



PSALMS:
THE PLAYLIST
FOR OUR LIVES

DEVOTIONAL

October 14-20

Psalms: The Playlist for Our Lives

Without a soundtrack, movies lack suspense and drama, and lose the audience's attention. Without music blaring at a Thunder game, "Loud City" would hardly live up to its name and the excitement of it all would be severely diminished. Without music, parades, long drives, and dance parties would be boring. Moreover, different genres and styles are appropriate for specific situations: you don't expect a Mariachi band serenading guests at a Japanese steakhouse, nor for a football team to enter to *Sherry* by the Four Seasons, nor do you expect Michael Jackson's *Beat It* to be a newlywed couple's first dance song at their reception!

In short, music plays such a profound role in all of our lives, and the song choice for any given moment is key. It's no wonder God calls us to worship Him with song and hymns, and has even provided an anthology of musical selections: The Psalms. Each Psalm was written for specific situations—all of which are appropriate for us today. While we may no longer know the tunes, the lyrics of the Psalms speak to us and our own life situations today, offering us words of wisdom, prayer and praise.

Join us for this series as we explore the appointed Psalms, seeing them as a sort of "Playlist for Our Lives," with each week's "Psalm of the Day" given a fitting title borrowed from modern songs.

We invite you to join us each week, too!

Daily devotional booklets like this one will be provided each week in an effort to connect the Sunday messages with your daily life.

The Sunday devotional offers a "review" of the morning's Scriptures and message, allowing opportunity to reflect on that day's sermon. The rest of offers a daily Psalm passage and a few thoughts to consider.

We pray these devotionals will be a blessing to you and your family, and in your Christian life! And, if you miss a Sunday, you can always find our services and sermons online at www.holytrinityedmond.org/sermons

Psalms: The Playlist for Our Lives

- October 14:** *Waiting on the World to Change* | Psalm 62:1-8
- October 21:** *Hopeless Wanderer* | Psalm 119:9-16
- October 28:** *Shake, Rattle and Roll* | Psalm 46
- November 4:** *At Last* | Psalm 149
- November 11:** *Unchained Melody* | Psalm 146
- November 18:** *Only Wanna Be With You* | Psalm 16
- November 25:** *King of My Heart* | Psalm 93

Waiting On the World to Change

Sunday Sermon Review

October 14th, 2018

It's easy to look at situations around us and throw our hands up in the air in helpless frustration. Locally, nationally, and internationally we see fearsome troubles—violence, political divisions, fragile economies, threats, and natural disasters. Social media outlets appear as a wasteland of outrage and accusations. With so much turmoil and tension on every front, one can easily become hopeless and restless. The title for today's message comes from a song by John Mayer. Like our Psalmist, King David, Mayer's song points to a world in chaos and turmoil, and reflects a helpless, hopeless frustration. While Mayer and others watch the world go by in hopelessness, in Psalm 62 David finds rest in the Lord. Our hope amid all the changes and chances of life is in the Lord Jesus! He offers rest for the weary. In a sense, we are waiting on the world to change, as we look to Christ's return to bring this sinful world back to perfection. At the same time, we do not wait for the change, but we go out as agents of change; witnesses in the world as the Spirit works through us and His Word to change the lives of all the restless here and abroad.

The Scripture Lesson Summaries for Today:

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15: The passage summarizes the message of the prophet Amos. He warns the prosperous nation to seek the Lord and to not oppress the poor, or else they will face consequences.

Hebrews 3:12-19: The writer of Hebrews warns against unbelief which turns hearts away from the Living God. Rather, we are to encourage one another in faith.

Various Gospel Accounts: As part of our celebration of LWML Sunday, today's reading was a compilation of accounts of women interacting with Jesus. In each example we see their faithful response to the Lord. (Matthew 9:20-22, & 15:22-28; Mark 12:41-44; and, Luke 1:26-48)

Reflecting on Today's Sermon:

1. At what point was I confronted with the Law?
2. What comfort did the Gospel bring?
3. What story/phrase/teaching stuck out to me?
4. What did I learn about God from this sermon?
5. In response to the Word of God, I will...

Pray: Heavenly Father, You are faithful to all Your people. Amid the changes and challenges of life, we may become fearful or even experience feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. In such moments, give us the faith to turn to You, to wait on You. Let us find our rest in You no matter what comes our way in this world. Change our fear into courage and contentment. Change our helpless attitude into empowered action for the sake of others for whom Christ died. And change our hopelessness into a confident faith that Christ is coming again to change this world back to perfection. In Jesus' name, Amen.

While You Wait

Saturday, October 15th, 2018

By Lindsey Duerr, DCE

Text: Psalm 25

Emphasis: Verse 3: “No one who waits for you will be disgraced; those who act treacherously without cause will be disgraced.”

I’m sure you’ve been stuck waiting at some point in your life – probably today even! We wait in line at the grocery store, we wait for e-mails to come through, we wait at the airport – a good portion of our day is spent waiting on various events to happen. What do you do while you wait?

I’m sure the answer to that question depends on what you are waiting for and where you are. If you are at the grocery store you will probably browse the shelves in line. If you are at work, I’d assume you’d work on something else while waiting. If you are waiting around at home, you might throw on the TV or play on your phone.

The problem is, waiting can be dangerous. Waiting too long in the grocery store checkout can cause you to buy an overpriced bag of candy or chips you really don’t need. Waiting around at work can cause you to be distracted instead of truly working. Waiting at home can lead to discovering “bad” websites. Waiting can easily lead to temptations seeping in.

Unfortunately for Christians, we are in for a long wait (at least in our minds) as we anticipate the second coming of Christ. While in light of eternity this time on Earth is only a blink, in our current state it feels like a lifetime. As impatient beings, we fall subject to many temptations while we wait, many of which threaten to become habits.

Our Psalm mentions waiting, but instead of focusing on boredom or impatience, it focuses on what to do while waiting. “Make your ways known to me, LORD; teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me” (Psalm 25:4-5). While waiting, the author (David) asks for God to teach him and guide him. It seems David anticipates the temptations that will flood his life as he waits, but he also recognizes that the only way to stay away from these temptations is to be surrounded by God’s guidance, so he prays to God and seeks His will.

In a similar situation – waiting for Jesus to return, instead of being filled with our temptations, we should strive to be filled with truth and knowledge which comes from the Word of God. We can pray to God asking for His guidance and we can be confident that the Holy Spirit will show us the way and will intercede for us. God has given us the opportunity to live out the Great Commission while we wait – so what will you do while you wait?

Pray: Heavenly Father, we anticipate and look forward to Jesus’ return. In the meantime, while we wait, you have given us a calling to go and make disciples. Help us to live out that calling in our lives as we seek your guidance and truth. Amen.

Don't Stop Believing

Tuesday, October 14th, 2018
By Pastor Jonathan Meyer

Text: Read Psalm 27

Emphasis: Verse 14: *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Wait for the Lord.*

While doing some research awhile back on “songs about waiting,” in preparation for developing this week’s sermon series title, I came across a song by Elton John. I honestly don’t know too many of his songs, so it was no surprise that I had never heard of this particular one. The song was, *If There’s A God In Heaven (What’s He Waiting For)*.

My guess is that Elton John’s title question is the question on the minds of many agnostics and atheists in the world. Where is God in all this? This is a question of many especially in light of all the main problems John mentions in the song: poverty, war, while others profit at their expense. To such things, the question comes, “If there’s a God in heaven, what’s He waiting for?”

It’s sad that so many have this question in mind. They’re looking for a God to come and save them, yet they are clueless that that is precisely what He did! They’re looking for a God to care for the hurting and broken in the world, and have no idea the Lord looks on all of His creation, and weeps for the least of these. They’re looking for a God of justice, but are so naïve to think they will escape the Lord’s final justice on the last day.

We know there are such faithless and unbelieving people in the world, and we think, “If only they knew...” But if we’re honest, we can admit that—although we know of and believe in the Lord who came to this world, who looks in love and brings justice—we sometimes ask these sorts of questions, too. When the world around us is difficult; when we feel attacked on every front; and, when we experience great troubles, we, too, may ask: Where is God in all this?

When our Christian brothers and sisters around the world experience persecution, losing their lives for the sake of their faith; when natural disasters claim the lives of thousands in Indonesia; when voices of oppression or abuse are silenced, we may ask: What’s God waiting for?

Our Psalm for today offers words of encouragement for all of God’s faithful. While there are plenty of things which cause fear, we having nothing to be afraid of, for the Lord is on our side, fighting for us. We know and believe that Christ is coming again, someday, to restore all things to perfection. So the Psalmist encourages our hearts. *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Wait for the Lord.* So rather than questioning with Elton John, a more appropriate title comes from Journey: *Don’t Stop Believing!*

Pray: *Father, there are many who question You and Your will; even I fall prey to this sometimes. Forgive me, and help me to never stop believing, but to show others Christ. Amen.*

Karma Chameleon

Wednesday, October 17, 2018

Vicar Joshua Brakhage

Text: Read Psalm 37:1-19

Emphasis: Verse 10: “A little while, and the wicked person will be no more; though you look for him, he will not be there.”

Just minutes before I wrote this devotion, I was in my car listening to sports radio. The host was talking about karma, describing coincidences between his childhood and adulthood. He firmly believed that because he had made fun of his father, his football coach, and a female classmate while growing up, “the universe” paid him back by giving him the same exact ailments and infirmities he ridiculed. He had a warning for kids today: “Don’t be the jerk I was,” implying it would come back to haunt them.

Someone who similarly puts stock in the concept of karma could initially find great comfort in the words of Psalm 37. It seems evildoers will get what’s coming to them. David urges God’s people to “be silent and wait expectantly” while the Lord takes care of things. Some could see the Lord delivering His justice simply as another way of saying, “karma came back to bite them.”

But there’s nothing biblical about the concept of karma (which comes from the Eastern religions of Hinduism and Buddhism.) Nowhere does the Bible ever say, “What goes around comes around.” Indeed, the Lord punishes evil. God is both just and holy; He cannot abide wickedness and his wrath is reserved for those who fail to follow His law perfectly. But karma does not allow for grace, one of the Lord’s defining characteristics.

If God were perfectly just and nothing more, the concept of karma would be accurate. God’s justice would wipe out all that is evil, and leave standing those who are good. (And if we played by karma’s rules, which of us would be good *enough* to be left standing?) But our God is both perfectly just and perfectly gracious. Following karma’s rules, our perfect Savior Jesus would’ve deserved all of life’s goodness. Yet on the cross, He endures all of the wrath of God’s justice, so evil could be destroyed and sinful people could be freed and forgiven. “A little while,” the psalmist writes, “and the wicked person will be no more; though you look for him, he will not be there.” Through faith in Jesus, the wicked person who once had your name is no more. Though you look for him, your baptism reminds you that child of evil is no longer there, and in his place stands a redeemed child of God.

Karma says if you want good to happen to you, you’d better do good. While nothing you could ever do would be good enough, God’s grace says here is My goodness anyway. As one of my favorite bands puts it, “the beauty of grace is that it makes life not fair.” Or the beauty of grace is that it makes karma irrelevant.

Pray: Jesus, thank you that karma is a lie and that Your grace is for real and for me. Amen.

Thursday, October 18th, 2018

By Pastor Jonathan Meyer

Text: Read Psalm 40*Emphasis:* Verses 1-3: *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he turned to me and heard my cry for help. He brought me up from a desolate pit, out of the muddy clay, and set my feet on a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and they will trust in the Lord.*

There's an old parable about a man who fell into a deep pit and couldn't get out. Several persons came along and saw him struggling in the pit.

The sensitive person said, "I feel for you down there." The reflective person said, "It's logical that someone would fall into the pit." The aesthetic person said, "I can give you ideas on how to decorate your pit." The judgmental person said, "Only bad people fall into the pit." The analytical person said, "Help me measure the depth of your pit." The curious person said, "Tell me how you fell into the pit." The self-pitying person said, "You should have seen MY pit." The meditation specialist said, "Just relax and don't think about the pit." The optimist said, "Cheer up! Things could be worse." The pessimist said, "Be prepared! Things will get worse."

All these passed by, offering words but never fully helping the man from his greatest need. Then along came Jesus. Jesus, seeing the man, jumped into the pit with him, and lifted the man out of the miserable pit.

The parable, of course, points to the truth that there is only one who can save us from the pits we find ourselves in. Some days it's the pit of despair, or the pit of loneliness. Sometimes it's the pit of hatred or the pit of fear. Whatever depths we sink to, ultimately it's all part of the pit of sin and death. Many people pass by us in these moments, offering us words and advice. But, the truth is, we need someone to pull us out.

Thanks be to God, Christ Jesus has come to do just that! The writer of Hebrews tells us Jesus suffered in every way that we suffer. He has suffered the depths of the pit for us, and is with us when we fall in again, and again. And, He is there to lift us up through His Word of grace and promise. The natural response to God's grace is to praise Him, as the Psalmist indicates.

U2 (whose lyrics often display a Christian message) understood this when they wrote a song entitled 40. The band was so inspired by Psalm 40, as it spoke to their own lives, that they quote the first few verses of the passage. Consider the Lord and His grace, how he has delivered you from the pit, time after time. Then, as a prayerful response, read (or sing!) these lyrics.

I waited patiently for the Lord, He inclined and heard my cry

He brought me up out of the pit, Out of the mire and clay

Chorus: *I will sing, sing a new song, I will sing, sing a new song
How long to sing this song, How long to sing this song
How long, how long, how long, How long, to sing this song*

He set my feet upon a rock, And made my footsteps firm

Many will see, Many will see and fear (to Chorus)

Just What I Needed

Friday, October 19, 2018
Vicar Joshua Brakhage

Text: Read Psalm 104

Emphasis: Verse 27: “All of them wait for you to give them their food at the right time.”

“Funny how a melody sounds like a memory” is a lyric from a modern country song about music’s intrinsic connection to memory. There’s all sorts of science that tells us how music connects synapses in our brain that makes it easier to store and retrieve information, so it should be no surprise when we notice the connection between music and memory. And since the psalms are all really songs, it’s not surprising when they drum up memories as well.

For example, the psalm Lindsey wrote about on Monday immediately reminded me of an early conversation I had with Suzy. We were still dating and she told me Psalm 27 was her favorite, and a painting of the psalm’s closing verses hangs on our wall. Psalm 23 takes me back to the funeral I helped with two weeks ago. And Psalm 95 (“For He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture”) immediately calls to mind my church-going, cattle-ranching grandparents.

Today’s psalm is another one of those memory triggers for me. I was attending a prospective student event at the Seminary. One of the evening activities was Bible study and fellowship with current students. One student (whose name I’ve forgotten) shared this psalm. He was a former US forest ranger. He talked about the psalm’s vivid imagery of nature, and how it reflected his appreciation for God’s creation, and how it connected his former career to his future calling as a pastor.

It is humbling to realize that the God who laid the earth’s foundations and spread out the sky like a tablecloth also organized every cell of your body. Each eyelash was put there by the same God who made mountains and carved canyons. This God arranged hydrogen and oxygen atoms so your body could have the water it needs to survive. And the same God who established the rhythms of nature has ordered each of your days.

Creatures large and small wait for the Lord to supply their needs at the right time. Physical needs, for sure. But also intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and vocational needs. God provides for each of our needs in His timing. It was not *my* timing that put me at the Seminary recruiting event where I heard a student discuss this psalm, but in making this career transition, the Lord has supplied my needs in abundance. Reflect on the ways God has met your needs at the right time. How can you better trust His timing?

Pray: God of all history, in your wisdom you established creation and numbered each of my days. Grant me faith to trust your timing and confidence that you meet all my needs. Amen.

Promises

Saturday, October 20th, 2018

By Lindsey Duerr, DCE

Text: Psalm 130

Emphasis: Verse 5-6: “I wait for the LORD; I wait and put my hope in his word. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning – more than watchmen for the morning.”

I was watching a little girl one time whose dad was over an hour late picking her up. The girl was only four years-old so I was trying to keep her calm, so she didn't get scared thinking her dad forgot about her. The thing that struck me is that she wasn't worried at all (in fact, I was probably more worried than she was!). She informed me that he was always really late picking her up, so we continued to wait and play until he showed up. If that dad made a promise to be on time to his little girl, I doubt she would believe him because he has shown her time and time again that he will be late – especially if he had already made that promise and broken it. As the saying goes – promises are meant to be broken.

It's a sad truth that happens all too often – broken promises. Of course promises aren't meant to be broken, but in our fallen state as sinners we fail to keep many of our promises. That's one reason people can become skeptical of God's promises.

Several theologians have taken the task upon themselves to count God's promises. In so doing they have discovered somewhere between 3,000-8,000 promises. While there are some differing opinions on what defines a promise, there is no denying that God made A LOT of promises. The difference is, God has kept ALL of His promises, even ones that seemed impossible.

- ✓ Abraham and Sarah to have a son even after child bearing age
- ✓ Rescued and provided for the Israelites after slavery in Egypt
- ✓ Prophecies regarding Jesus including His birth, life, and death
- ✓ Countless other promises and covenants regarding protection, provision, strength, victory, etc.

Nothing is impossible for God, and He always keeps His promises. That means He will keep His promises to us as well. We can take Him at His word when he says His grace is sufficient for us – He will and does forgive us of our sins – washing them away in baptism and continually forgiving us after. God promises to be with us and gives us the Holy Spirit as well. God also saves us from sin, death, and the devil. He promises believers eternal life, and we can take Him at His word for it.

Pray: Gracious Father, you are good, right, and just. You have proven yourself faithful to your people and we can trust you to keep your promises. Thank you for the gift of eternal life. Help us to always rely on you. Amen.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and School does not necessarily condone any particular message or lifestyle choices represented from the musicians or songs mentioned or included in this series. Song selections were made purely for the sake of the title reflecting the particular message of the Psalm of the Day.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible[®], Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible[®] and CSB[®] are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.



HOLY TRINITY
— LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL —

405.348.3292 | HOLYTRINITYEDMOND.ORG