

desperate way we are searching for a sign of the end of the world. The Apostles were looking for some clues about the end of the world, even going so far as to ask about the day and the time. Instead of a single sign, or a day/date, Jesus gave us a manner of life. He told us not to fall asleep in our faith. We are not to be frightened by anything in this life because we know that after it all we have the resurrection, we have the wonder and the peace of Heaven. As life drags us down, the knowledge of Heaven lifts us up. As suffering and troubles harm us we are able to stand tall in the knowledge of Heaven as our home. Especially, as we wait for the result of Jesus' work and person to be fulfilled, we watch.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

® Hear us as we call to You, O God. You saved us and called us with a Holy calling, not according to our works, but according to Your own purpose and grace. You gave us Christ Jesus before the world began. We thank You for the abundance of Your mercies, but especially for the gift of Your Son. Through His sufferings and death You have abolished death and, through His Resurrection You brought life and immortality to light.

Grant that by Your grace we would ever continue in the things we have learned through Your Word. We have been taught by the Holy Spirit, so that, being wise unto salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus, we may receive on the day of His coming the crown of righteousness which He has laid up for us and for all who long for His appearing. Save us from following after sin, lies, deceptions and vain philosophies. Free us that we always listen only to Your Holy and Eternal Word of life.

Give strength to Your Church, that with a fervent spirit we may fight the good fight of faith. Raise up a faithful ministry of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Call messengers who will endure hardship as good soldiers in carrying His Gospel to all lands. Prosper the schools of Your Church, that the young people may be prepared to serve You and everyone in useful and honorable vocations. Give the members of Your Church a secure faith in eternal life with You.

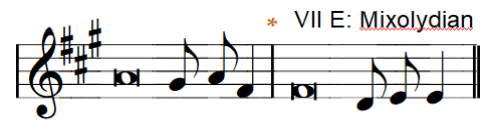
Hear the cry of the afflicted and give them Your compassionate aid. Make straight paths for them, strengthening the weak, upholding the feeble, and healing the sick.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (Time of silent prayer.) Preserve us in our faith, that we continue to look forward to the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ when He comes as our victorious king. In His name we pray.

© Amen.

PROPER TWENTY NINE

Chant Tone



Introit We are waiting for new heavens and a — new Earth* in which righ teousness dwells. O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days;* let me know how fleet ing I am! Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing be — fore You.* Surely all mankind stands as a — mere breath! And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? * My hope is — in You.	Deliver me from all my trans — gressions.* Do not make me the scorn of the fool! Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry;* hold not Your peace at my tears! Glory be to the Father and to the Son* and to the Holy — Spirit; as it was in the be — ginning,* is now, and will be forever. — Amen. We are waiting for new heavens and a — new Earth* in which righ teousness dwells. <i>(Antiphon, 2 Peter 3:13b; Psalm 39:4-5, 7-8, 12a)</i>
--	---

Collect of the Day

Lord Jesus Christ, so govern our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of Your glorious return, we may persevere in both faith and holiness of living; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

These are the ones coming out of the great tribu — lation.*
They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood | of the Lamb.
Blessed are those whose strength is — in You,*
in whose heart are the highways to — Zion.

(Revelation 7:14: Psalm 84:5)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: King of the Cosmos, Redeemer of the world, without beginning and without end, we come before You to praise Your divine majesty. Lord Jesus Christ, we give You humble and hearty thanks for calling us into Your kingdom. We gratefully acknowledge the benevolence of Your kingdom. For setting aside Your Divine majesty and becoming one of us, we adore Your most Holy name. For sacrificing Your life for our salvation, we give You thanks. You have freed us from our sins by Your blood and made us a kingdom of priests before God. To You we ascribe glory, dominion and power forever and forever more. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

TODAY IS THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR, OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY THIS YEAR TO REFLECT ON GOD THE CREATOR AND SUSTAINER OF THE WORLD. We know that tomorrow we will awake in the praise of God, and yet we are also aware that we are living in the end times—the eschaton—and that Jesus has promised to come again to take us to live with Him, in the glory of the Father. We do not know the day and the hour of the second coming of the Savior, we keep ourselves prepared, whether asleep or awake.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Looking for Jesus

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 2 Peter 3:13b;) Psalm 39:4-5, 7-8, 12a
The choice of the Antiphon is pretty obvious. This is the last Sunday of the church year, so we proclaim our hearts desire. Psalm 39 is a hymn of great suffering. It is used for funeral services. David was in great pain. This was written after his great sin with Bathsheba and he was in fear for his salvation. (The end of the story is that their first son died (as a type of Christ for David's sin.)

COLLECT

Because it is easy to forget, we pray to be reminded that Jesus is returning that we would be reminded to live in faith and holiness.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Isaiah 51:4-6

God is describing the salvation that will come to His people. Heaven and Earth and its inhabitants will vanish. On the other hand, "salvation will be forever." These statements are tied to the coming of the Savior in His first advent. The chosen people were seeing their nation and even their place in the world, shrink. The Northern Kingdom was destroyed, the "kingdom" was being refined down to Jerusalem. God made a point to promise that even as they saw death and destruction all around them, He is forever, and the salvation He is offering; Heaven, is forever.

GRADUAL—Revelation 7:14b, Psalm 84:5

Those who have come out of the tribulation of this world are the one's who praise God for the blessings they received. They believed in Jesus as Lord and Savior. They look forward to the Second Coming of Christ. Revelation 7 tells us the number of the saved. Psalm 84, tells us there is a highway to Heaven in the faith of our heart.

EPISTLE LESSON—Jude 20-25

This section of Jude is addressed to the faithful. The faith once delivered to the saints is the very foundation on which the Christian's life is built. Jude was reminding the faithful that watchfulness and perseverance are indispensable ingredients as one contends for the faith. We are built up and kept in the fellowship of others where the Word and Sacraments are offered and given. Left to our own resources, none of us can stand on his own two feet, but God is able. Through the mercy and power in Jesus, we are enabled to stand on our own two feet, in the presence of the glory of God.

GOSPEL LESSON—Mark 13:24-37

The end is near. The stage is set. Today is the last Sunday of the Church year. The problem for Christians is that we long for, and sometimes in a