

## Week of Trinity 12

*First recite the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the weekly section of the Small Catechism. Then read the Proper and assigned Scripture reading followed by the devotion. Conclude with singing the hymn of the week.*



**Weekly Catechism section:** *Seventh Commandment (Luther's Small Catechism)*

**Hymn of the Week:** *Praise the Almighty (TLH 26)*

### Monday - Introit (Psalm 70:1-2, 4, 5)

#### **Read Psalm 70.**

Our sufficiency is in the Lord who does all things well. God is faithful to his promises, causing the deaf to hear just as he had promised through the prophet, Isaiah. He is compassionate toward those who are afflicted by the effects of sin and other trials. St. Paul doesn't need to establish himself by the commendation of seemingly influential people. Instead, he relies on Jesus who shows by his work that he is the Lord who fulfills the Scriptures and does all things well. Yes, our Lord is faithful and compassionate, doing all things well. But is he quick? Our *Introit* taken from Psalm 70 says: "Make haste, O God, to deliver me! Make haste to help me, O Lord!" This is a simple and eager prayer, confident that God will act swiftly.

This confidence that God will faithfully show his compassion is coupled with the confidence that those who persecute his saints will be put to shame. Who is there to harm you if you are relying on God's Word? If you must suffer at the hands of slanderers and persecutors, then let it only be a lesson that you cannot trust in men. They are unreliable at best. Even the most faithful friend must fail. But God will not fail. He will act swiftly. "You are my help and my deliverer. O Lord, do not delay!" This is not a frantic prayer. Yes, it is urgent, but it proceeds from a calm and established faith, which rests firmly on God's promise to save. Observe how Christ does not rush through his act of compassion on the deaf and mute man. He takes his time, with sighs too deep for words (Rom 8:26). So know that your Lord is acting quickly, even if it seems like your battle against sin is unending. He bears with you, forgiving you,

sanctifying you, and establishing you by the power of his gospel. Your redemption is urgent to God. But he doesn't rush through it. He waited for the fullness of time before he finally sent his Son into the flesh to bear our sins. Yet he remains a quick defender, faithful, compassionate, and true to his Word.

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## **Tuesday - Old Testament Lesson (Isaiah 29:17-24)**

### ***Read Isaiah 29.***

Isaiah speaks of a time when Lebanon will be turned into a fruitful field. This is the region along the Mediterranean Sea, including the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. This region was destroyed by the Assyrian invasion, just as Isaiah foretold (Is 10:34). So now, in chapter 29, Isaiah tells of a time when Lebanon will be restored. But this is no mere political restoration of Gentile cities. It is true fruitfulness, brought only by the Word of God. This is why Isaiah continues by saying that the deaf will hear the words of the book. Their children will honor God's name. And those who once complained would learn doctrine. They would learn what God teaches about the salvation he gives in his Son.

Jesus fulfills this prophecy. Mark records that Jesus went to Tyre and Sidon where he healed the demon possessed daughter of a woman from that land. This was Lebanon. Here was how Lebanon became a fruitful land, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah. It was blessed with the presence of the Word made flesh. Jesus blessed the land by casting out a demon. So from here he moves down to the Decapolis along the sea of Galilee. Here he meets a deaf man with a speech impediment. He healed this man so he could hear and speak. But this healing was only an outward sign of what Isaiah foretold. Earlier in chapter 29 Isaiah laments that people have become deaf to God's Word. The Scriptures have become like a sealed book. No one can read it. No one can understand it. This is why they worshiped gods made from their own hands. This is why people still rely on the works of their hand rather than on the Word of God for their comfort and salvation. But God gives us ears to hear. Jesus bore with sighs and groaning the sin that shuts our ears to the Word of God. So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ (Rom 10:17). The result of such hearing of faith is true worship of God. These are the true children of Jacob who fear God. This isn't a fear of torment. It isn't like you are walking on egg shells trying not to break any of the rules.

This worship is a good conscience toward the Lord. It is true confidence and piety toward God through his Son, his Holy One, who opened our ears to hear his gracious voice. It is faith, which relies on the saving works of Christ and bears abundant fruit.

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### **Wednesday - Gradual (*Psalm 34:1-2*)**

#### ***Read Psalm 34.***

Our *Gradual* is from Psalm 34:1-2: "I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear of it and be glad." It is the will of God that his praise continually be in our mouth. With the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation (Rom 10:10). It is the will of God that people would hear of this boast in the Lord and that they would be given the joy of faith. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom 10:17).

Hearing, believing, and confessing the Word -- this is the life God gives to his saints. This is what gladdens the soul. But who are glad by hearing this? The humble are. As David says later on in this Psalm, "Come, O children! Listen to me! I will teach you the fear of the LORD." The fear of God isn't to love life and see good days, but to hear the Word of God, seeking peace with him. Those who are humbled by their great need for salvation are the ones who gladly hear the Word of their Savior. They don't get tired of learning more about what God has done for them, sending his Son to die for them, giving them life in his gospel and sacraments. They taste and see that the Lord is good. They are his holy ones, his saints. They fear him knowing that those who fear the Lord lack no good thing. God calls these people to himself through his Word, which he so graciously puts in your mouth. So don't be afraid to boast in it. The humble will hear it, and they will rejoice with you, praising God that he does all things well.

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### **Thursday - Epistle (*2 Corinthians 3:4-11*)**

#### ***Read 2 Corinthians 3.***

In our Epistle lesson St. Paul says that his confidence is not in coercing his hearers into stepping in line. His confidence is that the Holy Spirit works through his Word to engrave on our hearts the image of Christ the

crucified. It is the Spirit of Christ who opens up our ears, hearts, and lips. And such is our confidence through Christ toward God.

Often ministers misunderstand St. Paul's words to the Corinthians, as if Paul is saying that the law should be avoided because its glory passes away. So they avoid speaking God's law. They speak vaguely enough in order to sound biblical but also not to offend the sensibilities of the godless culture. Instead of talking about sin and death, they talk about anxiety. They often end up talking more about God doing great things through us than God calling us to repentance and faith in Christ's death on the cross. All of this vague religious talk comes from not wanting to talk about sin and condemnation. But St. Paul teaches us that righteousness comes after condemnation. The ministry of death brought by the law is certainly passing away, but in the meantime it still has glory. It is still necessary for us to be condemned in our sinful desires, thoughts, words, and actions. It is necessary for the letter to kill so that the Spirit might make alive. Just as Christ threw his fingers in the ears and on the tongue of the deaf and mute man, so does he thrust his fingers in our ears and tongue. He makes us hear things that we don't want to hear about ourselves, and he places on our tongue that which we don't want to believe with our own sensibilities. Our reason won't cling to the cross, because that means it must first be condemned for the sins that stain it. We can't, by our own strength, accept the glory of the ministry of life, because we can only look away from the glory of the ministry of death, just like the sons of Israel could not look at Moses' face. But despite what our sinful reason does, we find our confidence in the ministry of Christ who kills and makes alive as he opens our ears, loosens our tongues, and marks our hearts.

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### **Friday - Alleluia Verse (Psalm 81:1)**

#### ***Read Psalm 81.***

Psalm 81 tell us to sing. This is one of many passages in Scripture, which tell us to sing. Sing for joy. Shout aloud to the God of Jacob. He is called the God of Jacob, calling to mind the promise he gave to Jacob and through Jacob. This is the promise of the holy Seed, the King and Prince of Peace who would not depart from Judah until the nations would be gathered to him (Gen 49). This was fulfilled as Christ came to make the deaf hear and the mute speak. In the same way, he opens up

our ears to hear what we could never understand by our own reason or strength. It was a voice unknown to us until he called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light. But now that we know this voice of our Good Shepherd, we sing. We sing with joy. Because he has removed the burden of sin from our shoulders.

In this Psalm God laments that his people would not listen to him. This is how our ears are by nature, and we must be warned lest our sinful nature makes our ears deaf to God's Word again. Those who hear the Word, come to know it, but then grow cold toward it are worse off than before they knew it. They have heard the most joyful promise of the gospel, yet they have lost their joy in the gospel. But just as God brought Jacob through much sorrow here on earth, teaching him to rejoice instead in the heavenly promise of blessing and salvation, so does God bring us through trials so that we would learn to sing a new song with joy. When we must walk through the sadness of this world, recognizing the wickedness of sin, then his gospel remains all the more joyful to us. May God continue to keep this song of joy in our hearts!

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## **Saturday - Gospel (Mark 7:31-37)**

### ***Read Mark 7.***

Jesus is the Word through whom all things were made (John 1:3) and in whom all things still hold together (Col 1:17). Usually, when we think of the Creator we think of the Father. But the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all involved in creation. God is not divided in his work of creation, nor is he divided in his work of salvation. Now, the Father and the Holy Spirit did not become flesh and die on the cross. Only the Son did that. But the Father sent the Son and gave him up unto death (John 3:16; Rom 8:32). The Holy Spirit led Jesus to be tempted (Matt 4:1) and thereby crucified, and he raised him from the dead (1 Tim 3:16; Rom 1:4; 8:11). So God is not divided in his work as Creator and Redeemer. The same God who created man redeemed him from sin and death.

As the Creator of the ears and the tongue, Jesus had compassion when the crowd brought a deaf and mute man to him. He did not simply wave his hand over the man and quickly move on his way. He rather took him aside. He paid special attention to this man's infirmity. God created the ears to hear his Word just as Jesus so often says, "Those who have ears to hear, let them hear!" He put his fingers in his ears. The finger of God is

the Spirit of God (Ex 31:18; 2 Cor 3:3). And he uses his Spirit to open our ears to hear his Word. It's just as we confess in the Small Catechism (III, 3), "God's Kingdom comes when our heavenly Father sends us his Holy Spirit so that by his grace we believe his holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and thereafter in eternity." God also created the tongue to call upon him, confess him, and praise him. So Jesus fixes the man's speech with clay, the same way in which he first created man. You see the care and precision our Lord puts into this miracle. His deep love for the healing of his sin-stained creation led him all the way to the cross. It is there where he would make all things new (Rev. 21:25) by taking away our sin (John 1:29), the sting of all turmoil, deformity, and of death itself (1 Cor 15:56).

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# 26

## Praise the Almighty, My Soul, Adore Him

Ps. 146

Lobe den Herren, o meine Seele

Johann D. Herrnschmidt, 1714

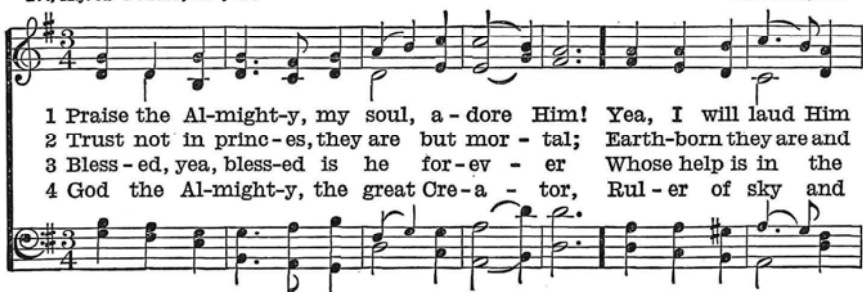
Tr., Alfred Brauer, 1925, alt.

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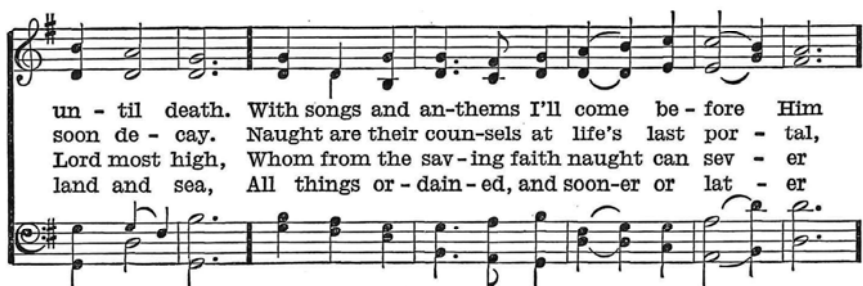
Lobe den Herren, o meine

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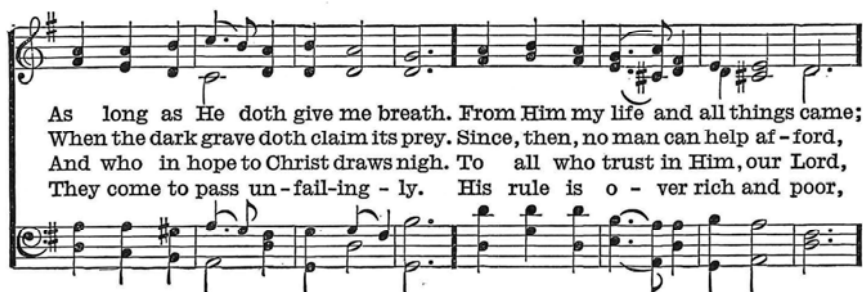
Onolzbach, 1665



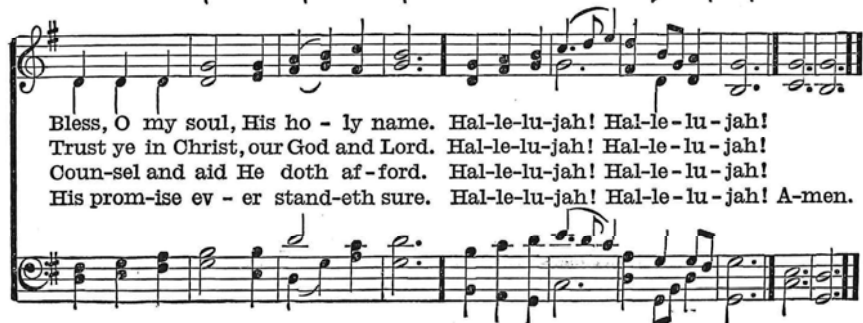
1 Praise the Al-might-y, my soul, a - dore Him! Yea, I will laud Him  
 2 Trust not in princ-es, they are but mor - tal; Earth-born they are and  
 3 Bless-ed, yea, bless-ed is he for-ev - er Whose help is in the  
 4 God the Al-might-y, the great Cre-a - tor, Rul-er of sky and



un - til death. With songs and an-thems I'll come be - fore Him  
 soon de - cay. Naught are their coun-sels at life's last por - tal,  
 Lord most high, Whom from the sav-ing faith naught can sev - er  
 land and sea, All things or - dain-ed, and soon-er or lat - er



As long as He doth give me breath. From Him my life and all things came;  
 When the dark grave doth claim its prey. Since, then, no man can help af - ford,  
 And who in hope to Christ draws nigh. To all who trust in Him, our Lord,  
 They come to pass un - fail-ing - ly. His rule is o - ver rich and poor,



Bless, O my soul, His ho - ly name. Hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le-lu-jah!  
 Trust ye in Christ, our God and Lord. Hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le-lu-jah!  
 Coun-sel and aid He doth af - ford. Hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le-lu-jah!  
 His prom-ise ev - er stand-eth sure. Hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le-lu-jah! A-men.

**Praise the Almighty, My Soul, Adore Him**

5 Penitent sinners, for mercy crying,  
Pardon and peace from Him obtain;  
Ever the wants of the poor supplying,  
Their faithful God He doth remain.  
He helps His children in distress,  
The widows and the fatherless.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

6 Praise, O mankind, now the name so holy  
Of Him who doth such wondrous things!  
All that hath being, to praise Him solely,  
With happy heart its "Amen" sings!  
Children of God, with angel host  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!