



ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Second Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 5

June 7, 2026



Say It Out Loud:
“God Loves Sinners”

Moses never forgot how, in a fit of anger, he killed a man. The apostle Paul never forgot how he had savaged the Church of God, overseeing the persecution and execution of Christians around Jerusalem. The apostle Matthew never forgot how, as a tax collector for the Roman Empire, he was distained as a swindler and traitor to his people. These men never forgot their past. But God did. He forgave all their sins and called them into the Holy Ministry to proclaim mercy to sinners. Christians are sinners whom God has mercifully called. Only mercy can explain why Jesus brings sinners to faith and promises them salvation. Only grace can explain how he calls them to serve as they are able, even as messengers of the good news. God loves sinners.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and merciful God, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to seek and to save the lost. Graciously open our ears and our hearts to hear his call and follow him by faith that we may feast with him forever in his kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Lesson ¹

Exodus 3:1-15

We see the pre-incarnate Christ calling Moses into service by his mercy. What else could explain the choice? Moses had already proven himself a failure at delivering God's people from bondage. He was an exiled killer, living in the wilds of Midian after fleeing the court of Pharaoh. No wonder Moses asked, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh?” Everyone called into God's service asks this question of themselves again and again. It comes from knowing that only mercy can explain God choosing us to serve him. But when the minister stops marveling at God's mercy and instead starts questioning God's choice, then God's answer rings out loud and true: I. Not you. I. Thirteen times in the NIV God uses the first-person pronoun. Can the point be clearer? Your call is by my mercy, and the ability to perform the service I give you comes only from me, the great I AM.

Second Reading ¹

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Paul tells the end result of a bright light on the Damascus road—Christ had come to call Saul to service by his mercy. But what an astounding choice! Such a man, to such an office! Only mercy could explain why Christ picked Paul, the worst of sinners. Could there have been a more unlikely man to call as Apostle to the Gentiles? The reason had nothing to do with Paul. It had to do with Christ and his patience. It had to do with us: Jesus wanted us to know that the call to ministry is not based on merit, but on mercy. When he reflects on God calling him to ministry, Paul cannot help but sing the praises of the King of mercy.

Gospel ¹

Matthew 9:9-13

The call of Matthew manifests the mercy of God. Despised as a quisling and swindler, the publican's only companions were the other “sinners” who lived beyond the pale of Jewish Law. Yet the call of Christ to faith and apostleship did not come to these outwardly righteous Pharisees, but to the tax collector. So powerful was the call that Matthew left his station and his old life behind and followed. Jesus bypassed the Pharisees because they knew sacrifice but were blind to mercy. When they questioned Christ's acts of mercy, Jesus tells the teachers of Israel to go and learn Scripture, to see the difference between mercy and sacrifice. Can they really be healthy when they are blind to mercy for their brothers, blind to the prophets, and blind to the Messiah? Christ wanted different ministers than these. He wanted ministers who knew the mercy of God and would share the mercy of God. So he turned to the sinner, Matthew, and called him from his life of sin to a life of ministry with those merciful words, “Follow me.”

Psalm of the Day ⁴

Psalm 119 C

“Teach Me, O LORD” Teth (119:65-72)

The Church sings Psalm 119 in services that encourage us to take the Word of God seriously. Based on the Hebrew alphabet, it is the longest psalm and the longest chapter of the Bible. Martin Luther said, “Psalm 119 is a thorough meditation on the Word of God. It is useful for prayer and for disproving the claims of the devil and false teachers. It contains all kinds of prayer, comfort, instruction, and thanksgiving, pleasing God and grieving the devil.”

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 9:12,13

“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Hymn of the Day

578 “Chief of Sinners Though I Be” (William McComb, 1793-1873)

Church Year Season ¹

Season after Pentecost

After reliving the great events of the life of Christ, the worshipping Church spends half a year focusing on the teachings of Christ. The Church wears green during the season of Pentecost as the Spirit uses those teachings of Jesus to grow the faith of believers. The appointed lessons cover a great body of doctrine for faith and life.

Minor Festivals

St. Barnabas, Apostle (June 11)

Joseph, known to the apostles as “Barnabas,” was a Levite from Cyprus. He was an early convert to Christianity and supporter of the apostles (Acts 4:36). Luke described him as “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith” (Acts 11:24). Barnabas vouched for Saul (later known as Paul, the apostle) when Saul came to Jerusalem to meet the other apostles for the first time after Jesus converted him. Barnabas later became a coworker with Paul and companion on his First Missionary journey (Acts 13:4 – 14:28). Though Paul and Barnabas later parted ways (Acts 15:36-41), Paul spoke well of him in his epistles (e.g. 1 Corinthians 9:6; Galatians 2:11-13).

Colors & Symbolism

Green

Green is the color of life, refreshment, growth, and regeneration. Whereas the first half of the Church Year (the “Festival Half” or the “Half Year of Our Lord”) focused on the life of Christ during his earthly ministry, the emphasis for the second half (the “Non-Festival half” or the “Half Year of the Church”) shifts to the result of Christ’s work through the Word: the work of defining and creating faith, and inspiring its fruits. The theme of the Christian’s growth in faith (like healthy green plants) fills the season.

Nain Paraments

Sundays after Pentecost

Superfrontal: When Isaiah was called to be a prophet of the LORD, two seraphs (a class of angels) appeared and called out to one another, “Holy, Holy, Holy” (Isaiah 6:3). The threefold repetition of the divine adjective emphasizes the infinite holiness of the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Some congregations count the Sundays in this season of the Church Year as the Sundays after the festival of the Holy Trinity, calling it the “Trinity season,” or the “Sundays after Trinity.” That is why most paraments for this season feature symbols of the Holy Trinity.

Lectern antependium: The equilateral triangle is one of the oldest emblems of the Holy Trinity. The three equal sides and angles represent the equality, unity, and co-eternal nature of the three persons of the Trinity. Though they are three distinct persons, they are of one essence as one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). The three interwoven circles represent the three members of the Trinity and emphasize their unity and eternal nature; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are without beginning or end.

Pulpit antependium: At each point of the triangle (the significance of the triangle is explained above) is a nimbus, Latin for *cloud*. The nimbus appears as a circle, or a halo. In Christian artwork, nimbi surround the head of the Father (when he is depicted as a human), Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit (when he is depicted as a dove) to signify their glory and holiness. In artistic depictions of believers (saints), nimbi are placed around their heads to show that they have been made holy by God’s grace in Christ and through faith. The three fish in between the nimbi and that meet in the middle of the triangle signify Christians who are united to the Triune God by faith. Fish have come to represent the followers of Jesus because believers have been brought into the ship of God’s church through the efforts of those who proclaim Gospel (cf. “fishers of men” in Matthew 4:19).

¹ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year A”. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.

² Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year B”. Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

³ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year C”. Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.

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