



# CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA

*"Helping others receive grace, purpose and direction by proclaiming Christ's love."*

17 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street  
Scottsbluff, NE  
(308) 632-8023  
[calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org](http://calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org)

**Sunday Morning Worship**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
**July 31, 2022**

## Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

**Prayer Before Worship:** God, we trust that you have our best interests at heart. As we hear the reading of your Word, remind us that we have been raised with Christ, and inspire us to seek the things that are above, through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

*(In preparation for our worship together, you are invited to take a moment of silence to offer your own prayers of worship and praise.)*

**KEY:** ELW and any page number = Worship hymnal (cranberry),  
OSB = Other Song Book (red), W&P = Worship & Praise (purple).

\* Indicates: please stand, either in body or in spirit.

Congregational responses are printed in **BOLD** type.

**A Warm Welcome** to all as we gather as God's people to worship our Lord. We pray our worship together would strengthen your faith and increase your desire to know and serve the One who loves us with an everlasting love as made known to us in Jesus Christ.

***Visitors**, if you are worshipping with us in person or online today, we are glad to have you with us. Please join us again soon!*

**Prelude Music**

**"The Church Song"  
"All Are Welcome"**

**W&P #135  
Dakota Road Music**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**‡WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS‡**

**Welcome Song:**

**"Lead Me, Guide Me"**

**W&P #84**

*Chorus:*

**Lead me, guide me, along the way;  
for if you lead me, I cannot stray.  
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.**

- 1. I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r  
to help me over my weakest hour.  
Help me through the darkness thy face to see.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. *Chorus:***

**2. Help me tread in the paths of righteousness,  
be my aid when Satan and sin oppress.  
I am putting all my trust in thee.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. *Chorus***

**3. I am lost if you take your hand from me,  
I am blind without thy light to see.  
Lord just always let me thy servant be.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. *Chorus***

### **\*Confession and Forgiveness**

*(All may make the sign of the † cross, the sign marked at baptism, as we begin)*

Trusting in the word of life given in baptism, we gather in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that, attentive to your Word, we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*(silence for reflection and self-examination)*

Merciful God,  
**we confess that we have not always followed your path and have too often chosen our own way. Instead of putting others before ourselves, we long to take the best seats at the table. When met by those in need, we have too often passed by on the other side. Save us from ourselves, free us from all that binds us, and empower us through your Spirit to love our neighbors as you have loved us. Amen.**

You belong to Christ and are heirs of the promise of freedom. In full assurance of justification by grace through faith, and by the authority of God's beloved Son, I declare to you the absolute forgiveness of all your sins. Through the power of the Holy Spirit you are free to love as God loves. **Amen.**

**Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One,  
Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ, His Son. *Repeat***

**And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” Let the poor say  
“I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us.” *Repeat***

**Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One,  
Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ, His Son. *Repeat***

**And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” Let the poor say  
“I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us.” *Repeat*  
Give thanks.**

**\*Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

Holy God,

**you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives. Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and to treasure what is precious in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**‡GOD’S WORD SPEAKS TO US‡**

**First Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23**

<sup>1:2</sup>Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher,  
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

<sup>12</sup>I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem, <sup>13</sup>applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. <sup>14</sup>I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

<sup>2:18</sup>I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me <sup>19</sup> — and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. <sup>20</sup>So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, <sup>21</sup>because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. <sup>22</sup>What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? <sup>23</sup>For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 49:1-12**

<sup>1</sup>Hear this, all you peoples;  
give ear, all you who dwell in the world,

<sup>2</sup>**you of high degree and low,  
rich and poor together.**

<sup>3</sup>My mouth shall speak of wisdom,  
and my heart shall meditate on understanding.

<sup>4</sup>**I will incline my ear to a proverb  
and set forth my riddle upon the harp.**

<sup>5</sup>Why should I be afraid in evil days,  
when the wickedness of those at my heels surrounds me,

<sup>6</sup>**the wickedness of those who put their trust in their own prowess,  
and boast of their great riches?**

<sup>7</sup>One can never redeem another,  
or give to God the ransom for another's life;

<sup>8</sup>**for the ransom of a life is so great  
that there would never be enough to pay it,**

<sup>9</sup>in order to live forever and ever  
and never see the grave.

<sup>10</sup>**For we see that the wise die also; like the dull and stupid they perish  
and leave their wealth to those who come after them.**

<sup>11</sup>Their graves shall be their homes forever, their dwelling places from generation  
to generation, though they had named lands after themselves.

<sup>12</sup>**Even though honored, they cannot live forever;  
they are like the beasts that perish.**

## **Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-11**

<sup>1</sup>So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup>for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

<sup>5</sup>Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). <sup>6</sup>On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. <sup>7</sup>These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. <sup>8</sup>But now you must get rid of all such things — anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. <sup>11</sup>In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation:**

**“Open our eyes, Lord”**

**W&P #113**

**Open our eyes, Lord; we want to see Jesus,  
To reach out and touch Him, and say that we love Him.  
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.  
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.**

**\*Gospel: Luke 12:13-21**

*Response after the announcement of the gospel:*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup>Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." <sup>14</sup>But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." <sup>16</sup>Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. <sup>17</sup>And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' <sup>18</sup>Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' <sup>20</sup>But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

<sup>21</sup>So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

*Response after the gospel reading:*  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Kid's Sermon:**

**Angie Hinze**

**Sermon:**

**Pastor Sheryl**

*(Silence for Reflection and Meditation.)*

**‡WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD‡**

**\*Song of the Day: "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"**

**ELW #678**

- 1. God, whose giving knows no ending,  
from your rich and endless store:  
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom,  
costly cross, grave's shattered door,  
gifted by you, we turn to you,  
off'ring up ourselves in praise;  
thankful song shall rise forever,  
gracious donor of our days.**
- 2. Skills and time are ours for pressing  
toward the goals of Christ, your Son:  
all at peace in health and freedom,  
races joined, the church made one.  
Now direct our daily labor,  
lest we strive for self alone;  
born with talents, make us servants  
fit to answer at your throne.**
- 3. Treasure, too, you have entrusted,  
gain through pow'rs your grace conferred;  
ours to use for home and kindred,  
and to spread the gospel word.  
Open wide our hands in sharing,  
as we heed Christ's ageless call,  
healing, teaching, and reclaiming,  
serving you by loving all.**

**\*Profession of Faith: The Apostles Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\*Prayers of the Church**

**ELW #178**

*(Sung Prayer Response)*

**Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:  
peace to all people, hope for each soul.  
God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.**

**\*Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

*(You are invited to share the peace of Christ with one another)*

**\*Offertory Prayer**

Having offered ourselves and our gifts, let us pray...God of abundance,  
**you have set before us a plentiful harvest. As we feast on your goodness,  
strengthen us to labor in your field, and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all,  
in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

## ‡**HOLY COMMUNION**‡

*Here our Lord gives to us His own Body and Blood for the forgiveness of all our sins.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### **\*Words of Institution**

*(The Words of Institution are spoken by the pastor, ending with... “now and forever. Amen.” The congregation responds by singing the refrain from “In the Singing”)*

**“In the Singing”**

**ELW #466**

**Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ,  
be the wine of grace;  
Jesus, Christ, Jesus Christ,  
be the bread of peace.**

### **\*The Lord’s Prayer**

**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.**

### **Invitation to Communion**

This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Come and be filled with the goodness of God.

### **Distribution of Communion:**

Christ is truly present in the Lord’s Supper with gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

**All are welcome and invited to receive Holy Communion.**

*(Communion will be served continuously at two stations in the front of the church.*

*WHITE GRAPE JUICE and GLUTEN FREE WAFERS are available. Just ask the server.*

*Children who are not yet communicants are invited to come forward for a blessing.)*

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,  
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

3. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

4. Light of my soul, after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

**\*Post-Communion Blessing**

**\*Post-Communion Prayer**

Life-giving God, through this meal you have bandaged our wounds and fed us with your mercy. Now send us forth to live for others, both friend and stranger, that all may come to know your love. This we pray in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

**‡WE DEPART TO SERVE‡**

**\*Benediction**

May the grace of God the Father bless you with peace,  
may the love of ‡ Christ, God's son, sustain you in joy,  
and may the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with courage and love for all,  
this day and forevermore. **Amen.**

*(Sunday School youth are invited to go to Sunday School  
during the singing of the closing hymn.)*

**\*Sending Song:**

**“Soon and Very Soon”**

**ELW #439**

**1. Soon and very soon  
We are going to see the King  
Soon and very soon  
We are going to see the King  
Soon and very soon  
We are going to see the King  
Hallelujah hallelujah  
We're going to see the King**

**2. No more crying there  
We are going to see the King  
No more crying there  
We are going to see the King  
No more crying there  
We are going to see the King  
Hallelujah hallelujah  
We're going to see the King**

**3. No more dying there  
We are going to see the King  
No more dying there  
We are going to see the King  
No more dying there  
We are going to see the King  
Hallelujah hallelujah  
We're going to see the King**

**4. Soon and very soon  
We are going to see the King  
Soon and very soon  
We are going to see the King  
Soon and very soon  
We are going to see the King  
Hallelujah hallelujah  
We're going to see the King**

**\*Dismissal**

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

**Thanks be to God!**

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## ✝In Our Thoughts and Prayers✝

Prayers for healing: **Virginia Pickett** (COVID), **Paul Bueide** (Hospitalized & COVID), **Marsha Bueide** (COVID & Bleeding Ulcer), **Audrey Harvey** (pneumonia), **Vicki Stahla** (Knee Replacement Surgery), **Annette Kester** (Knee Surgery—Pastor Sheryl's mother), **Kevin Feil** (Sepsis & Cancer—Lindsey Singer & Melissa Guerrero's father), **Jan Wylie** (recovering at home), **Patty** (cancer—Jim Dorn's sister-in-law), **Mary Jo Haack** (Becky Martin's mother), **Allie Meyers** (friend of Marissa Wright), **Mark** (Jean Collins & Kathy Johnson's cousin's husband), **LaDonna Schmidt** (chemotherapy), **Gloria Gorr** (health issues).

Prayers for comfort and peace for: Family and friends of **Judy Hinze** (Grant Hinze's mother), **Kathy Pickett** (Virginia Pickett's niece).

Prayers for comfort and safety: **Jeffery Christeleit** (deployed—Brian & Jodi Christeleit's son and Jim & Sheila Miller's grandson), **B.J. Carr** (deployed to Poland—Dee Brady's son-in-law).



Lansen Fleenor, 8/2; Deanna Zweifel, 8/2; Travis Miller, 8/4;  
Jo Heidingsfelder, 8/4; Sheila Miller, 8/4; Craig Smith, 8/6

If we have missed your birthday, please let the office know. Thanks.

**GIVE+**Mobile

**YOUR GIVING ONLINE**

Scan the **QR code** to the right, go to our website: [www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org](http://www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org) and click on the **Give Online** button OR download the **Vanco Now App** on your smartphone. It's safe and secure.



**AUGUST FOOD DONATIONS REQUESTED**

**FOOD PANTRY:** Peanut Butter & Jelly

**BACKPACKS:** 16 oz. jars of Peanut Butter  
Containers are located outside Fellowship Hall.

Thanks for your generosity.



**CLCW AUGUST MISSION PROJECT:  
Cat & Pup Packs Program**

**Coffee and Fellowship**

We would like to invite people to stay after worship for a time of fellowship. The coffee pot will be on, but if you would like to provide treats, please sign up on the sheet outside the office.



**CHILDREN'S**  
*Sunday School*

**"Start children off on the way they should go,  
and even when they are old they will not turn from it"**  
Proverbs 22:6

We believe that children are a precious gift from God. We invite your children to celebrate the love of Jesus Christ through Bible stories, songs, games, and crafts.  
every Sunday @ 11 a.m.

**WE WILL CONTINUE THROUGH THE SUMMER!**



### Blessing of the Backpacks

## BACKPACK BLESSING

Sunday, August 21, during worship. Bring your backpacks to church or have them in your worship space at home (if worshipping online) and receive God’s blessing as you start off the new school year! Students, teachers, administrators, and staff are also invited for our Backpack blessing.

## **Our first EPIC meeting will be Sunday, August 21!**

Our middle school/high school youth group is for kids in 7th-12<sup>th</sup> grade. We will begin our year with an outdoor picnic/lake party at Wally and Kathy Randall's home. We will meet at the church at 11:30 a.m. and drive out to the Randall home. We will have hot dogs/chips and dessert and then have some fun swimming in their private lake. Bring a friend and don't miss out on this fun time! Bring your swimsuit, your towel and plan for a fun time!



## Retirement Dinner & Celebration for Pastors Chris and Sheryl

Please join us on Saturday, August 27 and 28 when we will be honoring Pastors Chris and Sheryl Kester Beyer on their retirement following 35 years of pastoral ministry, seven and half of which have been here at Calvary. The celebration will begin following our regularly scheduled Saturday night service at 5:30 p.m. with a dinner at the Civic Center in Gering at 6:30 p.m. (Yes, we know pastors and the Saturday night worshipers will probably be a few minutes late to dinner!) Doors to the Civic Center will open at 6 p.m., and a 'honor bar' with beer, wine, and soft drinks will be available. Because we need to give the Civic Center an exact count of people attending, it is necessary that you sign up on the reservation sheet outside the church office or call/email the church by August 25. There are two meal choices: pork tenderloin with sun dried tomato sauce or lemon chicken with rice pilaf. You need to indicate your meal choice when you register. You will check in at the civic center and receive a "ticket" indicating which meal you selected to put on the table at your place. If you would like to make a donation to help cover the cost of an individual meal, \$20 a plate would be appreciated, but is not necessary. And don't forget to join Pastors Sheryl and Chris the following morning for their last Sunday with us at 10 a.m. on August 28 where we will bid them farewell and send them off with our blessings.

## **Sing Praise to the Lord!**

Calvary's **Choir practice** will be starting on Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the **Choir Loft**. If you love to **sing God's Praise**, you are welcome to join us. Hope to see you there!

We will sing for Pastors Chris and Sheryl's last Sunday with us on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Questions? Call Becky Martin at 436-3993.



## **Do we have your photo?**



In anticipation of our new Interim Pastor, Brett Vander Berg arriving on September 1, the Outreach Committee is seeking to have pictures of all of our members and regular visitors in our picture directory. A picture directory is a great way to help a new pastor (or new member) get oriented to the congregation. If we do not have your picture in our directory, a member of the Outreach Committee will be taking photos after church on August 21st in Room 9 in the education wing OR you may submit a recent photo via email or drop off a picture in the church office and we can scan it in and then will return the photo to you. Thanks for your help in making our directory as complete as possible.

## **Informational Meetings about the Call Process - August 20th & 21st**

Pastor Jon Mapa, our Nebraska Synod Assistant to the Bishop will be here to lead us in worship on August 20 & 21, as Pastors Chris and Sheryl will be having their last Sunday with Holy Apostles the weekend. Following each worship service at Calvary, Pastor Mapa will be leading a short informational meeting about the Call Process for those who are interested.

## **WORSHIP LEADERS**

**Pastors Chris and Sheryl Kester Beyer**

### **This Sunday – July 31**

**USHERS:** Deb Brown & Vicki Howell

**LAY READER:** Dennis Gorr

**COMMUNION ASST:** Barb Gorr

**POWERPOINT:** Matt Payne

**ACOLYTES:** Rhyan Buckley & Brynlee Payne

**MEDIA:** Chris Jensen

**AUDIO:** Trea Hess

**ALTAR GUILD:** Abby Newsom, Maunette  
Loeks-Van Patten, Barb Jensen, Nannie  
Walsh

**PIANIST:** Dee Brady

**COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP:** Payne Girls

### **Next Sunday – August 7**

**USHERS:** Kent & Dawn Holub

**LAY READER:** Angie Hinze

**HEAD COMMUNION ASST:** Vicki Howell

**COMMUNION ASSTS:** Marlene Downer &  
Lynn Margheim

**POWERPOINT:** Angela Bonow

**ACOLYTES:** Ben Moravec & Jacey Cochran

**MEDIA:** Jeff Van Patten

**AUDIO:** Jack Martin

**ALTAR GUILD:** Deb Brown, Vicki Howell,  
Tracy Steele, Shari Copsey

**ORGANIST:** Rhonda Boettcher

**COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP:** Please Sign  
Up!

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

### **Sunday, July 31**

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Children's Sunday School

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship in  
Fellowship Hall

### **Tuesday, August 2**

1 p.m. – Quilting

### **Saturday, August 6**

5:30 p.m. – Worship

### **Sunday, August 7**

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Children's Sunday School

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship in  
Fellowship Hall

JULY 31, 2022  
EIGHTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST



*Our lives are renewed daily in Christ.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 12:13-21	Parable of the rich fool
Monday	Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23	Wisdom makes sense
Tuesday	Colossians 3:1-11	New life in Christ
Wednesday	Ephesians 4:17-24	The old life and the new
Thursday	Psalms 19:7-13	The wonders of God
Friday	2 Corinthians 4:16-18	Living by faith
Saturday	Psalms 49:1-12	Do not depend on wealth
Sunday	Luke 12:32-40	Seek treasures in heaven

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*

Colossians 3:2-3 (NRSV)

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Almighty and Eternal God, we thank you that you bring us new life each day, a life that one day will be fully revealed with Christ in glory. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

For life and health and every blessing, including this gift of food today, we give you thanks, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the glory of Christ lead you into each new day with hope.

JULY 31, 2022  
HYMN OF THE WEEK  
*Chief of Sinners  
Though I Be*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something most people do not know about you?
- How would you describe to someone else a life in Christ?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Colossians 3:1-11.

This is a beautiful passage that brings comfort and encouragement for a life in Christ. God sees what the world cannot see. Our lives are hidden in the grace and mercy of Christ. How wonderful is that? Our true identities will not always be hidden: *"When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory"* (v. 4). The scripture reading begins, *"So if you have been raised with Christ,"* it really means *"since you have been raised with Christ."* There is no conditional *"if"* implied, but an absolute *"since."* Because of God in Christ, we have a beautiful and joyous life that will be fully revealed one day. In the meantime, we live believing this. We continue to *"put to death"* those behaviors and attitudes that are inconsistent with a life in Christ. We already live the resurrection life, being renewed each day confessing our shortcomings, our sin, and receiving grace, mercy, and forgiveness. Wow! Discuss: What does it mean to you to know that through the resurrection your life is renewed each day?

*Pray:* Almighty God, help us to trust that our future is filled with goodness and mercy and that our lives are being renewed each day, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how might you serve others with grace and mercy?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Being *"rich towards God"* (Luke 12:21) means growing in generosity toward those who are in need. Giving regularly to God's work in and through the church is a practice for keeping our accumulation of earthly things in check. Setting aside a portion of our income for giving to those in need reminds us that God is the giver of all we have. Think or talk about how you determine your financial giving to others and why it is important to give in this way. Encourage children by teaching them about: Giving – for the needs and benefit of others; Saving – to reach a goal, instead of instant gratification; and, Spending – making wise purchasing decisions.



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