

Liturgical Resources for Theological Education Sunday September 16, 2012

Lectionary-Based Resources

LECTIONARY SCRIPTURES

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

- [First Reading Proverbs 1:20-33](#)
- [Psalm Psalm 19:1-14](#)
- [Second Reading James 3:1-12](#)
- [Gospel Mark 8:27-38](#)

OPENING SENTENCES

The heavens are telling the glory of God; *Psalm 19*

The firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

Day to day pours forth speech,

Night to night declares knowledge.

Rejoice and give glory to God.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, we give thanks for your awesome handiwork in all Creation.
Gather us into your presence, and surround us with your Spirit as we come to worship you today;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

CONFESSION OF SIN

Consider leading the Prayer of Confession and Declaration of Forgiveness (not included in these resources; see Book of Common Worship, 56-57) from the baptismal font. This helps to illuminate the theological connections between God's forgiveness and the new life we receive in baptism. You may pour water into the font during the call to confession, lift water from the font with your hands as the words of forgiveness are spoken.

(1) Loving God, you come to us in the voice of wisdom; *Proverbs 22; James 3*

You walk beside us each day—

yet we are quick to complain and slow to recognize your care. We do not bridle the destructive power of our tongues. We try to hoard up your good gifts and worry that there is not enough.

Forgive our fearful and selfish ways, and teach us to trust your mercy;
through Jesus Christ our Savior.

(2) *(From Call to Worship Lectionary Aids)*

Psalm 19 and James 3:1-12

Our words are full of deadly poison.

We curse one another, ignoring the likeness of God in our neighbors.

We use our words to bless you, yet curse one another.

Forgive our hidden faults and cleanse us of our public sins.

Let our words and our thoughts be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer.

Silent prayer for confession may follow.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God,

you are the source of all wisdom and truth. Nourish us by your Living Word and fill us with your Holy Spirit, so that we may love and serve you faithfully this day, and always;
through Jesus Christ, true wisdom from heaven. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Consider leading the Prayers of the People and/or the Offering (below) from the Lord's table. This helps to demonstrate our calling—as the body of Christ—to intercede for others and to offer our lives in love for the world.

In faith and hope, let us call on the name of the Holy One, saying:

God, in your wisdom, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church of Jesus Christ our Lord,

for its mission and ministry to a world in need.

Unite us as your people and fill us with your purpose.

God, in your wisdom ...

We pray for our theological seminaries [Austin, Columbia, Dubuque, Louisville, McCormick, Pittsburgh, Princeton, San Francisco, Johnson C. Smith, Union, Auburn, and Evangelical of Puerto Rico],

and for the work of seminaries and churches together.

We give thanks for the women and men who have answered your call to ministry
and for the professors and administrators who help to shape them for your service.
Challenge and nurture them with your Word.
Strengthen and stir them with your Spirit.
God, in your wisdom ...

We pray for the people of all nations and those who govern them,
for the wisdom to seek peace, and the will to do justice.
Heal our divisions, put an end to our violence,
and help us to build new relationships of compassion and understanding.
God, in your wisdom ...

We pray for the earth and its precious resources.
Restore the splendor of your good creation
and give us a common vision of this world as our home.
God, in your wisdom ...

We pray for this community of your people,
for discernment as we seek to be your disciples in this place.
Lead us toward the future you have prepared for us
and keep us faithful in our promises to you and to one another.
God, in your wisdom ...

We pray for the poor and oppressed, and all who suffer,
for those in prison, and those who mourn.
Pour out your healing love on our broken world,
and equip us for ministries of healing and wholeness,
evangelism and outreach, peacemaking and reconciliation.
God, in your wisdom ...

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died,
particularly those saints and sages who bore witness to your light,
opened our hearts to your Word, and helped us to discern your call.
Let our own lives give testimony to your love and grace,
as we seek to share your good news with all the world.
God, in your wisdom ...

Loving God,
receive all the prayers of your people, spoken and silent,
and in your infinite wisdom,
use them for the fulfillment of your new creation;
through Jesus Christ, your Word and our way. **Amen.**

OFFERING

God has given us far more than we deserve, *Mark 8*
Now we set our minds not on human things, but on divine things.
With glad and generous hearts,
let us return to God the offering of our lives.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Generous God, we give you thanks and praise *Mark 8*
for the grace of Jesus Christ,
for the knowledge that Jesus is the Messiah
Strengthen us in faith and faithfulness
and empower us to proclaim this good news, until that day when the last are first and all are one in
your heavenly realm; through Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega. **Amen.**

CHARGE

Jesus asks: "Who do you say that I am?" Mark 8

Go forth this day to live into the answer "You are the Messiah!"

General (Non Lectionary Based) Resources

General (Non Lectionary Based) Resources

CALL TO WORSHIP / OPENING SENTENCES

(1)

Make me to know your ways, O Lord. Psalm 25:4-5 **Teach me your paths.** Lead me in your truth,
and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation. **For you I wait all day long.**

(2)

The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; Proverbs 3:19-22 **by understanding God established the heavens.** By God's knowledge the deeps broke open, **and the clouds drop down the dew.** Children,
do not forget these things: **keep sound wisdom and prudence, and they will be life for your soul.**

(3)

Where shall wisdom be found, Job 28
and where is the place of understanding?

**Mortals do not know the way to it,
and it is not found in the land of the living.**

The deep says, "It is not in me,"
and the sea says, "It is not with me."

**It cannot be gotten for gold,
and its price cannot be paid in silver.**

Where then does wisdom come from,
and where is the place of understanding?

God understands the way to it, and knows its place.

**God looks to the ends of the earth,
and sees everything under the heavens.**

Truly, reverence for the Lord is wisdom.

**To depart from evil, and seek the good:
that is understanding.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY / INVOCATION / COLLECT

Holy God, you dwell in infinite mystery, but we have come to know you truly in Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. You move with wondrous power, but we have come to sense your presence in the Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life. Lead us in this service of worship and in the service of our neighbors that our hearts may be open to your truth and that our lives may be reflections of your love; through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Consider leading the Prayer of Confession and Declaration of Forgiveness (not included in these resources; see Book of Common Worship, 56-57) from the baptismal font. This helps to illuminate the theological connections between God's forgiveness and the new life we receive in baptism. You may pour water into the font during the call to confession, lift water from the font with your hands as the words of forgiveness are spoken.

Gracious God,
you have given us minds to know you, hearts to love and worship you, and strength to serve your people. But we have often squandered your gifts and neglected our calling—turning our strength to violence, our hearts to idle pleasures, and our minds to a thousand distractions.

Redeem us by your saving power, restore us to your beloved community, and return us to the ways of truth and life. through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Silent prayer for confession may follow.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

See the Prayers of the People provided above, in the Lectionary-Based Resources.

OFFERING

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, Romans 12:1 by the mercies of God, to present yourselves— heart and soul, mind and strength— as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of priests and prophets, of disciples and apostles, we give thanks that, in this and every generation, you call women and men to service and leadership in your name. Continue to choose and to call us, to support and sustain us, so that we may bring challenge and comfort your people and give honor and glory to your name for generations to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord, and in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE

(1)

Go out into the world in peace. Matthew 22:37-40 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.

(2)

Do not be conformed to this world, Romans 12:2 but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God— what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Hymn Suggestions

LECTIONARY BASED HYMN SUGGESTIONS

The Heavens Above Declare God's Praise PH 166

Though I May Speak PH 335

Take Up Your Cross, The Savior Said PH 393

HYMNS RELATED TO EDUCATION AND MINISTRY

O God of Earth and Space (PH 274) Called as Partners in Christ's Service (PH 343)

Help Us Accept Each Other (PH 358)

Take My Life, and Let it Be (PH 391)

Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord (PH 392)

How Clear is Our Vocation, Lord (PH 419)

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending (PH 422)

Lord, You Give the Great Commission (PH 429)

We Are Your People (PH 436)

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word (PH 454)

Earth and All Stars (PH 458)

Here I Am, Lord (PH 525)

Praise the Source of Faith and Learning (STF 2004)

At the Font We Start Our Journey (STF 2114)

The Summons (STF 2130)

Together We Serve (STF 2175)

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve (2241)

WORSHIP RESOURCES

FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION SUNDAY

These are resources for a worship service based on the nature of wisdom.

Call to Worship:

Proverbs 8: 1, 4; Psalm 34:11, 100:4

Wisdom raises her voice: "To you, O people, I call. My cry is to all that live."

Come, let us listen to God's teaching.

Which of you desires life and covets many days to enjoy good? Then come, walk in the Way of the Lord.

Let us enter through God's gates with thanksgiving and into God's courts with praise!

Hymn of Praise

Come Sing, O Church, in Joy

PH 430

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

PH 288

Call to Confession

Isaiah 1:18

"Come let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they will be white as snow." Trusting in the promises of God, let us confess our shortcomings before God and one another.

Confession of Sin

Divine Wisdom, your Way is blessed, leading to eternal life. You invite us to walk with you on paths of righteousness, but we do not listen. We think we know better, and waste our days chasing after our own ways. We are fools. We think we know it all and refuse the enlightenment of others' viewpoints. We use knowledge to destroy in many ways--from gossip's tongue to technology's bombs. We stand guilty, ashamed. Yet for all our knowledge, we cannot save ourselves. Forgive us, we pray. We need you, O Wisdom, to wipe the slate clean for us, that we may be filled with the understanding of your ways and stand under your life-giving Word, Jesus Christ our Lord, though whom we pray. Amen.

Hymns that could function as a Prayer for Illumination

Be Thou My Vision

PH 339

God of Grace and God of Glory

PH 420

Eternal Light, Shine in My Heart

PH 340

Scriptures for Theological Education Sunday

Overall, scripture teaches that we are to strive for wisdom as a spiritual gift of God beyond that of mere human knowledge, which is a good thing, but insufficient alone. Wisdom is associated with walking in the Way (Torah) of the Lord. Christ is thus seen as God's Wisdom/Way, whose righteous power is bestowed upon us as a gracious gift as we walk in the Way.

Genesis 3 Human striving after knowledge that belongs to God alone results in the fall.

Deut. 4:5-20 Wisdom is associated with attending to God's Torah (Way/Law).

I Kings 3, II Chronicles 1: Solomon requests the gift of wisdom from God and is given much more as a result.

Psalms 90 may be considered a wisdom psalm, which may be sung to "Lord, You Have Been Our Dwelling Place" PH 211 You may find a scholarly discussion of the wisdom psalms and various lists [here](#).

Proverbs 8:22-31 Wisdom is depicted as God's partner in creation.

Litany of Wisdom based on various wisdom scriptures.

Luke 4:14-20 and **Isaiah 11:1-5** and **Luke 1:77, 2:40, 2:52:** Jesus is the embodiment of wisdom.

I Cor. 1:17-31 Christ crucified is the wisdom and power of God we preach

Revelation 7:9-17 Heavenly worship at the end of time is described with ascriptions of wisdom and knowledge of God centered in Christ.

Ascriptions of Praise after the Reading of Scripture

The Word of the Lord.

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! *Romans 11:33*

This also comes from the LORD of heavenly forces, who gives wondrous counsel and increases wisdom. *Isaiah 28:29*

Thanks be to God!

Ascription of Praise after the Sermon

Amen?

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and always. Amen." *Revelation 7:12*

Hymn of Dedication

God of Grace and God of Glory PH 420

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind PH 345

Affirmation of Faith:

Eph 1:8-10, 1 Corinthians 1:24, Colossians 2:3

Let us stand for what it is we stand for.

One: With all wisdom and insight God has made known to us the mystery of the divine will, according to God's good pleasure set forth in Christ. This is a plan for the fullness of time, a plan to gather up all things in heaven and on earth in him.

Female Voices: **All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ.**

Male Voices: **Christ is God's power and God's wisdom.**

Offering Dedication

We give you thanks, God of Wisdom, for your generous gifts to us. For the gift of life itself, our family, our friends, this church, our community, our nation, this earth. All good gifts come from you. Accept this tribute of thanksgiving for all you have lavished upon us, and use it for your purposes so that all people may know your abundant blessings through Christ our Lord and gladly shout with all the saints:

"Worthy is the Lamb to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and might, and honor, glory, and blessing." *Revelation 5:12*

Communion Service

may include the praise from *Revelation 5:12*: **"Worthy is the Lamb to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and might, and honor, glory, and blessing."**

Sending Hymn

Lord, You Have Been Our Dwelling Place (*to most any LM tune*) PH 211

God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us PH 261

Charge:

James 3:14. Colossians 3:16-17

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Teach and counsel one another with all wisdom, . . . and whatever you do, in or word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God through him.

Benediction:

Ephesians 1:17-19

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which you have been called, what are your riches of God's glorious inheritance as one of the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of the Spirit's power for those who believe.

Sermon Helps

[Bonaventure on Wisdom, Knowledge and Theology](#)

Excerpt from *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, a seminal thirteenth-century work that discusses epistemology and the knowledge of God.

Farley, Edward. *[Practicing Gospel](#)*.

Contains several essays on theology in relation to other forms of knowledge that will prove helpful.

Art on the Theme of Divine Wisdom



McCloud, Shiloh Sophia. [Divine Wisdom](#)

McCloud, Shiloh Sophia. [Wisdom](#).

Plaster, Mary. Sophia, [Divine Wisdom](#). 2004.

Sacchi, Andrea. Allegory of Divine Wisdom. 1629-1633.

Andrea Sacchi, [Allegory of Divine Wisdom](#), c. 1629-33.

Litany of Wisdom Scripture *for two voices and congregation*

The scriptures move from human investigation of wisdom to the acknowledgment that God is the source of wisdom. The litany then moves to explore the nature of wisdom, where she resides and what those who dwell with her are like before going on to encourage us to ask God for wisdom and seek it as the precious gift that it is. The litany comes back to the source of wisdom in God and our reverence of the Holy One.



Voice 1: I turned my mind to know, to investigate, and to seek wisdom, along with an account of things. Ecclesiastes 7:25

Voice 2: I applied my mind to investigate and to explore by wisdom all that happens under heaven. Ecclesiastes 1:13

The LORD gives wisdom; from God's mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 2:6

Voice 1: The LORD laid the foundations of the earth with wisdom, establishing the heavens with understanding. Proverbs 3:19

Voice 2: By divine power God made the earth, shaping the world by his wisdom, crafting the skies by his knowledge. Jeremiah 10:12

Reverence of God is where wisdom begins; sure knowledge is for all who keep God's laws. Psalm 111:10

Voice 1: The Lord of heavenly forces gives wondrous counsel and increases wisdom. Isaiah 28:29

Voice 2: God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to those who please the Lord. Ecclesiastes 2:26

With God are wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are the Lord's. Job 12:13

Voice 2: God teaches the path of wisdom and leads in straight courses. Proverbs 4:11

Voice 1: Wisdom is right in front of those with understanding, but the eyes of fools are off to the edges of the earth. Proverbs 17:24

Wisdom is more beneficial than folly, as light is more beneficial than darkness.

Ecclesiastes 2:13

Voice 1: The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. James 3:17

Voice 2: No wisdom, understanding, or advice can stand up against the LORD. Proverbs 21:30

Voice 1: With pride comes disgrace, but wisdom brings humility. Proverbs 11:2

Voice 2 Know that wisdom is like honey for the soul. If you find it, there is a future and your hope won't be cut off. Proverbs 24:14

As source of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge, God will be the security of your time. Isaiah 33:6

Voice 2 Wisdom makes a wise person stronger than ten rulers protected behind city walls. Ecclesiastes 7:19

Voice 1: Wisdom's protection is like the protection of money; the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who possess it. Ecclesiastes 7:12

By wisdom a house is built; by understanding it is established. Proverbs 24:3

Voice 1: Wisdom resides in an understanding heart. Proverbs 14:33

Voice 2 Wisdom, dwells with prudence. Proverbs 8:12

Blessed are those who find wisdom and those who gain understanding. Proverbs 3:13

Voice 1: The mouths of the righteous recite wisdom; their tongues discuss justice. Psalm 37:30

Voice 2 The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouting of a ruler among fools. Ecclesiastes 9:17

Voice 1: Those skilled in wisdom will shine like the sky. Those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever and always. Daniel 12:3

Voice 2 Anyone who needs wisdom should ask God, whose nature is to give to everyone without a second thought, without keeping score. Wisdom will certainly be given to those who ask. James 1:5

Turn your ear toward wisdom, and stretch your mind toward understanding. Proverbs 2:2

Voice 1: Acquiring wisdom is much better than gold, and acquiring understanding is better than silver. Proverbs 16:16

Voice 2: Get wisdom! Get understanding before anything else. Proverbs 4:7

Respect for the Lord is wisdom; turning from evil is understanding. Job 28:28

Voice 1: Get wisdom; get understanding. Don't forget and don't turn away from God's words. Proverbs 4:5

Voice 2: Say to wisdom, "You are my sister!" Call understanding, "Friend!" Proverbs 7:4

Voices 1 and 2 Reverent respect for God is where wisdom begins; sure knowledge is for all who keep The Way of the Lord. May God's praise last forever! Psalm 111:10

God's name be praised from age to age, for wisdom and might belong to God! Daniel 2:20