

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

## Living as God's People

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation (1 Peter 2:9-12).*

By Rev. Dr. Robert M. Roegner, LWML Pastoral Counselor (2013-2017)

### Hymn

“Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now”

902 *LSB*

### Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

### Call to Worship

L: Through the Gospel, the Holy Spirit has called us out of the darkness of unbelief and transformed us into God's holy people. He has adopted us into His family. He has made us a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

C: **Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. He has enlightened us with His gifts, sanctified and kept us in the true faith in His Son, Jesus Christ!**

L: He has loved the entire world and sent His Son to be its Savior. We praise Him for His saving work!

C: **He still shows mercy to those who call on His name. We praise Him for His mercy!**

L: As members of His Church, He daily and richly forgives all our sins.

C: **We praise God for His forgiveness through His Son, Jesus Christ, who has freed us from death and uses us to proclaim this same forgiveness to all people!**

L: We have been called to be God's very own people. We hunger to grow in faith and confidence to go into our families, communities, and the world as eager witnesses.

C: **Praise God for transforming us into His ambassadors, making us ready and eager to share with others the reason for the Hope that is in us!**

### Confession and Absolution

P: O Lord, we confess to You and to each other that we have wronged You by our thoughts, words and deeds.

*(A brief silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.)*

P: Today we especially confess our self-centeredness in our Christian faith.

**All: We have so often received the precious Gospel of God's love in Jesus Christ, but we have kept it to ourselves. We have failed to share it with those who still live in bondage to sin. Lord, we have been too indifferent, too busy, and too intimidated when You have brought other people to us who have spiritual needs: members of our families, our neighbors, our friends, fellow workers and those who live in our communities. Forgive us, Lord, for being unconcerned about those who do not have the assurance of Truth, forgiveness, and eternal life with You. Forgive us for not sharing the abundant resources you have given us to accomplish Your mission to the ends of the earth. Be merciful to us, for we have kept our faith to ourselves. For Jesus' sake, forgive us and restore us to a joyful life of courageous faith and ministry. Through us, speak Your words of comfort and hope and victory into all the corners of this world! Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake, God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ, He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit, who gives us a new life and a new mission, along with His own words and His own power, as a testimony to others. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and in His stead, I forgive you all your sins. In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit., May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

### *Living as God's People*

1. **Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .**

**They are Chosen!**

(Power Point Slide)

## Scripture Readings

R: *For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth* (Deuteronomy 7:6).

R: *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, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved* (Ephesians 1:3-6).

## Discussion

### Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us by choosing us, not because we are better than others, but because this choosing is a work totally of Your grace. All praise, and honor to You for Your unmerited favor! Amen!

Hymn                    “Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go”                    920 *LSB*

**2. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a Royal Priesthood!**  
(Power Point Slide)

## Scripture Readings

R: *First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way*  
(1 Timothy 2:1-2).

R: *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age* (Matthew 28:19-20).

## Discussion

### Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us by calling us out from the world to be a royal priesthood. Use us according to Your will and through the power of Your Holy Spirit, to be Your witnesses to all those we meet along the way! Amen!

Hymn                    “Church of God, Elect and Glorious”                    646 *LSB*

**3. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a Holy Nation!**  
(Power Point Slide)

## Scripture Reading

R: *. . . and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel* (Exodus 19:6).

## Discussion

### Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us by making us a holy nation. Thank You for choosing us, people saved by grace, to do the beautiful handiwork You have placed before us as we serve You. Amen!

Hymn                    “Go, My Children, with My Blessing”                    922 *LSB*

## **Apostles Creed**

**All: 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.**

**4. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a people possessed by God!**  
(Power Point Slide)

Scripture Reading

R: *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine* (Exodus 19:5).

Discussion

Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us, possessing us as Your own. The world tells us we're too short, too tall, not smart enough, not a great enough leader, not a great speaker, that we don't have enough money, and so on. No, we are perfect. We are perfect because we were made saints in Baptism, through the forgiveness of sins and You even use our weaknesses for Your glory! Amen!

Hymn                    "How Wide the Love of Christ"                    535 LSB

**5. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a people who have received mercy!**  
(Power Point Slide)

Scripture Reading

R: *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—* (Ephesians 2:1-5).

Discussion

Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us because of Your great mercy. Because of Your love and mercy, You removed the wrath we deserved and gave us undeserved mercy and salvation instead. Thank You, for not giving us the judgment and punishment that we deserved! Amen!

Hymn                    "Today Your Mercy Calls Us"                    915 LSB

**6. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a worshipping people!**  
(Power Point Slide)

Scripture Readings

R: *And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve'"* (Luke 4:8).

R: *But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him* (John 4:23).

Discussion

Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us and we worship You with all praise and thanksgiving.  
We have been called out of the darkness of sin in order to be a unique people who  
worship You! Amen!

Hymn

“Lord, This Day We’ve Come to Worship” 911 *LSB*

**Lord’s Prayer**

**All: 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.**

**7. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a people away from home!**  
(Power Point Slide)

Scripture Readings

R: *Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all (Matthew 6:31-32).*

R: *But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content (1 Timothy 6:6-8).*

Discussion

Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us with another place that we, as Your children, can call home. By Your loving grace and mercy we are not of this world and yet, we live here now to show others we are of a different culture, language, and norm! Amen!

Hymn

“Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus” 685 *LSB*

**8. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a people at war!**  
(Power Point Slide)

Scripture Readings

R: *For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.*

R: *So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members (Romans 7:15-23).*

R: *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 (Galatians 5:17).*

Discussion

### Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us as You daily overcome the war raging in us. As we do the things we should not do, and do not do the things we should, it is by Your grace and mercy, as we live in Your Word and Sacraments, that we have the victory over this war! Amen!

### Hymn

“Onward Christian Soldiers”

662 *LSB*

**9. Believers are a people who are blessed by God . . .  
They are a beautiful people!**  
(Power Point Slide)

### Scripture Readings

R: *For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly (1 Peter 2:21-23).*

R: *“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Matthew 5:43-45).*

### Discussion

### Prayer

L: Dear God, You have blessed us and because of You, we are a beautiful people. Even when we are persecuted and mocked by unbelievers, since You first loved us, by Your Word and Sacraments we can respond with love that shows others how beautiful we really are, even though we still bear the marks of sin, we were made in Your image and will be fully restored in heaven. All praise and honor be to You forever. Amen!

### Hymn

“Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service”

848 *LSB*

### Benediction

P: The grace of the Lord † Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: Amen!**

### Sending

P: As the Father sent the Son into the world to save us, so Jesus sends us into the world with His Good News. Are you ready to go? Are you ready to serve Him, “**Living as God’s People?**”

**C: Yes.**

P: Then go forth to serve with joy, knowing Jesus Christ is your refuge and your strength.

**C: Amen!**

### Acknowledgements

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