

“That We May Know” 2023 Life Sunday Materials

ORDER OF WORSHIP

(Note: This order of worship, was originally used for the opening worship of the CLR National Convention, October 15, 2022. As this was not a complete Divine Service, the elements, hymns, readings, etc. here are provided so that they can be used in and adapted for a Life Sunday observance in the regular worship of a congregation.)

L: Hasten to save me, O God.

C: **O Lord, come quickly to help me.**

L: The Mighty One, God, the Lord, speaks and summons the earth.

C: **from the rising of the sun to where it sets.**

L: From Zion, perfect in beauty,

C: **God shines forth.**

L: Almighty God, you divide the day from the night. Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet in the way of peace. And having done your will with cheerfulness while it is day, grant that when evening comes, we may rejoice in giving you thanks.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN: *“I Sing as I Arise Today” – Hymn 779 (CW21)*

READING: *2 Kings 6:8-17*

The things we see in this world and experience in this life can make us fearful and shake our faith. But we are comforted to know the deeper reality, often just beyond our sight, in which God has all our concerns and circumstances well in hand. His knowledge and power are always at work for his purposes and his people.

⁸ Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, “I will set up my camp in such and such a place.”

⁹ The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: “Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there.” ¹⁰ So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places.

¹¹ This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, “Tell me! Which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?”

¹² “None of us, my lord the king,” said one of his officers, “but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom.”

¹³ “Go, find out where he is,” the king ordered, “so I can send men and capture him.” The report came back: “He is in Dothan.” ¹⁴ Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?” the servant asked.

¹⁶ “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (NIV11)

PSALM: *“God Is My Strong Salvation” – Psalm 71 (CW21)*

GOSPEL: *Mark 2:1-12*

The paralyzed man’s friends had impressive faith, but they also had love for him and deep concern for his health and life. Jesus wanted both those who trusted him and those who opposed him to see and know his authority – over our bodies and lives as well as over our hearts and souls.

¹ A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ² They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? ¹⁰ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, ¹¹ “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” ¹² He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!” (NIV11)

HYMN: *“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” – Hymn 614 (CW21)*

SERMON TEXT: *Colossians 2:2*

My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ. (NIV11)

SERMON: *That We May Know (and Share) Maturity in Christ*

- 1. Expect strenuous effort*
- 2. Expect significant impact*

Please stand

THE APOSTLES CREED

A summary of not only what the Triune God has given us to know about himself and his work, but also what we believe, teach, and confess as his people.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Prayer of the Church

M: Almighty God, you have called us to bring you not only our own needs and desires, but to make requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving for everyone.

We therefore pray for our nation's president, our states' governors, and all our elected county and local leaders. Give them a strong and renewed respect for all human life, wherever and however it is found. Guide them to policies and decisions that protect the vulnerable, assist the needy, and defend the innocent.

C: Hear us, Lord.

M: We pray also for all those who serve our citizens in Congress, legislature, and councils. Lead them to make and pass laws that protect life and to unmake and repeal any laws that put human life at risk. Give them wisdom and love for others that move them to rise above party politics and popular opinion, so that they choose to do what is best for all our people, not just some.

C: O Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Grant wisdom also to those who serve as judges and justices in our courts. Lead them to decisions that are not guided by the opinions or mood of the day. Instead, move them to

respect and uphold the rights of all people to live their lives without fear of falling victim to anyone else's views that find them inconvenient or of small value.

C: Hear our prayer, for Jesus' sake.

M: Lead all your people in this nation, Lord, to recognize what a precious gift life is and therefore to stand with you in defense of life. Give them the courage and confidence to speak and to act precisely in those areas where life is most under attack, whether in the womb, the wheelchair, or the hospital bed.

C: Have mercy and help us, Lord.

M: Forgive us for the times when we have been lukewarm with our faith, failed to appreciate your gifts, or have remained silent when we should have spoken. In your mercy, remove our guilt and grant us the power and courage to do now what we have failed to do in the past.

C: Have mercy and forgive us, O God.

M: As you have given to us what was most precious to you, your Son, so that we might have eternal life, inspire us to give of ourselves in service to our fellow man. Whether it is with time, conversation, money, or labor, move us to engage with and invest ourselves in our society, so that it prospers as we prosper. Especially let us be effective and productive as salt and light in our culture, pointing sinners to their Savior and working to preserve respect for life and all that is morally good.

C: Hear us, good Lord, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours

now and forever. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

L: Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever!

C: **Amen.**

HYMN: *“God of Grace and God of Glory” – Hymn 770 (CW21)*

NOTE: *Opening and Doxology follow “Start of Work (Prime)” Devotion from CW21 (p. 240)*