lot like debt. Some debt is inevitable, such as a mortgage to purchase a home. Other debt can be voluntary, such as credit card debt. Credit card debt is often taken on to satisfy some passing desire. But at 27% interest, even a small debt can balloon into something that feels enslaving. A man can count the hours he has to work just to make the interest payment, and he has little hope of ever paying it off. Sin is a lot like that. We engage in sin to satisfy some passing desire, but the payment sin requires in the end is enormous, so large, in fact, that we can never hope to pay it back (Matthew 18:23-35).

The only way to escape our debt of sin is for God to forgive it. That is why Christ came, to earn our forgiveness. But having been freed from sin, we would be pretty foolish to fall back into slavery to sin, as Paul writes, "So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die." The wages of sin is always death, and having been freed from sin and its wages, don't go back to earning them! There is no reason to be re-enslaved. But having been set free from sin, we are to serve God in a new way. Paul continues, "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba, Father!'"

As sons of God, we still live under a kind of obligation. But the obligation of a slave is very different from the obligation of a son. A slave serves from compulsion. A son serves from a willing Spirit. A slave hates his master. A son loves his Father. A slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son continues in the family forever. Forgiveness does not mean the end of service, but the beginning of service in a new way, for we are no longer slaves, but sons. And if we are sons through Christ, then we will share in the reward of the Son's work, an inheritance in heaven that God is storing up for all who trust in his Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Friday

For the first 22 years of my life, I lived in Iowa. Iowa is rural and agricultural. Even if you are not a farmer, you learn to pay attention to the soil, to the rain, to seasonable weather. You just absorb it. Living in the middle of a 56,272 square mile cornfield will do that! So one of the things that surprised me when I lived in North Carolina in 2018 was how different the soil was. It wasn't black like Iowa soil in spring. It wasn't brown like Iowa soil in a summer drought. It was a wet clay, red as Samuel's hair.

In our Gospel reading, Jesus compares hearts to soils. Some hearts are hard like a dirt road. Seed falls on this dirt but stays on the surface, only to get eaten by the birds. Some hearts are like thin soil covering bedrock. The soil warms early in the spring but dries out in the summer, causing the sun to scorch everything grown in it. Some hearts are like a garden full of weeds. Seeds sprout and grow, only to be choked before producing a harvest. But some hearts are like good soil. These hearts receive the Word of God, persevere in it, and produce an abundant crop.

We all desire to be the good soil. That is why Jesus tells the parable, to awaken in us the desire for good soil so that we would bear fruit. Yet even though we trust God's Word and seek to follow Christ, it doesn't take much self-examination to find the three poor soils in our hearts. The Word of God comes and we sometimes resist it. The Word of God comes, but we are preoccupied with worry, so we ignore it. The Word of God comes, but we are so busy with sin that it can't find room to sprout. Left to ourselves, we would all fail to produce a harvest for eternal life. But understanding our need, we turn to Christ, the one who sows the seed, to our Father, the one who sends forth spiritual rain, and to the Holy Spirit, the one who pulls those sinful weeds, and we pray that even though we are unworthy and infertile, that we too would become good soil, and persevering in faith, produce a harvest for eternal life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Prayer

You may pray one or more of the following after dinner or before bed:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day; and I pray you 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 wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.



Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep; if I should die before I wake, I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take; and this I ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.



Visit, O Lord, our home, and drive from it all the snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell in it to preserve us in peace, and may your blessing be upon us evermore; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

A Parent's Blessing

You may place your hand on the head of your child before kissing them goodnight and say:

My loved one, rest securely,
for God this night will surely
from peril guard your head.
Sweet slumbers may he send you
and bid his hosts attend you
and through the night watch o'er your bed. Amen.

Memory Verse

MEMORY VERSE

**Continue steadfastly
in prayer, being
watchful in it with
thanksgiving.**

COLOSSIANS 4:2

