

Where Two or Three are Gathered Together

‘Mid-Fall’ 2025 - October 12 - Nov 23, 2025

Year ‘C’

Key: *ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

ACS: All Creation Sings

Introduction:

I call this ‘mid-fall’ because it is not really a season, it is ‘between and betwixt’ - between Harvest Thanksgiving and the Reign of Christ, the last Sunday of the church year, this year ‘C’ of our three year cycle of Sunday lections. Local communities will need to make some decisions - about Harvest, about Reformation Day, about All Saints. This period of 7 weeks also includes some notable Saints days and other days of potential observance, all listed in the calendar, pp. 16-17 of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. These include:

Teresa of Avila, October 15

Ignatius of Antioch, October 17

St. Luke the Evangelist, October 18 (the patronal feast for congregations dedicated to St. Luke)

St. James of Jerusalem, October 23

Ss. Simon and Jude, October 28

St Martin de Porres, November 3

A group of Missionaries, November 7

Martin of Tours, November 11

Remembrance Day, November 11

Soren Kierkegaard, November 11

Elizabeth of Hungary, November 17

St. Clement of Rome, November 23

None of these has specific readings attached to them but local custom and tradition may include them in their practice.

This time begins with the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend, in which we in Canada mark the abundance of the harvest and, particularly in rural communities, mark it with special Sunday observances. Similarly: All Saints (November 1) and Reformation Day

(October 31) are noteworthy dates in our calendar and are quite possibly kept as 'special' days within your congregation's annual worship pattern.

This particular group of Sundays concludes with The Reign of Christ (aka Christ the King) on November 23. This Sunday brings to a close the liturgical year and looks forward to the celebration of our own 'New Year' on the first Sunday of Advent, this year on November 30.

Places that have particularly followed the church year and have heard the week-by-week gospel lessons from St. Luke may - wish to continue those through these weeks and not interrupt or lose some of Luke. Others will want to keep Harvest, Reformation, and All Saints.

A note about the calendar and special observances: The end of October and beginning of November present a richness of liturgical opportunities. And liturgical choices! I know that many will keep the tradition of observing Reformation Day on the Sunday prior (in this case, October 26.) Some may have the tradition of keeping Reformation Day on the 31st, whatever day of the week it is. Still others may wish to transfer it to November 2 (there is a long and rich tradition of transferring a special feast to the days after the actual day). Still others may wish to combine celebrations both of Reformation Day and All Saints' to November 2 - this could make for a most joyous and wonderful Sunday! Whatever your community decides is ok - remember to transfer readings for Reformation etc, to October 26 is that is your pattern.

So what can we say about these seven weeks, in terms of the world around us. Summer (which may gloriously continue through September for many of us) sort of 'hangs on' through Thanksgiving in many ways. September has been the month of 'back to school - back to normal', whatever normal is. October and November take us deep into fall, perhaps even into winter. After the great days of summer and the lead up to Thanksgiving, these later days give us a chance to prepare for the winter ahead. We here in Canada understand the dormancy into which the land must go; perhaps it can be in church Sunday by Sunday that we pray for the silence of the wintry earth, for the slowing down of the high level of activity that we have enjoyed through the summer and early fall. Maybe it could be a time of contemplation as we get ready for Advent and a whole new cycle beginning.

Whichever of these 'themes' if any, apply to you and or your congregation, may these weeks be a time of both reflection and anticipation. May you try new things. learn some new hymns, experiment with space and rite. May it be rich indeed!

Sunday, October 12 - Harvest Thanksgiving or Pentecost 18 (Proper 28)

Deut. 26.1-11

2 Kings 5.1-3,7-15c

Psalms 65

Psalms 111

2 Corinthians 9.6-15

2 Timothy 2.8-15

Matthew 13.24-30,36-43

Luke 17.11-19

Colour: Green

Collect: ELW, p. 62

ELW, p.50 (Year C)

Alternate Collect(s):

Harvest:

God of heaven and earth, we sing of your bounty and your goodness in the abundant harvest, in the changing seasons, and in the wonder of nature. With generous hearts, may we share what we have received with those who have little, so that none may hunger or thirst and all may know your wide justice; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Pentecost 18:

God of the known and unknown, open us to those we would exclude and despise; heal and liberate us when we are outcast, so that we may learn to praise your name with hearts that are whole; through Jesus Christ, the Rejected One. **Amen.**

Space: Even if liturgically you are 'keeping' Pentecost 18, consider decorating the church with the 'fruits' of the harvest. For non-rural congregations, a great exercise is considering just what are the 'fruits' of our harvest - possibly not corn and squash - maybe *your* congregation's particular harvest is academia, or auto parts, or steel manufacturing.....what does that mean in terms of a 'harvest'??

In both Gospel readings, abundance and offering thanks are mentioned. What does that mean for you and for your congregation??

Hymns:

Harvest:

ELW 693, 679, 681

ACS: 1063

Pent. 18

ELW: 740, 610

ACS: 1014

Thoughts for the Day:

Harvest: What does deliverance from affliction and need What are our 'first-fruits'? (Deut.) What is the good seed of our time and place? The weeds? (Matthew)

Pentecost readings: There are those Samaritans again. Why are they the ones who always 'get it', and not us? Would you go back and give thanks? Really???

Sunday, October 19 - 19th After Pentecost (Proper 29)

Genesis 32.22-31

Psalm 121

2 TIm. 3.14-4.5

Luke 18-1-8

Colour: Green

Collect: ELW, p. 50

Alternate:

Holy God, we lift our eyes to you in hope and awe. Grant that we may reject all apathy of spirit, all impatience and anxiety, so that, with the persistence of the widow, we may lift our voice again and again to seek your justice. **Amen.**

Seasonal: What's going on in your community that deserves special mention? School events? Local sports teams? Fall fairs? Particular local concerns or issues??

Hymns:

ELW: 710, 579, 583, 469

ACS: 1086

Thoughts for the Day:

Proclaim the message.....with the utmost patience in teaching....' (2 Tim). How do we do that, what does 'proclaim' mean? How can/should you and I do it?

Who are the 'unjust' judges in our world? Who are God's chosen ones to whom he will grant justice? (Luke)

Sunday, October 26 - 20th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 30)

Jeremiah 14.7-10,19-22

Psalms 84.1-7

2 Timothy 4.6-8,16-18

Luke 18.9-14

Colour: Green

Collect: ELW, p. 51

Alternate:

O Jesus Christ, teacher and healer, you heard the cry of the blind beggar when others would have silenced him. Teach us to be attentive to the voices others ignore, and, by the power of the Spirit, respond in your name to heal the afflicted and welcome the abandoned; for your sake and the sake of the gospel. **Amen.**

Hymns:

EWL: 580, 620, 581, 663

ACS: 1037, 1044

Thoughts for the Day:

Piety can be a problem - how do we live authentically, with honesty and humility?

It's easy to judge others; it is more difficult to love them....

*As we approach Halloween and All Saints/All Souls, what costumes so we hide behind?
Where is the 'real' me??*

Sunday, November 2 - All Saints, Reformation

My guess is that most communities will keep either Reformation or All Saints (or both) on this day.

Reformation:

Jeremiah 31.31-34
Psalm 46
Romans 3.19-28
John 8.31-36

Colour: White

Collect: Reformation, ELW p. 58

Space: Banners, depictions of saints, bright colours

Hymns:

ELW: 576, 594, 746, 509
ACS: 1048

All Saints:

Daniel 7.1-3, 15-18
Psalm 149
Ephesians 1.11-23
Luke 6.20-31

All Saints, ELW p. 59

Thoughts for the Day:

The history of the Reformation is made up of many saints: Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, Jan Hus, John Calvin, John Knox. Who are today's saints? Who are the saints sitting here this morning among us? When am I (can I be?) a saint??

Here's a good poem (by Brian Wren) about Saints. Hymn tune (Hunter's Hill) available from Hope Publishing.

All saints? How can it be?

Can it be me,

holy and good,
walking with God?
How can we say that we're all saints?
O that we could!

All saints! -- Crucified love
sings from above
what it will do
making us new,
naming and claiming us "all saints,"
till it comes true.

Some Saints touch the divine,
and as they shine,
candles at night,
holy and bright,
gladden the spirits of all saints,
giving us light.

All saints stumble and fall.
God, loving all,
knowing our shame,
longs to reclaim:
standing or falling we're all saints.
Treasure the name!

Come, saints, crowds who have gone
beckon us on,
hindrances shed,
joy in our tread,
one in the Spirit with all saints,
looking ahead.

Sunday, November 9 - 22nd Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 32)

Job 19.22-27a

Psalm 17.1-9

2 Thess 2.1-5,13-17

Luke 20.27-38

Colour: Green

Collect: ELW, p. 52

Alternate:

Almighty God, you hold the power of the universe within your hands. Transform us through Jesus Christ our Saviour and strengthen us in every deed and word. **Amen.**

Hymns:

ELW: 712, 725, 770

ACS: 983, 1042

Thoughts for the Day:

What does 'standing firm and holding fast to the traditions that we were taught' mean to us now, today? Should we jettison some? Should we not?? (Thess)

What is really going on here? (Luke)

Sunday, November 16 - 23rd Sunday after Pentecost - Proper 33

Malachi 4.1-2a

Psalm 98

2 Thess. 3.6-13

Luke 21.5-19

Colour: Green

Collect: ELW, p. 53

Alternate:

O God, in Christ you give us hope for a new heaven and a new earth. Grant us wisdom to interpret the signs of our times, courage to stand in the time of trial, and faith to witness to your truth and love. **Amen.**

Hymns:

ELW: 618, 793, 396

ACS: 1037, 1043

Thoughts for the Day:

Pretty desperate things going on...what is the price of discipleship? What is our testimony? What is your defence?

Sunday, November 23 - The Reign of Christ (The Last Sunday after Pentecost)

Jeremiah 23.1-6

Psalm 46

Colossians 1.11-20

Luke 23.33-43

Colour: White

Collect: ELW, p. 53

Alternate:

God of unbroken weakness, you scorn our lust for power. Keep us faithful to Jesus Christ, crucified and victorious, in whose authority we dare to speak your truth, even in the face of injustice and death. **Amen.**

Hymns:

ELW: 634, 662, 434, 616

ACS: 952

Thoughts for the Day:

This is the end of the church's year - what does it mean to live under the living rule of a reigning Christ?

The gospel passage is set right in one of the most moving parts of Luke's Passion - it is stark and emotionally charged. Jesus says: 'Father, forgive them....' One of the criminals crucified with Jesus, says: 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' Deeply powerful words and images - what are the words for us, here and now, about Jesus, The King??

Enjoy worship during this 'season between seasons'

Peter Wall

