

Life Thoughts in the Church Year – July-September 2026 – One Year Lectionary

July 2 – The Visitation – Today we journey with Mary to the hill country of Judah to visit her relative, Elizabeth. Both women were blessed by God with miraculous pregnancies. Even in the womb, a child can be filled with God’s Spirit and recognize the Savior’s presence (Luke 1:39-45)! The pregnancies in our midst may not be as miraculous, but every new human life is a cause for rejoicing. And every child in the womb is, in fact, a blessing from God.

July 5 – Trinity 5 – We labor night and day in the monotonous—in the diapers, in the dishes, in the routine of our day-to-day lives—and it can often seem to be in vain (Luke 5:1). We wear ourselves out and despair with Elijah that we alone are left to overcome the challenges (1 Kings 19:14). But even when it seems foolish or absurd, we take God at His Word, knowing that He brings the catch (Luke 5:5-7). The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but for us it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18). The cross redeems our work and gives us hope, even when our works feel vain or when despair takes over (1 Kings 19:14).

July 12 – Trinity 6 – Jesus, who did not come to destroy the Law, but to keep it (Matthew 5:17), teaches us that we are all guilty of breaking the 5th Commandment (Exodus 20:13). Even though we may not have had an abortion or ended someone else’s life, we have been angry with those who have. Therefore, we are all equally in need of His salvation (Matthew 5:20). Thankfully, Jesus has reconciled us to Himself (Matthew 5:23-24) by uniting us to His death and resurrection through Baptism, and He empowers us to live a new life of love toward each of our neighbors (Romans 6:1-4).

July 19 – Trinity 7 – God fashioned and formed Adam from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7). He knits us together in our mother’s wombs, and He provides for us in all the needs of life, both in body and in soul (Mark 8:2-3). Precious in His sight are all the children of men because He has formed and created each of us and continues to sustain our earthly lives. Additionally, He also offers us the free gift of everlasting life in His own blood (Romans 6:23), thus declaring each person worthy of our love and protection.

July 26 – Trinity 8 – The world tells us that we should follow our own hearts, changing or forsaking God’s Word about life and sexuality, and promising that it will be well with us when we do (Jeremiah 23:16-17). Beware of these false prophets who are ravenous wolves, seeking to draw you away from Christ (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:30). Instead, as God’s children and heirs of His kingdom in Christ (Romans 8:17), pay attention to the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), and you will stand on level ground (Psalm 26:12).

August 2 – Trinity 9 – It’s easy for us to sit and point our fingers at those who commit sins against life. But we must all remember that we were “brought forth in iniquity” and “conceived in sin” (Psalm 51:5). We have each committed our own sins against life and must “take heed” lest we fall into the same sins of sexual immorality and grumbling (1 Corinthians 10:10-12). Thankfully, God is faithful to “cleanse us from our sins” (Psalm 51:2) and “provide the way of escape” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

August 9 – Trinity 10 – As in Jeremiah’s day, it may seem to us that in this culture of death, “everyone turns to his own course” and that many around us “have rejected the Word of the Lord” (Jeremiah 8:6, 9). However, recognizing that every person is created, redeemed, and called

Life Thoughts in the Church Year – July-September 2026 – One Year Lectionary

by God, we do not see them as our enemies. Instead, we weep over them and pray, along with Jesus and St. Paul, that their eyes would be opened to “know the things that make for peace” (Luke 19:42) that “they may be saved” (Romans 10:1).

August 16 – Trinity 11 – As Cain and the Pharisee prove, when we place our trust in our own righteousness, the result is that we “treat others with contempt” (Luke 18:9), including sometimes our own flesh and blood. But Jesus has died for all the children of wrath, and we are saved by God’s grace through faith (Ephesians 2:3-8). Therefore, we need not trust in our own righteousness, and we walk in the good works created for us in Christ (Ephesians 2:10), treating each of our neighbors—regardless of their size, age, or condition—as gifts for whom Christ died.

August 23 – Trinity 12 – Jesus never saw those with disabilities as burdens to be dealt with or impediments to His own life. Instead, He, who makes “no distinction” between people (Romans 10:12), treated the sick and disabled in the same way He treats every other person: as one affected by sin and in need of His love and redemption. As we await the day of the resurrection, at which time all the deaf will hear and the blind will see (Isaiah 29:18), let us sanctify the name of God (Isaiah 29:23) by following Jesus’ example in loving each one of our neighbors.

August 30 – Trinity 13 – Jesus exemplifies the Good Samaritan, bearing the burden of sin and pouring out the healing balm of His blood for all people, even those who sought His death (Luke 10:33-34). Through His Gospel, which forgives all transgressions and covers all sins (Psalm 32:1), we learn that our mercy is to extend to every neighbor whom God places in our path, regardless of how doing so might affect our way, and we are empowered to “go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37).

September 6 – Trinity 14 – The lepers are given to be our example today (Luke 17:11-19). They set themselves apart, for they were unclean. We, too, know the sin of our covetous and lustful hearts revealed by God’s Word. Yet, despite their exile and lowly state, the lepers boldly cried out for mercy to the One who is mercy. Jesus comes for sinners. God’s mercy is for those who know their need. Whatever you have done to sin against God and your neighbor, repent, confess your sin, and be healed in body and soul. His mercy is for you. Rejoice, beloved, for those in Christ have forgiveness of all their sins.

September 13 – Trinity 15 – The evil one, the world, and your easily influenced sinful flesh preach doubt in God’s Word, which is false faith (Matthew 6:24-34). Consider who it is that knows your need, who loves you, who watches over you day and night? It is He who rules all of creation, directing everything in the entire cosmos for the benefit of His children. He is your God. True faith overcomes false faith. Jesus is the object of true faith. We fill our hearts and minds with Him. We daily read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest Him in the Holy Scriptures and His Supper. Beloved in Christ, all your needs are met, and true peace is yours in Jesus.

September 20 – Trinity 16 – Let all men know that the Lord is God (Luke 7:11-17). Yes, He appeared in a form like ours. Yet He has revealed to us His divine power and majesty throughout the Scriptures. He healed diseases and rebuked unclean spirits. He gave the blind their sight. Finally, He even evicted death itself from the bodies of men, death that cruelly and mercilessly had tyrannized humankind from Adam even to you. That widow’s son at Nain was raised from

Life Thoughts in the Church Year – July-September 2026 – One Year Lectionary

death to life amidst the finality of it all. Truly unbelievable apart from faith. Jesus, your Lord, your God, will raise you with those same words: “I say to you, arise.” For each of us baptized into Jesus, death has no power.

September 27 – Trinity 17 – Humility is the posture of the Christian (Luke 14:1-11). The lower place is our preference. After all, we are the creatures. Yet, pride is the great prize of our old man. Pride kills the humble new man. Therefore, our pride must be put to death. The One who fulfilled the Law does just that. Humility was on full display in Jesus on the cross. He took our lower place, a place we deserved, that we might be moved up to rejoice in the presence of our Creator Host, our Triune God. “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Life Thoughts in the Church Year for July-September 2026 were written by Rev. Aric Fenske, Rev. Rod Stewart, Rev. Doug Peeters, Rev. Joseph Signore.