

**Devotions – October 4-10, 2020**  
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**Sunday, October 4, 2020**

Text: Philippians 4:7

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

This week we will consider several people in the church who have special days set aside for them.

Today we celebrate FRANCIS OF ASSISI, renewer of the church, born in 1186, dying in 1226. He came from a wealthy family, but gave up his inheritance to serve the poor, and in the process founded the Catholic Order of Friars Minor, now called Franciscans.

He wrote the words to one of our ELW hymns, "All Creatures, Worship God most High" (#835), also titled "All Creatures of our God and King". Assisi was grateful for all of God's creation, and many churches hold blessings of pets and animals at this time of year.

He is the author of the familiar Prayer, found on p. 87 in the ELW, which begins: "Lord, make us instruments of your peace. . . ."

A prayer: *Yes, Lord, may we ALL be helping to bring peace into our world. Amen.*



**Monday, October 5, 2020**

Text: I Timothy 3:8-13

[Describing male Deacons] v.8 *...serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money;* [And for women] v.11 *... serious, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things.*

THEODOR FLIEDNER, renewer of society, is also commemorated on October 4th. He lived in the 1800's and helped to revive the ministry of deaconesses in the Lutheran church. As a pastor in Kaiserswerth, Germany and minister to prisoners in Düsseldorf, he met Moravian deaconesses and learned about their mission to assist the sick, the poor and the imprisoned.

Certain that this mission also had a place in the Lutheran church, Pastor Fliedner recruited women through his work and his writings. The Motherhouse of Lutheran Deaconesses was established in Kaiserswerth, and the movement has since spread throughout the world.

In the ELCA, Deaconesses are now part of a new Roster of "Deacons" which also includes AIMs (Associates in Ministry) and DMs (Diaconal Ministers).

In fact, in our Northern Great Lakes Synod, Sister Lori Ward is awaiting her ordination as a Deacon. Sister Lori is working as our new Synod Missioner, coordinating the Lifelong Faith Formation effort (formerly known as Lay School for Mission) to bring classes by Zoom to members of the NGLS. She also oversees the Licensed Lay Minister program. We welcome this follower in the footsteps of Thomas Fliedner.

A prayer: *We pray for the success and well-being of Deacons/Deaconesses, as they serve in schools, prisons, hospitals, parishes, and Synods. Amen.*



**Tuesday, October 6, 2020**

Text: Mark 4:14, 20

*The sower sows the word. . . . And these are the ones sown on good soil; they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.*

WILLIAM TYNDALE, translator and martyr, was ordained in England in 1521. He had a simple goal: translate the Bible into English. King Henry VIII disapproved of the idea, and Tyndale was forced to leave England to preserve his life. He fled to Germany where he produced a translation of the New Testament in 1525, all the while living in itinerant poverty and constant danger. Captured in 1536 as he was working on translating the Old Testament, he was tried for heresy and burned at the stake.

Enter Miles Coverdale, who took on the task of completing Tyndale's translation of the Old Testament. In 1537, the Tyndale-Coverdale Bible, both Old and New Testaments together, were published under the title of the "Matthew Bible."

This version of the Bible has served to influence subsequent translations of the Bible, including the King James Version and the New Revised Standard Version.

A prayer: *We are in awe of the dangers faced and the bravery and commitment shown by these heroes of the faith. Thank you, Lord, for people like Pastor Tyndale and others like him. They are an inspiration. Amen.*



**Wednesday, October 7, 2020**

Text: 2 Corinthians 3:18

*And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.*

HENRY MELCHIOR MUHLENBERG, pastor in North America in the 1700s, was instrumental in guiding the transition from the state churches of Europe to a new identity as American churches. For example, we owe the idea of Synods to him, and also the development of the American Lutheran liturgy. His liturgical principles were the basis for the Common Service of 1888, which was used in many North American Service Books through much of the 20th century.

I can recall the days of the SBH, the red Service Book and Hymnal, which had two settings of the liturgy. Then came the LBW, the green Lutheran Book of Worship with its three settings. Now we have the ELW, the cranberry Evangelical Lutheran Worship, which has ten settings of the liturgy. And these days we have many other liturgies to choose from as well, and many use folk instruments.

A prayer: *There is an eternal quality about the Lutheran liturgies, which follow familiar pathways and feel "right" though they may be different in many ways. We thank you for that, Lord. Amen.*



**Thursday, October 8, 2020**

Text: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

We are trying something new in our table-prayer life. Instead of using the same grace before all meals, which we have done for years and years, we have added some variety to asking a blessing before meals.

At breakfast, we do use the common prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest..." It is easy to remember first thing of the day, and sometimes that is a big help on busy mornings.

At lunch, however, we say together a prayer that has been in the family for decades, and it is in Finnish! Some of you may recognize it: "Herra, kaikki ravitset, Tarpehemme taritset. Ruokaa annat ruumiille, Henkes sanan sielulle." We sometimes alternate that with another Finnish table prayer which begins "Nyt silmain alla Jeesuksen ...". Gradually we are getting better at remembering all the words. It gives us a great sense of family continuity.

Then, at the evening meal, we go for originality and thankfulness. Our prayers almost always begin with thanking God for the food we are about to eat. Then we branch out into recalling blessings of the day and praying for those we know to be in any need. Recently we have added a petition about the upcoming elections, that good decisions would be made that will benefit all of us. But perhaps the most interesting thing about this table prayer is that each of us adds a statement about one thing that we are grateful for today. Then, with an "Amen to that!", we start to eat.

A prayer: *For that one wonderful thing today (or perhaps several things, on a really good day), we give you thanks, O Lord. Amen to that!*



**Friday, October 9, 2020**

Text: Psalm 133:1

***How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!***

What would you do if you knew someone who:

- kept in close touch via email and phone
- loved to travel and made the 400-mile trip to see you when possible
- had a real talent for sewing, and made a beautiful Chanel jacket for yourself
- remodeled her kitchen, and renovated other rooms in her house
- created a 8' by 12' mosaic tile picture of aspects of her family's life
- . . . on an outside house wall alongside the patio
- has gone on to live a good life after her husband died 7 years ago . . .?

Well, you might love her to bits, and wish her a happy birthday today!

Ah, family - they are the core of our lives. Happy Birthday, sister Liz!

A prayer: *Whether small or large, families are our foundation, our grounding in the world, our go-to folks with our joys and our sorrows. God bless all families. Amen.*



**Saturday, October 10, 2020**

Text: Daniel 12:3

*Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.*

MASSIE L. KENNARD, renewer of the church, was born in 1918 in Chicago. He was ordained in 1958 in the LCA, the Lutheran Church in America, a predecessor body to our ELCA. He pastored two Lutheran churches. In 1977, he took the position of Director for Racial/Ethnic Ministries, remaining in that position until his death in 1996.

He is remembered for his leadership and support for ethnic and racial inclusiveness in the church. He was Director for Minority Concerns in the Division for Mission in North America in the LCA. He worked tirelessly to counsel and recruit minority members to become Lutheran ministers to make the church a more racially inclusive fellowship.

A prayer: *We need more people like Pastor Kennard in the world today. May we likewise recruit men and women to join in our efforts to achieve racial and ethnic justice for all. Amen.*

