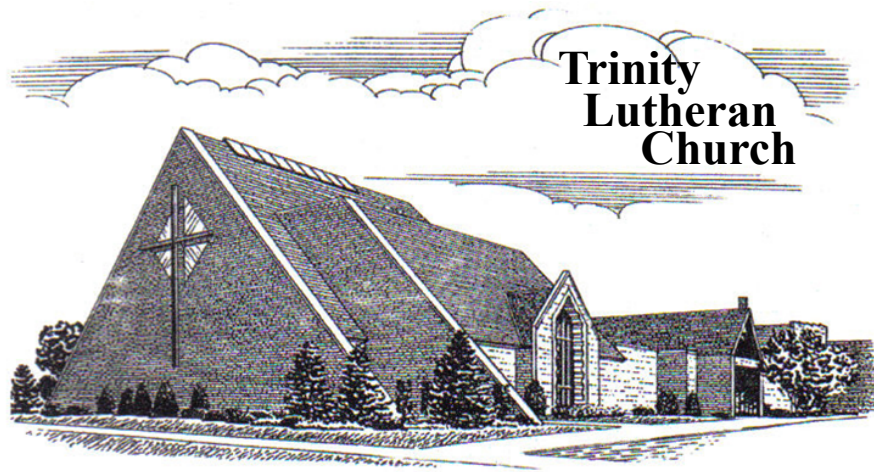


Proper 14



Aug 3-Aug 9, 2026

Weekly Outline

Invocation

L: O Lord, open my lips,

C: and my mouth shall declare your praise.

L: Almighty, everlasting God, Lord, heavenly Father, whose Word is a lamp to our feet and a light on our way: Open and enlighten my mind that I may understand thy Word purely, clearly, and devoutly, and then, having understood it aright, fashion my life in accord with it, in order that I may never displease thy majesty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Scripture

Aug 3: Job 38:4-18

Aug 5: Romans 10:5-17

Aug 7: Matthew 14:22-33

Devotion

Closing Prayer

L: Faithful God, whose mercies are new to us every morning, we humbly pray that you would look upon us in mercy and renew us by your Holy Spirit. Keep safe our going out and our coming in, and let your blessing remain with us throughout this day.

Preserve us in your righteousness, and grant us a portion in that eternal life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

Monday

The big bang is often held up today as proof for a purely material universe that doesn't need God. But it wasn't always seen that way. In fact, the big bang was once decried by atheists because it proved that the universe had an origin. There was a moment in time where there was nothing, and then "Bang!" there was something. Previously, it was thought that the universe was eternal and essentially without motion, but the proof of an ever-expanding universe eventually forced scientists to conclude that every atom had at one point been packed into an infinitesimally small volume of space, and perhaps, into no space at all. That there was at one moment nothing, and "Bang!" there was something.

The big bang has been accepted by the scientific community because it had to be, not because it supports a purely material world. If anything, it is the strongest evidence that there is a God. The strongest evidence outside of life itself that is, for which there is no scientific explanation outside of divine intervention. In our reading from Job, we meet the being who created all things. He alone laid the foundation of the earth. He determined the dimensions of the universe. He calmed the seas and brought forth land. He caused the sun to rise and the moon to appear. He knows what happens after death and comprehends everything that happens in the expanse of the earth. This being, whose nature and power we do not understand, is the one we call God.

This God has not only revealed his power in what has been made. He has also shown his love in what he has done. Unlike the blind chance proclaimed by evolutionists or the mythological deities of the pagans, the true God has acted in history to save those who trust in him. He even sent his Son to take on human flesh and die in place of sinners. This being of ultimate power and love—he is the one we call God. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Wednesday

Every religion pursues the same thing, the fulfillment of human life. Religions disagree with each other on what fulfillment looks like and how to pursue it, but at the most basic level, we are all looking for the same thing—the truly good life. People do all kinds of things to pursue that life, most of which is nonsense and only some of which is fulfilling to any significant degree. But the remarkable thing about the Christian faith is how close the good life is to each one of us. We don't need to climb to heaven to bring it down or trek through Hades in order to find it. God has placed it in our mouths and in our hearts.

Paul writes, "Do not say in your hearts, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down) or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." The most incredible thing about the Christian faith is that true life descended from heaven to give life to the world, and that this life is given to all who believe the Gospel. So simple. So simple that it is hard to believe! But not only do millions of people believe it, but it is actually true, the very best news of all.

Every religion and every person—we are all looking for the same thing: the fulfillment of human life. But there is only one person who perfectly fulfilled what it means to be human, Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the life on which every life is patterned. No religion fulfills its purpose unless it brings you to him, for he alone is the way and the truth and the life. You don't need to climb to heaven to bring him down or trek through Hades to bring him up from the dead. He is already very close to you. He is in your mouth and in your heart in the Word of faith proclaimed by the Church, that whoever believes in him is saved. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Friday

"The Christian life is a great act of faith from beginning to end." That is my favorite description of what the Christian life is. It is living toward promises that you cannot see. Promises, even, that contradict what you can see. That is what the author of Hebrews means when he says, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Peter became an unexpected example of faith during a stormy night on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had sent the disciples across the lake on a boat. But he stayed behind so that he could pray. At about 3:00 A.M., Jesus approaches the boat during a windstorm. The boat is beaten by the waves and the disciples struggle to make any progress. When the disciples see Jesus, they cry out in fear. But receiving assurance from Jesus that he is the one approaching them, Peter says, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus says, "Come." In commanding Peter to come, Jesus promises to keep Peter safe from the wind and the waves. Christ would not have commanded Peter to leave the boat only to let him drown. But halfway to Jesus, Peter's faith in Christ's promise of protection is overcome by the wind and the waves. And taking his eyes off of Jesus, he begins to drown. But crying out to Christ for help, he is saved by his gracious Lord.

Jesus rebuked Peter for his "little faith," and his little faith is found in this. He let what he could see, the wind and the waves, overcome his faith in what he could not see, Christ's promise of protection. The Christian life is just like that. We have been promised heaven, but we live on earth. We have been promised life, but we experience death. We have been promised good, but we experience evil. Yet through it all, we live toward the promises of Christ in an act of faith. And even when our faith falters like Peter's, we have our gracious Lord to pull us up. 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

Let no corrupting talk
come out of your mouths, but only
such as is **good for building up,**
as fits the occasion, that it may
give grace to those who hear.

EPHESIANS 4:29



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