

### **Wednesday, June 2, 2021 - Scripture: Psalm 118:24; Song: "New Day"**

It is June and Memorial Day is over. Yesterday we began what the weather folks call "Meteorological Summer." And this year, many seem to be much more optimistic than last summer when we just discovering what the pandemic was all about and the tough year that was predicted was in full swing. The Covid-19 numbers are down this June, masks are going away, crowds are allowed (outside, at least) and it looks like a new day may be coming. Today's song by Danny Gokey is called "New Day" and is quite appropriate for these times, I believe. We will be tempted to pat ourselves on the back and say, "Look what we have done." Certainly, some of the politicians are doing that or they will be anyway. Gokey's song, though, talks about a new day – not by our own doing, but by God's. As the Psalmist says in our Scripture passage for today from Psalm 118:24: "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." As Gokey sings, "This is a new day, bursting with joy," and then later: "This is a new day, the old has gone away," and later "it's coming, coming, coming." The temptation as things gets better will be to pat ourselves and others on the back and say, "We did it." But due to our sins we cannot do it. Everything new is given to us by the grace of God. As we begin a new summer, full of possibilities, remember it is not because we have done anything that Covid-19 is almost under control and that we will be able to enjoy each other company this summer, it is by the grace of God. Enjoy the new day that is coming as the song says, and remember, today like every day is a day the Lord has made and that we can rejoice and be glad in it. That is our motivation.

[Danny Gokey - New Day Lyrics](#)

### **Friday, June 4, 2021 - Scripture: Genesis 3:15; Song: "In Adam We All Have Been One"**

Last Sunday, in churches across our country and the world, Christians celebrated Trinity Sunday, the day we celebrate our three in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. From the beginning of time, our 3 in 1 God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, worked together first to create us and then after Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, to rescue us from our sin. In our in-person service this Sunday, the 2nd Sunday after Pentecost, our sermon Hymn will be: "In Adam We Have All Been One" and the link below leads to a beautifully sung version for our enjoyment and comfort. The hymn writer sings about our Good Shepherd, Jesus, and all he has done to rescue Adam and Eve and all who are one in Adam because we share his sin. From the time Adam and Eve sinned, God's plan to rescue was predicted and perfectly carried out by Jesus. In Genesis 3:15, today's Scripture and part of our Old Testament reading for the Sunday after Pentecost, God tells the serpent of his plan for bringing sinful man back into a perfect relationship with him. God tells the serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." As the hymn points out, Satan would bruise Jesus' heel as Jesus was dying on the cross to save us and as the verse says, "crush his head." All of Satan's power was lost when Jesus rose from the dead to conquer death and the devil. The Father sent his Son, and Jesus after his death and resurrection and ascension, sent the Holy Spirit to bring us to faith in Jesus, so that we might overcome the sin of Adam in us and our own sin as well. What a blessing this all is. Listen to the hymn and understand the depth of the love of our 3 in 1 God:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit for you and all mankind. Then join us in Church on Sunday to celebrate just who our God is!

[In Adam We Have All Been One LSB 569](#)

**Wednesday, June 9, 2021 - Scripture: Matthew 18:12-14; Song: "Next to Me"**

It's hump day again, Wednesday, and halfway through another work week. Many of you are back in the office or factory or wherever else you worked before the pandemic. Things are back to normal a little bit more each day. I'm wondering if maybe it's time for all of us to think about getting back to normal in our Church attendance as well. Has it gotten too convenient to stay at home in your P. J.'s on Sunday morning watching our virtual service or another church's? Has it become too convenient to do the shopping or the golfing or the lawn mowing or whatever else is getting in the way of you, in a sense, coming back to God in person and on a regular basis? Today's song by Jordan Feliz, called "Next to Me" poses that question in a very up-beat way. He talks about how God fills the cup when needed, but then his ego, wants to grab the wheel and take control. Maybe the same thing is happening to you. Things seem to be going well, without that daily or weekly contact with God, so why change? He then goes on to say that God is calling him, back where he belongs, because it's been too long. If it's been too long as Jordan sings, think about coming back. God hasn't forgotten you. Neither have your friends at church. God is seeking you. As our Scripture reading for today from Matthew 18:12-14 says: God is like a shepherd who won't give up on even one of his sheep. Like a shepherd would leave the 99 in the pen and go after the one who wandered away and rejoices more over the one he finds than the 99 left in the pen, it's similar with God. As Jesus said: "So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that anyone of these little ones should perish." As the song and the Scripture remind us, God is always calling us back. Nothing that has gotten in the way of that during the pandemic will change how much he wants to see you. Enjoy the song and see if it doesn't encourage you to come back on a regular basis, to meet God again in reading His Word and receiving His gifts on Sunday.

[Next To Me - Jordan Feliz \(Lyrics\)](#)

**Friday, June 11, 2021 - Scripture: Numbers 6:24-26; Song: "Sent Forth by God's Blessing"**

It's Friday again and for most of you another work week is over. How did it go this week? Did you feel blessed by God in all you did as you were sent forth from church last week with His blessing, or did all the clutter and struggles of life get in the way again? Today's hymn and Scripture remind us of what happens at the Worship service each week and how it prepares us for life in the rest of the week. It reminds us that we don't leave God behind when we leave the church, that he blesses in all that we do. The hymn title "Sent Forth by God's Blessing," should remind of our Scripture reading

form Numbers 6, quoted by Pastors all over the world as the Worship service ends. Most of you should be able to recite it without me sharing it here since you have heard it so often. But just in case, Number 6:24-26 reads this way: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." And God always does what he promises. All through this past week and every week before and after, he continues to bless you. He continues to be gracious with you, treating you not the way you deserve because of your sin, but with all the love and mercy that a Father has for his children. The hymn helps us to know how to respond to that blessing you hear each Sunday. The second verse begins, "With Praise and Thanksgiving, our everyday tasks we will face." There is some powerful encouragement in this hymn on how we leave the Lord's table after the gift of His Son's body and blood, and the way we live our life during the week. As we head toward Sunday again, listen to the hymn and then as you come to God's house again on Sunday, or for the first time if you never have been, reflect on how next week might begin and end differently with the focus of the hymn. Then when you leave, listen closely for the words of Numbers 6 as you receive God's blessing and head out to a new week ready to serve. May it make a difference as you begin another week on Monday.

[Sent Forth By God's Blessing - LW 247 - Lutheran Worship - Christian Church Hymn](#)

## **Monday, June 14, 2021 - Scripture: Psalm 95:6-7; Song: "Bless the Lord, O My Soul"**

It's Monday again and almost the middle of June. Summer starts in a week for real and the year it really feels like a Michigan summer. Things are opening up more and more, we can visit with our friends and family again, and maybe just maybe, it feels great to be alive again. Are we really done with the pandemic? That remains to be seen, but if we are, we need to celebrate the fact that God got us through all of this just like he has all our lives and through whatever other crisis we have gotten into. I am sure that I have done today's song before, but I know that was last year and I encouraged you to bless the Lord and worship despite your circumstances. Maybe this time it's our song today for a slightly different reason. Maybe it's blessing the Lord BECAUSE of our circumstances. We are still alive and kicking, despite the pandemic. We are still able to enjoy the beauty of another Michigan summer, despite the pandemic. We are still able to worship the Lord, despite our sin and all the other things that have been bothering and depressing us and keeping us from feeling the joy of the Lord. Our song begins, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; worship His Holy Name." And maybe you feel a little better about doing that, because of your circumstances, right now. Well, guess what, if we haven't been, we should have been doing it all the time, for ten thousand reasons, as the song says. God has always been there for you, taking caring care of you. He has promised to be with you always, and he has been and will be. As the Psalmist says in

our Scripture for today, oh, come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker! For his is our God and we are people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand!" None of that has changed, pandemic or not. And it never will. So yes, listen to the song, and bless the Lord and worship him for your circumstances, because things are better, most likely. But as you listen, make a list of all the reasons we bless him and worship him. And realize that, because he sent Jesus for us, the tough circumstances are temporary, and that we should always bless Him and worship Him even the tough times we have are just maybe coming of. Praying the song and God's Word gets you through another Monday!

[Bless the Lord O my soul | with Lyrics](#)

### **Wednesday, June 16, 2021 - Scripture: Luke 8:25; Song: " Jesus Savior, Pilot Me "**

I am guessing I might have used this hymn once before in the 220 devotions I have written before today since the beginning of the pandemic in March of 2020. Yes, that is correct. This is devotion number 220. Hard to believe, right? Never in a million years did I dream that this project would still be ongoing over 16 months after it started. I know this though, on my own I would have never been able to continue to do this week after week. Today's hymn reminds me and all of us how important it has been and will continue to be, to let God be in control, to let him lead the way. The hymn: "Jesus Savior, Pilot Me," was written for those who make a living traveling the seas, carrying all the things we need to keep our economy going, to provide for all our needs. Over the years, it has come to be loved by many, even those who don't travel the seas. As you listen to this hymn you will begin to see why. The treacherous shoals and thunderous waves that are the theme of the verses, translate easily to the troubles and struggles of life in a sin-filled world. There are times when like those sailing the seas in a large storm, we don't think we will make it through. At those times we might want to turn things over to God. We might put our faith in God, something we should have been doing in the good times as well but then we thought we had it and didn't need God. It reminds us of the account of the disciples on the sea and Jesus was sleeping and they woke him up because they were afraid. In Luke 8:25, Jesus asks them: "Where is your faith?" Then Luke explains that they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?" Whether you think the good times are here with the end of Covid-19 in sight, or whether there are winds and waves and treacherous shoals in your life right now, things like illness or family problems or financial issues, remember you are not alone. Pray the hymn as you listen to it: Jesus Savior, Pilot me. And remember, He is God, and he does control the literal wind and waves and he will pilot you through these issues as well.

[Jesus Savior. Pilot Me](#)

**Friday, June 18, 2021 - Scripture: Romans 8:38-39; Song: "No Matter What"**

It's the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in June and on Sunday we will be experiencing the longest day of the year, the day on which at least in Michigan the sun shines the longest. For many, that's a good thing. It's the beginning of summer, a time to relax, a time to enjoy yourselves and to forget about life's problems. It's not that way for everyone though. Some are still paralyzed by the threat of the pandemic and are hiding away from the world even though all restrictions end on Tuesday, too afraid to venture out and enjoy summer. For others, there are family problems or financial problems, or you've done something that you feel is so terrible, nobody could ever love you again. Whatever the situation is, today's song, No Matter What, by Ryan Stevenson is for you. Over and over again, the chorus reminds us that no matter what, any of the examples above or any others that involve you now, can ever separate you and all of us from God's love for us. As the hymn says, now is the time to come clean, to come to the cross and be washed in the blood of Jesus. The song echoes the words of Paul in our Scripture reading for today from Romans 8: 38 and 39. Paul writes: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life; nor angels nor rulers; nor things present nor things to come; no powers; nor height nor depth; nor anything else in all creation; will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." What powerful encouragement for all who are dealing with situations like the ones I laid out. And it's just as powerful for those who are going through the good times as well, nothing can separate us from God's love except not believing it is true. As the end of the songs says, you are God's daughters, you are God's sons. And all because your brother, Jesus, went to the cross for us to bring us back into the family. Enjoy your weekend and make some time on

Sunday to stop by and worship the one who will always love you, no matter what!

[No Matter What \(lyrics\) ~ featuring Bart Millard ~ Ryan Stevenson](#)

**Monday, June 21, 2021 - Scripture: Ephesians 6:2-4; Song: "Our Father by Whose Name"**

Yesterday our country celebrated Father's Day. Now certainly this is not a Christian holiday, but the Bible has a lot to say about Fathers and families and the relationship between parents and their children. And some of it does not mesh well with how our culture thinks these relationships should go. And maybe, just maybe, our wanting to do it our way is leading to many of the family and societal problems we are dealing with right now. Our hymn for today's devotion, "Our Father by Whose Name," encourages us on the day after Father's Day. First of all, it's nice that our country has a day to honor fathers, but Scripture speaks to that and as we hear what it has to say, one of the first things we should know is that one day to honor fathers (and Mothers as well) is not enough. Paul speaks to this in his letter to the Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 2 through 4. He writes, using one of the ten commandments given by God to Moses in Exodus 20: "'Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may go well with you and they live long in the land.' Father, do not provoke your children to anger, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." So, we are to honor our father every day, yes, but fathers, it's not all about getting honor because you are the dad, you have a responsibility too. And it's not to give everything to your kids or to raise them to be a pro sports athlete so they can support you in your later years. Your responsibility is to not provoke your children to anger and to bring them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. This is challenging at any time but certainly has been a struggle during the pandemic. Know this though, as a

Christian parent, you don't do it alone. As the hymn points out so clearly, a Christian parent has God helping and supporting him or her. Listen to the hymn and don't put too much pressure on yourself the day after Father's Day. Rely on God's help and he will help you raise the Godly Christian adult that Paul talks about in Ephesians 6.

[Our Father, By Whose Name \(with vocals\) ELW 640](#)

**Wednesday, June 23, 2021 - Scripture: Exodus 20:8-10; Song: "Church (Take Me Back)"**

The church has been taking a lot of garbage from the world lately. Christians are the worst; we hear from those who want to change society so that just about everything is acceptable. And if you disagree with that, they will accuse of hate speech and try to give you a fine or put you in jail or try to close you down. They want equality but only for those who agree with them. The church is accused of being out of touch and not relevant and many other things that make Christians look bad. Today's song, "Church (Take Me Back)" by Cochren and Company, reminds us that these folks speaking this way don't understand Church. They sing of the acceptance they received when they messed up and of the preacher who brought them to the foot of the cross where they received forgiveness and the acceptance that we all need. Monday, I used a Scripture passage quoting the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment and today's song brings to mind the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment. So my Scripture today is Exodus 20:8-10, where God gave the commandments to Moses on Mt. Sinai. God tells Moses there to share this with his people: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God." God wants you to take time to rest, to come to him and hear how much he loves you, so much so that he sent his only Son to die for you. It's time we change how we think about church. We don't have to listen to what the world would tell us is wrong with the church. It's a place for broken sinners to go and hear how much God loves them. Listen to the song, "Church" and I pray it helps you understand why God gave us the Sabbath, the seventh day to rest, and to be encouraged. And then I pray that God will take you back as the song says, to the one who loves you despite who you are and how you have treated him.

[Church \(Take Me Back\) Cochren & Co. Worship Video with lyrics](#)

**Friday, June 25, 2021 - Scripture: Matthew 20:26-28; Song: "Broken Things"**

It's another Friday again, the last one in June of 2021. Hopefully, your summer is going well. It seems much better than last year when we were isolated from everyone, and we had no idea if the pandemic would ever end. But if your day isn't going well, as quite often happens on Fridays as we look back over another week and wonder why we didn't get enough done, didn't measure up, weren't satisfied with how we had done - or all the above, I have a song for you. It's titled "Broken Things," by Matthew West. Matthew is so good at writing and performing songs that speak to us about our relationship with God, our relationships with the world, and have practical advice for us from God's Word. This song talks about how the world expects us to be perfect, to do everything right according to their definition and what happens when we fail and don't want to live that way. Maybe it's because the world's way isn't God's way or something else. The world says we need to put ourselves first and maybe this week that didn't work out so well. Matthew shares how that's not how God expects us to be and how God's way is much more important than what the world thinks. He talks about how, as he looks back at history and especially the Bible, he sees God work through those who are broken and not the ones who think they are perfect or have to be. Then he sings that he heard a whisper from heaven that the first will be last and the last will be first and receive a crown. He is, of course, referring to Jesus' words, spoken more than once while he was here on earth. One of those places was when the disciples were talking about who would be able to sit next to him and occupy the most important place. And Jesus tells them, in my kingdom it doesn't work that way. In Matthew 20:26-28 he goes on to teach the disciples with these words: "It shall not be so among you; But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." So this Friday, or any day for that matter, remember as you look back on this day or that week, it's not about being perfect or pleasing those who set the world's standards. Instead, it's about serving the one who gave his life as a ransom for you, so that you don't have to be perfect or live the way the world expects. If you think about it, the world doesn't love you, it only thinks about itself and the standards they set for you are meant to help only them. Feel free to live life the way Jesus encourages. It will take a lot of the burden of Friday away and give you an opportunity to serve the one who loved you when you were broken and opened eternal life to you. Enjoy your Friday and live in the peace of God who created you and who continues to love you whether you are broken or not.

[Broken Things - Matthew West - Worship Video with lyrics](#)

## **Monday, June 28, 2021 - Scripture: Matthew 27:46; Song: "What God Ordains is Always Good"**

It's the last week of June and summer seems to be moving fast. Six more days until the 4th of July and you know what they say, once you hit the 4th of July, it's all downhill from there- summer will be over before you know it. Wondering how your summer is going? Is it better than last year or are you still having problems? If you are, are you tempted to blame God? If you got the Covid virus, was it God's punishment for something you did? If you are sick or your family is coming apart, is it God's doing? The answer to all those

questions, of course, is no. Our hymn for today's devotion answers that. If you were at our in-person service yesterday you might already know what it is. If not, here it is: "What God ordains is Always Good." As you listen to it each verse explains why that is true. Then we come to the last verse where the hymn writer says, "Though sorrow, need or death be mine, I shall not be forsaken." That's because Christ was forsaken for us as he stretched out his arms on the cross. As he himself said from the cross in our Scripture verse for today, "Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" Jesus knew the answer, for sure. He was dying that we might not be forsaken as the hymn says. He died to suffer the punishment we deserved for forsaking God, the cause of all the things I began the devotion with. As the hymn says, "For with his arm he shall embrace and shield me. Think about Jesus stretching out his arms on the cross," he is embracing your sins so that whether you are having a good summer or not, you are not forsaken. Don't let the devil trick you into blaming God for the bad things in your life. As the hymn says, "What God ordains is always good." That is true summer or winter, good weather or bad, trials and tribulations or good times. Listen to the hymn and hear this truth again.

["What God Ordains is Always Good" by the Lutheran Quartet](#)

### **Wednesday, June 30, 2021 - Scripture: John 15:13-17 ; Song: "Child of Love"**

It's the last day of June in 2021. Hopefully, you are finding much more freedom this summer than last. No more masks, no more mandated social distancing, no more limits on who you can be with or how many you can be with. It's tempting to think only about yourself and all the things I can do now that I'm free. Praying that you don't do that, it's selfish and it doesn't help our friends and family. Praying that as our song for today, "Child of Love" by We the Kingdom puts it, "I found a friend in Jesus, I am a child of Love." You can almost feel the song writers talking about the end of the pandemic even though the song was written before that was happening. We might feel like climbing a mountain and doing a host of other things that we have been missing because of the freedom the song talks about. Friendship and love are not about doing stuff for yourself though. As Jesus says, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are friends if you do what I command you." Then after explaining himself in the following verses, he summarizes what he is teaching with these words: "These things I command you, so that you will love one another." As things get back to what I believe will be a new normal, don't be selfish about what you do with your freedom. I encourage you to be, as the group We the Kingdom sing, "A Child of love." Jesus has laid down his life for you to be that child and claimed you as his friend. Instead of being selfish, follow Jesus' command and "Love one Another." Have a great day in Jesus!

[We The Kingdom - Child Of Love \(Lyric Video\)](#)