

CONFESSING CHRIST - DAILY LECTIONARY AND PRAYERS

Pentecost/Trinity Seasons, 2012 (2)

Frederick R. Trost and Colleen Darling, Editors

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“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.”

(Psalm 127: 1a)

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10 Trinity/11 Pentecost, 8/12	Psalm 130 1949, Geneva Convention of Protection of War Victims	Peter B. St. Martin Grand Rapids, MI
Monday, 8/13	Psalm 34:1-10 +1910, Florence Nightingale	Sharon Stier West Bend, WI
Tuesday, 8/14	Psalm 30:1-3 +1941, Maximilian Kolbe 1846, Henry David Thoreau jailed (War tax resistance)	Gary Stillwell Wisconsin
Wednesday, 8/15	Psalm 130:4-5 *1917, Oscar Romero	Karl Strohmeier Lenexa, KS
Thursday, 8/16	Psalm 130:6-7	James Tilbe Raynham, MA
Friday, 8/17	Psalm 130:8-10	Gary Titusdahl Cannon Falls, MN
Saturday, 8/18	Psalm 130:11-12 +2008, George Knight	Harley C. W. Tretow Berlin, WI
11 Trinity/12 Pentecost, 8/19	Psalm 111 +1622, Blaise Pascal	Ann Trost Grand Rapids, MI

Monday, 8/20	Psalm 19:1-6 +1153, Bernard of Clairvaux	Frederick & Louise Trost Elkhart Lake, WI
Tuesday, 8/21	Psalm 19:7-13	Jonathan H. Trost Rochester, NY
Wednesday, 8/22	Psalm 19:14	Marianne Trost Fountain Hills, AZ
Thursday, 8/23	Psalm 34:1-3 1535, Calvin's Institutes *1948, World Council of Churches	Sarah E. Trost Milwaukee, WI
Friday, 8/24	Psalm 34:4-10	John Van Epps Guilford, CT
Saturday, 8/25	Psalm 34:11-22	Edward A. Walker Dennis, MA
12 Trinity/13 Pentecost, 8/26	Psalm 84 1920, U.S. Voting Rights for Women	Rev. & Mrs. John R. Walker Bethlehem, PA
Monday, 8/27	Ephesians 6:10-20 *1910, Mother Teresa	Roger & Frances Wentz Black River Falls, WI
Tuesday, 8/28	Philippians 1:3-11 +430, Augustine 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. Address "I Have a Dream"	Timothy Wepner Newton, NC
Wednesday, 8/29	Philippians 1:15-21 +1943, Simone Weil	John A. Werley Malone, NY
Thursday, 8/30	Philippians 3:17-21 +1688, John Bunyan	Glenn W. Wernecke Sun City, AZ
Friday, 8/31	Colossians 1:3-8	Fritz West Marine on St. Croix, MN
Saturday, 9/01	Colossians 1:9-15 1939, World War II begins	Rudolf Weth Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany

13 Trinity/14 Trinity, 9/02	James 1:17-21 1945, World War II ends (Tokyo)	Jean T. Whitcomb Paxton, MA
Monday, 9/03	James 1:22-27	Cody Williams New York, NY
Tuesday, 9/04	Jeremiah 10:1-5 1948, First World Council of Churches Peace Message +1965, Albert Schweitzer	David Yochum Whitewater, WI
Wednesday, 9/05	Isaiah 61:1-4	Nathaniel Yordon Norwalk, CT
Thursday, 9/06	Isaiah 58:6-9a *1860, Jane Addams	Elga Zachau Bochum, Germany
Friday, 9/07	Isaiah 58:9b-12	Leonard Zecchini Lyndeborough, NH
Saturday, 9/08	Isaiah 58:13-14 1675, Spener's "Pia desideria"	Walter Ziegenhals Burlington, NC
14 Trinity/15 Pentecost, 9/09	Psalms 146	Lowell & Maya Zuck St. Louis, MO
Monday, 9/10	Psalms 148 *1828, Leo Tolstoy	Hans-Juergen Abromeit Greifswald, Germany
Tuesday, 9/11 (Day of Remembrance)	Psalms 102:1-7	Clifford B. Anderson Cranbury, NJ
Wednesday, 9/12	Romans 12:1-2 +1977, Stephen Biko	Ralph Anderson West Seneca, NY
Thursday, 9/13	Romans 12:3-8	F. Christopher Anderson York, PA
Friday, 9/14	Romans 12:9-13	Franklin Anderson E. Waterboro, ME

Saturday, 9/15	Romans 12:14-21 *1907, Alfred Delp	Geoffrey Black Cleveland, OH
15 Trinity/16 Pentecost, 9/16	Psalm 116:1-7 *1916, Alexander Schmorell +1963, Martyred Children of Birmingham, Alabama	Rupert E. Annis Topsfield, MA
Monday, 9/17	Psalm 117 +1179, Hildegard of Bingen	Sally S. Bailey Raleigh, NC
Tuesday, 9/18	Mark 8:27-29 +1961, Dag Hammarskjöld	William Baran Kittery Point, ME
Wednesday, 9/19	2 Corinthians 6:1-13	William Barker S. Wellfleet, MA
Thursday, 9/20	Philippians 4:8-9 *1848, Universal Peace Conference (Brussels)	Linda U. Barnes Colchester, CT
Friday, 9/21	1 Timothy 1:12-17 International Day of Peace	John & Doris Baumann Sheboygan, WI
Saturday, 9/22	Hebrews 3:1-6 *1981, Hans Scholl *1961, U.S. Peace Corps	Martha Ann Baumer Belleville, IL
16 Trinity/17 Pentecost, 9/23	Psalm 1	Thomas Bentz Milwaukee, WI
Monday, 9/24	Mark 10:17-22	Helen M. Benz New Haven, MO
Tuesday, 9/25	Mark 10:23-27	Hans Berthold Schwerte, Germany
Wednesday, 9/26	Mark 10:28-31 *1924, Declaration of the Rights of the Child	Gerald & Cynthia Bertsch Sheboygan, WI

Thursday, 9/27	Luke 6:1-5 1937, Finkenwald Seminary Closed	David Biebighauser Ipswich, SD
Friday, 9/28	Luke 6:6-11	Eugene Birmingham Bensenville, IL
Saturday, 9/29	Luke 6:12-19 1795, Kant's "Perpetual Peace"	Cathie Fisher Braman Fredericksburg, VA
17 Trinity/18 Pentecost, 9/30	Mark 9:38-50	Charles Brizius Elkhorn, WI
Monday, 10/01	Proverbs 17:5-7 +1968, Romano Guardini	Robert F. Broeder Le Sueur, MN
Tuesday, 10/02	Proverbs 16:16-18 *1969, Mohandas Gandhi	Calvin Brown Ontario, Canada
Wednesday, 10/03	Proverbs 16:1-3 +1226, Francis of Assisi +1958, George Bell	Richard S. Brueseke Owensville, MO
Thursday, 10/04	Proverbs 2:1-8 +1669, Rembrandt	Martin Bupp, II Wyomissing PA
Friday, 10/05	Psalms 103:1-5	John Burgess Pittsburgh, PA
Saturday, 10/06	Psalms 103:6-14	Christine Busch Dusseldorf, Germany

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PRAYERS AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR PENTECOST/TRINITY SEASONS, 2012
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A Prayer of Simon Patrick (1626-1707) [adapt.]

Almighty and most merciful God, in whom we live and move and have our being, to whose tender compassion we owe all the comforts of this present life, and the hopes of that which is to come: We praise You and offer You our thanks. You are our exceeding joy... We ask You that Jesus our Lord may be formed in us, in all humility, meekness, patience... and that we might surrender our souls and bodies to Your holy will. Leave us not, forsake us not, but conduct us safe through all changes of our condition here in an unchangeable love towards You and in holy tranquility of mind in Your love for us, until we come to dwell with You, rejoicing in You forever.

(Simon Patrick, initially a Presbyterian minister, became a bishop of the Anglican Church in England. His writings included biblical commentaries on books of the Old Testament, which were widely consulted for at least 150 years. He was among the founders of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.)

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A Prayer from the Gelasian Sacramentary (A.D. 402)

O God, forasmuch as our strength is in You, mercifully grant that Your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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A Prayer of Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) [adapt.]

We ask You, Lord, to look upon us with favor, folk of many families and nations gathered under one roof, weak men and women subsisting under the covert of Your patience. Be patient still; suffer us yet a while longer – with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavors against evil, suffer us a while longer to endure and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us that we might live under our affliction. Be with our friends. Be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest. If any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching and when the day returns, return to us, our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts – eager to labor – eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion – and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it.

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A Prayer of Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

O Lord, with whom is the foundation of life, give us all, we pray, grace and good will to follow the leadings of Your Holy Spirit. Let the dew of Your grace descend and abide with us, refreshing that which droops, reviving that which is ready to perish; until the day when all Your faithful people shall drink of the river of Your pleasure who, in You, are befriended.

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A Prayer of Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667)

Guide me, O Lord, in all the changes and varieties of the world, that in all things that shall happen, I may have an evenness and tranquility of spirit; that my soul may be wholly resigned to Your divine will and pleasure, not murmuring at Your gentle chastisements and loving correction.

Jeremy Taylor was a bishop of the Church of England, a theologian and composer of spiritual writings, including his famous “Rule and Exercises of Holy Living” (1650) and “Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying” (1651), which have been described as “among the most noted and worthy devotional books in the English language.” History has described Jeremy Taylor as “the Chrysostom of England.”

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A Prayer of St. Theresa of Avila (1515-1583)

Govern all by Your wisdom, O Lord, so that my soul may always be serving You as You will and not as I may choose. Do not punish me, I pray, by granting that which I wish or ask, if it offend Your love, which would always live in me. Let me die to myself so that I may serve You. Let me live to You who, in Yourself, are the true life.

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A New Household:

“The reign of God” was preached by Jesus, revealing “the order of a new household, a new dwelling place where the Samaritan woman, the tax collector, and the leper are equally at home.”

(Catherine Mowry LaCugna in “God For Us:
The Trinity and Christian Life”)

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Silent Witnesses:

“We have been silent witnesses of evil deeds; we have been drenched by many storms; we have learnt the arts of equivocation and pretense; experience has made us suspicious of others and kept us from being truthful and open; intolerable conflicts have worn us down and even made us cynical. Are we still of any use?”

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1906-1945)

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Where Are Our Traditions?

Where are our traditions? That question was posed to the United Church of Christ in the Lutheran-Reformed Conversation and the answer was a factor in the final inclusion of the UCC in the 1997 full communion agreement among the four participating Churches. UCC representatives were asked to write their answer down and it appeared in the special “Note” in “A Common Calling” (77-80). As “corporate texts” are critical in ecumenical matters, especially so when identifying traditions short of binding confessions, they were listed in that note. They include “official texts” such as the UCC “Constitution and By-Laws,” the “Basis of Union,” the UCC “Statement of Faith,” “Book of Worship,” the “Manual on Ministry,” UCC hymnals, UCC confirmation material, “theological lore developing through actions taken at General Synod,” the 1987 “Statement on Mission,” and “Unofficial Texts” manifold in nature, including actions as well as writings. Along the way, mention was made also of the Church and Ministry committees as gateways to pastoral ministry. Two distillations of core identity have, in my experience as a UCC representative in various ecumenical encounters, been crucial: the “Preamble” to the UCC Constitution because it deals primarily with “theological method” and the UCC “Statement of Faith” in its various versions, since it deals with theological content. These have been important in keeping the United Church of Christ – often dismissed by its critics as “theological adventurist,” or our giving reasons for the same by the temptation of trendiness – within the larger community of the Church universal. May they continue to be so.

(Gabriel Fackre, June, 2011)

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Elijah and the Cave:

Fleeing deeper and deeper into the wilderness, Elijah finds a cave to hold up in. Peering out of his womb-like cave, he observes a storm. But God is not in the hurricane wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire. The eye of the storm is God’s eye. The stillness and silence at the center of the storm is the voice that God speaks through: the still, small voice you have to strain to hear over the sound and fury of the outside world... In the midst of the whirlwind of God’s absence, God comes. In Dostoyevski’s “Brothers Karamazov,” it is at the very moment Alyosha feels abandoned by God that he suddenly finds the world aflame with the presence of God.

(David Chevrier, 1938-2012)

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Luther:

When Luther became a priest and celebrated his first Mass, in 1507, he trembled so much he nearly dropped the bread and cup. He became so terrified of the presence of Christ in the sacrament that he tried to run from the altar...

Luther raised so much hostility that it was rumored – and taken seriously for a time by some respected intellectuals of the day – that he was the product of a bathhouse liaison between his mother and the Devil. At the Diet of Worms, he was condemned as a “demon in the appearance of a man.”

Luther almost died at age 19. On his way home from school, a dagger pierced his leg, cutting an artery. Only because he was with a friend, who fetched a doctor, was his life saved. Lying at the edge of the road until the doctor came, he cried to the mother of Jesus, “O, Mary, help!” His Wittenberg friends later criticized him for appealing to Mary instead of Jesus.

In 1520 and 1521, Luther was the rage in Germany. Posters of Luther (single-sheet woodcuts) sold out as soon as they went on sale, and many were pinned up in public places. By the end of his life, Martin Luther wrote 60,000 pages, yet he hoped that “all my books would disappear and the Holy Scriptures alone be read.”

(Herbert K. Jacobsen in “Church History,” XI, No. 2)

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Nuclear Weapons:

The threatened nuclear annihilation of whole populations in the name of national security is an evil we can no longer accept. At stake is whether we trust in God or the bomb. We can no longer confess Jesus as Lord and depend on nuclear weapons to save us. Conversion in our day must include turning away from nuclear weapons as we turn to Jesus Christ. The building and threatened use of nuclear weapons is a sin against God, God’s creatures, and God’s creation. There is no theology or doctrine in the traditions of the church that could ever justify nuclear war. Whether one begins with pacifism or with the just war doctrine, nuclear weapons are morally unacceptable.

(“New Abolitionist Covenant,” 1981)

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Christendom:

So-called Christendom – and I mean precisely the large, mainline, established churches as well – keeps its ears, eyes, and mouth closed, composes brilliant memoranda and position papers, puts experts to work. And yet the Word that God gave to human beings through Jesus of Nazareth, the Word that judges and redeems and liberates us, is muffled into silence... The “Christian world” has found ingenious ways to get by with compromises – as if it were possible to

serve the two lords, God and Mammon, at the same time. But this is as impossible today as it was in Jesus' time. On the issue of peace,... and precisely here, we cannot possibly serve two masters; and yet we have been trying to do so since the fourth century, when Christianity was introduced to the whole Roman Empire as state religion... what else is discipleship and service to our Lord, if serving peace among human beings and among nations is not?

(Martin Niemoeller, "Bringing the Beatitudes
Down to Earth," a sermon, January 25, 1980)

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Never Again War!

Never again war! No, never again war, which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution of the very problems which provoked the war."

(Pope John Paul II, 1991)

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"If I Might Only..."

If I might only love my God and die!
But now He bids me love Him and live on,
Now when the bloom of all my life is gone,
The pleasant half of life has quite gone by.

My tree of hope is lopped that spread so high;
And I forget how summer glowed and shone,
While autumn grips me with its fingers wan,
And frets me with its fitful windy sigh.

When autumn passes then must winter numb,
And winter may not pass a weary while,
But when it passes spring shall flower again;
And in that spring who weepeth now shall smile,
Yes, they shall wax who now are on the wane,
Yea, they shall sing for love when Christ shall come.

(Christina Rossetti, 1830-1894)

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“The Heart Should Have Life”

It is a sad thing that so many of us... preach our hearers asleep; but it is sadder still if we have studied and preached ourselves asleep, and have talked so long against hardness of heart, till our own (hearts) grow hardened under the noise of our own reproofs. Though the head only have eyes, and ears, and smell, and taste, the heart should have life, and feeling, and motion, as well as the head.

Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

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“Little Presents”

My mother... loved giving little presents. Even if we didn't have very much, she said that any person who comes to a house must always be given something, even if it's only a little pinol or, at meal-times, a tortilla with salt, or whatever there is. "You must always know how to give" my mama would say... She always made us have some hot water on the fire so there would always be something for anyone who came to the house, even if it was only a little atoll...

(Rigoberta Menchu)

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“I Never Close My Door”

I try not to hunt around to find things to do. I do not hunt around to find people to help. But I never close my door, never refuse to help somebody who asks for something. This is my kind of religion. When things happen, not things that I plan, but things sent by God or by chance; when people come to my door, I feel responsible.

(Magda Trocme)

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Strengthen Our Faint Hearts

Strengthen our faint hearts, make steady our trembling hands,
toughen our weak knees to stand in the traditions of the apostles and martyrs.
Yes, give us a backbone and a heart, O Lord,
that we might become contemptuous of the idolatries
that daily entice us. (FRT)

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You are invited to refer to the Confessing Christ website at the following address: <http://confessingchrist.net>

Confessing Christ materials are being prepared at the Mission House Center, Lakeland College. Those no longer wishing to receive materials or those with address changes should contact Colleen Darling, Lakeland College, PO Box 359, Sheboygan, WI 53082-0359 by e-mail darlingca@lakeland.edu or by calling 920-565-1538.

“For no one can lay foundation other than the one that has been laid: that foundation is Jesus Christ.”

(1 Cor. 3:11, NRSV)