

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 6 June 12, 2016

LUTHERAN

## LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.  
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings  
become a part of the rhythms of your life.

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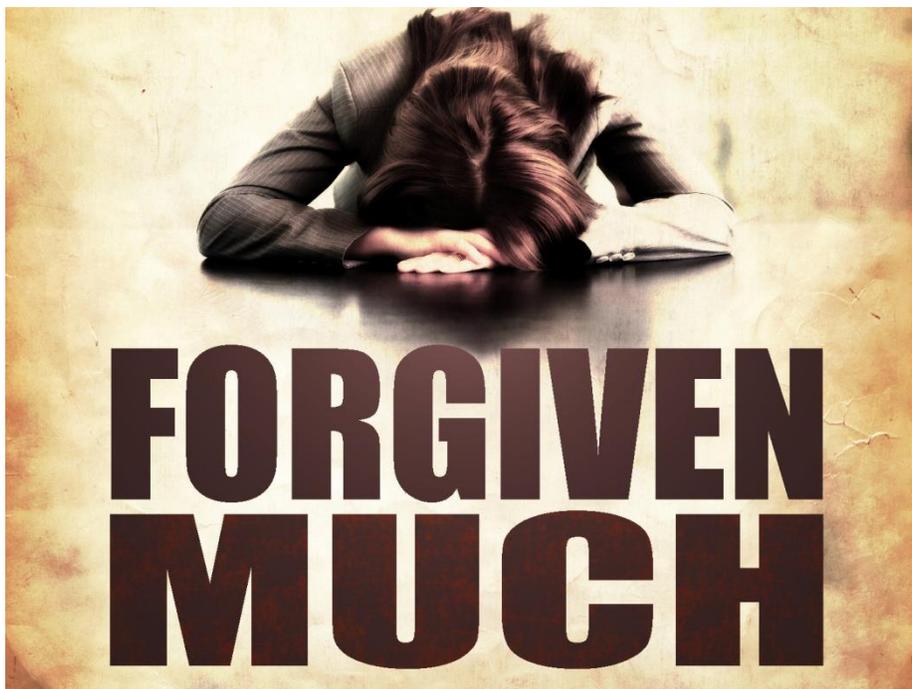
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through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,  
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”

June 9, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

*(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service at the home of Robert Russo, a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com) for details.)*



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Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 915 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 279

“Today Your mercy calls us”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXtjSGGpkGs> Organ with prelude, “One LSB Hymn a Week”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8lxcmmGjk> Piano and voice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxdttazqWQ> Piano accompaniment

Both of the previous are a part of a 10 CD set from Concordia Publishing House. “One in Christ: Hymns of the Month” <https://www.cph.org/p-18604-one-in-christ-hymns-of-the-month-10-cd-set.aspx> This 10-CD set provides an organized and progressive way to study hymns found in Lutheran Service Book and grow in appreciation of the rich musical heritage of the Church. This collection includes 60 hymns featuring children’s voices with piano accompaniment and an instrumental-only version of each hymn. Please note that disc 10 contains hymns with Spanish lyrics. Current price \$34.99.

Women play a prominent role in this week’s readings. Each of the four commentaries this week were written by women. As you read them consider if you would have known that by the content or perspective on the reading. To read the complete commentaries in one place go to [https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp\\_print\\_all.aspx?lectionary\\_calendar\\_id=647&print\\_type=comm&is\\_spanish=0](https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp_print_all.aspx?lectionary_calendar_id=647&print_type=comm&is_spanish=0)

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**2 Samuel 11:26-12:10, 13-14; in addition to the 2 Samuel reading, RCL offers 1 Kings 21:1-10, (11-14), 15-21a\* (Next Week: Isaiah 65:1-9; RCL, 1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a or Psalms 42 and 43)**

*\*The First Kings reading has a similar theme. It is the story of Naboth’s vineyard.*

<sup>26</sup> When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. <sup>27</sup> And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD....

<sup>10</sup> Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’

<sup>11</sup> Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. <sup>12</sup> For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.’” <sup>13</sup> David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, <sup>[b]</sup> the child who is born to you shall die.”

“2 Samuel 12 is one of the most compelling stories of injustice uncovered.

The story actually starts in the last few verses of 2 Samuel 11:26-27 with Bathsheba crying bitterly when she heard about the death of her husband Urijah. But then life moves along at a brisk pace with David marrying the newly widowed Bathsheba and their son being born a couple of months later. Time passes and the last word about the injustice seems to have been spoken. Except the narrator notes in v 27 that God is furious about what David had done...

...Third, probably the most disturbing part of this narrative is that, after David's confession, Nathan promises David that he will not die, however his son will. This troublesome aspect of this text reflects the biblical idea that the sins of the fathers will be visited upon the sons -- literally in this case. But how is this fair? And was it perhaps the illness of the child that caused the people around David, including also Nathan, to ask the question: Why would this baby become sick and die? In terms of the theology of the day, the answer would of course be because of the atrocious things David had done.

It is very important though in a sermon to challenge this direct association between sin and suffering. The reason for this is that such religious views, even though forming a distinct part of this biblical text as well as many others, is deeply problematic when children today would get sick and die. In this regard, it is significant that, in the rest of 2 Samuel 12 that does not form part of the lectionary reading but nevertheless offers important perspective on this story, David is shown to fast and pray for the life of his child. It seems that through these religious rituals David is resisting the forces of death as well the underlying theological framework for the sake of the child. David's actions calls to mind the mothers and fathers, teachers, health care professionals, and relief workers who work relentlessly to save children in a context of exceedingly high infant mortality worldwide.

Finally, glaringly absent from this text is Bathsheba's voice. It is ironic that whereas she in the beginning of the pericope was lamenting for her husband, now when her child dies we do not hear what had to be this bereaved mother weeping at the top of voice. Perhaps Bathsheba's silence in this text about the death of her child in addition to the events that led her to this place is fitting given the fact that so many victims of sexual violence today are silent and silenced. Ultimately it is up to the preacher to stand up as Nathan had done and uncover the ugly reality of violence against women as well the high incidence of infant mortality.”

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2861](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2861)

***Juliana Claassens** Professor of Old Testament, **University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, South Africa***

**Psalm 32:1-7; RCL suggests all of Psalm 32 or Psalm 5:1-8 (Psalm 3, RCL, Isaiah 65:1-9 or Psalm 22:19-28)**

The complete Psalm 32 was also used on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent this year.

**Blessed Are the Forgiven      A Maskil<sup>[a]</sup> of David.**

32 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

<sup>3</sup> For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup> For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;  
my strength was dried up<sup>[b]</sup> as by the heat of summer. **Selah**

<sup>5</sup> I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and I did not cover my iniquity;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"  
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. **Selah**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore let everyone who is godly  
offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;  
surely in the rush of great waters,  
they shall not reach him.

<sup>7</sup> You are a hiding place for me;  
you preserve me from trouble;  
you surround me with shouts of deliverance. **Selah**

"Three of the readings for this Sunday, including Psalm 32, speak of sin and forgiveness.<sup>1</sup>

The first reading tells the story of the prophet Nathan confronting King David with his sin. Adultery and murder stain the reputation of this beloved king of Israel. In the Gospel reading, an unnamed woman, a "sinner," washes Jesus' feet with her tears and dries them with her hair. To the astonishment of those around him, Jesus tells her that her sins are forgiven.

Psalm 32 could be the song of that woman and the song of King David (though Psalm 51 is associated more closely with the story of David and Bathsheba). The writer of Psalm 32 knows the terror of secret sin, and the joy of being forgiven. "Happy are those..." he begins his psalm. Or, in an older translation, "Blessed are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

The psalm is titled, "a maskil," which seems to mean a wisdom-poem, or a composition designed to make one wise. The psalmist uses the same root in verse 8 to speak of instruction: "I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go." This psalm, then, is a composition designed to teach one how to live well, how to live a happy and blessed life...."

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2869](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2869)

[Kathryn M. Schifferdecker](#) Associate Professor of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

**Galatians 2:15-21; 3:10-14, RCL does not include 3:10-14** (*Galatians 3:23-4:7; RCL Galatians 3:23-29*) Readings from Galatians will continue through July 3.

## Justified by Faith

<sup>15</sup> We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; <sup>16</sup> yet we know that a person is not justified<sup>[b]</sup> by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

<sup>17</sup> But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! <sup>18</sup> For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. <sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness<sup>[c]</sup> were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose...

- b. [Galatians 2:16](#) Or *counted righteous* (three times in verse [16](#)); also verse [17](#)
- c. [Galatians 2:21](#) Or *justification*

## The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

...<sup>10</sup> For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” <sup>11</sup> Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”<sup>[d]</sup> <sup>12</sup> But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.” <sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— <sup>14</sup> so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit<sup>[e]</sup> through faith...

- d. [Galatians 3:11](#) Or *The one who by faith is righteous will live*
- e. [Galatians 3:14](#) Greek *receive the promise of the Spirit*

“The great theme of Paul’s letter to the Galatians is Christian freedom.

That theme has already been sounded in the letter’s opening verses, where Paul praises “the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free (Greek deliver us) from the present evil age” (Galatians 1:4). And Paul also reintroduces the theme when he introduces some of his main antagonists in the Galatian communities: “But because of false believers (Greek brothers) secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us ... ” (2:4). Finally, Paul concludes the great Allegory of Hagar and Sarah in 4:21-5:1 thus: “For freedom Christ has set us free” (5:1).

### **Context**

As the NRSV footnote indicates, it is not certain whether the quotation of Paul’s previous words to Peter carries over into the section at vv. 15-21 and, if so, precisely where it ends. Either way, the current pericope carries on and supports Paul’s thought as he has been developing it in the preceding verses.

Peter had participated in common meals with mixed groups of Jews and Gentiles, in which Jewish Christians relaxed their adherence to Jewish food laws. But under perceived pressure from members of the Jewish Christian church in Jerusalem, Peter pulled back and resumed the life of a law-observing Jewish Christian. Paul took this to mean that in Peter’s opinion, all Christians, including Gentile converts, must observe the Jewish food laws. Paul took exception to this...

### **Thoughts and questions toward preaching**

In his mission to take to gospel of Jesus Christ to non-Jews, Paul confronted the large questions of ethnic and religious practices and requirements for Christians of different backgrounds and traditions.

How do we as the church measure up in these kinds of questions?

To what extent are our congregations mixed at all, combinations of people from divergent ethnic and religious/denominational backgrounds?

Do we diligently strive to find ways to be both fully respectful of racial/ethnic differences among the people while at the same time being mindful and discerning of what are those things that are and are not essential in making us who we are?

In our churches, do we implicitly or explicitly require new participants (“members”) to conform to previously existing patterns of congregational behavior? Are there requirements or expectations for specific doctrinal affirmations or other expected behaviors?

How diligent are we in discerning what is necessary and what is contingent in these matters of congregational life and faith?

And as important as these matters are, -- and they are very important -- do we really and truly take to heart Paul’s message that no human acts or works, none whatsoever, are what ultimately justify us with God?

May God help us to live into the freedom of the Gospel.”

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2872](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2872)

***Alicia Vargas*** *Dean for Academic Affairs, Assoc. Professor of Multicultural and Contextual Studies, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, Calif.*

## “The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 7th Chapter”

### “Glory to You, O Lord”

**Luke 7:36-8:3** (*Luke 8:26-39*)

#### **A Sinful Woman Forgiven**

<sup>36</sup> One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. <sup>37</sup> And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, <sup>38</sup> and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.” <sup>40</sup> And Jesus answering said to him, “**Simon, I have something to say to you.**” And he answered, “Say it, Teacher.”

<sup>41</sup> “**A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?**” <sup>43</sup> Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt.” And he said to him, “**You have judged rightly.**” <sup>44</sup> Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, “**Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. <sup>45</sup> You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. <sup>46</sup> You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. <sup>47</sup> Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.**” <sup>48</sup> And he said to her, “**Your sins are forgiven.**” <sup>49</sup> Then those who were at table with him began to say among <sup>[h]</sup> themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” <sup>50</sup> And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

h. [Luke 7:49](#) Or to

#### **Women Accompanying Jesus**

8 Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, <sup>2</sup> and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, <sup>3</sup> and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them <sup>[a]</sup> out of their means.

a. [Luke 8:3](#) Some manuscripts *him*

***“This is the Gospel of the Lord”***    ***“Praise to You, O Christ”***

“Imagine if you had invited guests to your home for dinner and suddenly someone entered your dining room uninvited and unexpected.

I know that I would not be very happy regardless of whom the person was. I think that we have to be a bit understanding of Simon and his shock as this woman enters and kneels at the feet of Jesus. My response would definitely be, “Who does she think that she is?”

We are asking the same question of Jesus, “Who does he think he is?” as we continue our journey with the author of Luke-Acts. Who is this Jesus of Nazareth? We have seen that he is a “long-distance” healer. And we have begun to wonder if Jesus is actually a prophet. Didn’t the crowd watch Jesus, like Elijah and Elisha, bring back to life the only son of a woman, a widow? The crowd declared that a great prophet had arisen, a great prophet who would do great things (Luke 7:16).

When following the Lectionary it is always important, not only to dig deeply into the text that is given, it is also important to investigate what have been skipped. Before today’s text we have learned that disciples of Jesus’ cousin John have been sent to ask him -- are you the one? Jesus answers not with a simple yes or no, but by presenting them with the signs of the Messiah. Where people are being cured and the dead are raised, then you have been in the presence of the Messiah. These will definitely help us answer our question, “Who then is this?” (Luke 8:25)...

Jesus wants us to realize that we are all like the woman. She has come to Jesus with the large debt of sin. We are all like the woman and like the debtor who owes God an un-payable debt. Our healing comes when we, like the woman, kneel at Jesus’ feet and pour out our love.”

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2864](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2864)

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