



## Living the Liturgy

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*the gifts of God in all of life*

“Every time we gather for the divine service history repeats itself. Once again the majestic voice of the Lord is heard, announcing the grace and truth that are in Jesus Christ. Once again God’s Word summons His people in holy assembly to hear God’s Word. And this vehicle of His Word is also the vehicle of our praise. We speak as we are spoken to; God speaks to us in grace and blessing, and we respond in prayer and praise. The cycle is forever the same. The grace and blessing are the Father’s; given freely through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus our prayers and praises are also His; returned in the Spirit through the Son to the Father.”

~ Harold Senkbeil,  
Dying to Live

### Holy Baptism Every Day

“Go therefore and made disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19)

God and His name go together. Throughout Scripture, He promises to work for blessing wherever He puts His name, whether among a people or in a temple.

“Wherever I cause My name to be honored, I will come to you and bless you” (Exodus 20:24). “I have consecrated this temple, by putting My name there forever. My eyes and My heart will always be there” (1 Kings 9:3). So where is God’s name? In Holy Baptism, God put His name on you. You are His people and temple.

As the Small Catechism reminds us, “Baptism is not water only, but water comprehended in God’s command and connected to His Word.” Because God commanded it and connected His name to it, Baptism is more precious than anything we do, and we could spend a lifetime (every day!) thinking about it and rejoicing in it.

**In the Liturgy:** listen for God’s name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It shapes our praise and prayer. If you have children, teach them to listen for it. That name tells the Gospel: the Father sent the Son (Jesus) who sent the Spirit; the Spirit keeps us with Jesus in the Father’s love.

**In the Home:** begin and end your day as the Small Catechism teaches: return to your Baptism by tracing the cross over yourself and saying, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Teach children to do the same. Remember that God has put His name on you as a promise to work in you for blessing.

## God's Gift of Time, Part II

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Last week we introduced God's gift of time. He created time as a gift for ordering our life on earth. Now the Church uses time to proclaim His gospel.

The earth may revolve around the sun, but the Church revolves around Jesus Christ!  
We use . . . .

- + the year to proclaim the gospel in twelve months, from Christ's birth to His final return (a copy of the liturgical year and its meaning is available at the church office or entryways).
- + the week as a celebration of the resurrection, journeying to and from the Lord's Day (Sunday), the day on which Christ rose.
- + the morning and evening light as symbols for remembering Christ the true light.

Today, we look more closely at the Church's use of the day.

In Holy Scripture, each day begins with sundown, not sunrise. Why? Because creation moved from darkness to light: "Darkness covered the face of the deep . . . And God said, 'Let there be light!' . . . And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day" (Genesis 1:1-4). In the same way, the light of the resurrection only dawned after the darkness of the crucifixion (Luke 23:44), and faith is described as moving from "darkness to His wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).

In its playful way, the Church reckons its days the same way. Christmas Eve is part of Christmas Day. Saturday night is "Sunday eve". Why? It's a way of resting in God's work: just as He moved creation, and now the Church, from darkness to light, so do we move from darkness to light each day, confessing that God has graciously made us part of His new creation through Christ.

### **For Home and Work**

*Let the transformed time of the Church envelop and warm you. Transform your perspective so that you keep time with the Church:*

~ see the nights not as "recovering and resting" from the previous day, but as "preparing and resting" for the next day. We always look forward – hope!

~ the early Christians lit candles in their homes at sundown and sang evening hymns. They rose early in the morning to pray.

~ make meals on Saturday evening a time for Scripture and prayer that welcomes the Lord's Day.

~ remember the things that Christ did at different times of day, such as His early morning prayer and healings, or His crucifixion from noon to 3 p.m.; or His "last Supper" on Thursday evening.