

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

July 5 – Pentecost 6 – Sin dwells in each one of us so that even when we desire to do what is right, we are seldom able to do it without stain (Romans 7:18). Therefore, even Christians fall into sins which dehumanize our neighbors. We treat others differently or harbor hatred toward them because of their race, political views, past sins, etc. Thanks be to God that He is pleased to reveal His salvation to us in His Son, Jesus Christ, forgiving our sins, delivering us from the power of sin, and considering us as His own beloved children (Matthew 11:25-27; Romans 7:25).

July 12 – Pentecost 7 – Oh, how many sins against life occur because the devil has snatched the Word of God from peoples' hearts and because the cares of this earthly life choke out the Word (Matthew 13:19-22)! We are often tempted to withhold preaching the Word to some, thinking that we know which people will believe and bear fruit. However, God calls us to continue casting out His Word onto every type of soil, knowing that His Word never returns to Him empty and will accomplish His purpose (Isaiah 55:11), sometimes in the most unlikely of places.

July 19 – Pentecost 8 – The devil sowed his evil seed of suffering and death into the world by convincing Adam to doubt and disobey God's Word (Matthew 13:39). The sons of the evil one (Matthew 13:38) would convince us that we could avoid the sufferings of this present time (Romans 8:18) by embracing death through abortion, suicide, and euthanasia. But, God, who is our Rock (Isaiah 44:8), promises us true redemption from suffering through the blood of Christ, in whom we are adopted as God's children and have the promise of the resurrection of our bodies (Romans 8:23).

July 26 – Pentecost 9 – God does not love us because of any quality in us, such as our age, physical ability, potential, wisdom, race, etc. (Deuteronomy 7:6-7). God chose to love us from His own good grace and mercy and gave all He had, His own dear Son, to purchase the world from sin and have us as His own possession (Matthew 13:44). In doing so, God reveals that every person—regardless of their age, size, or condition—is a precious treasure to Him and is worthy of our love and protection.

August 2 – Pentecost 10 – Our God is the Lord and Giver of life! “Come ... incline your ear to me, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live” (Isaiah 55:3)! “He who gives food to all flesh, for His steadfast love endures forever” (Psalm 136:25) also gives nourishment to every born and preborn life He knits together fearfully and wonderfully. Even while I “have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart” (Romans 9:2) over the spiritually lost and the violence of abortion and euthanasia, we continue to eat and be satisfied (Matthew 14:20) from Jesus Christ, our Bread of Life.

August 9 – Pentecost 11 – “Who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb” (Job 38:8)? While He knitted you together in your mother's womb, our gracious God surrounded you with a beautiful watery cushion of amniotic fluid, which no one should ever hurt or harm. “The person who does the commandments shall live by them” (Romans 10:5, quoting Leviticus 18:5), showing that God desires life for us and not death. We worship our living, risen Lord, and not a ghost (Matthew 14:26-27), just as we speak and act for every enfleshed soul whom He has made in His image.

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August 16 – Pentecost 12 – “Thus says the LORD: Keep justice, and do righteousness ...” (Isaiah 56:1, 7)! Keep justice for innocent unborn babies and for every human life, dear Christian friends. “For God has consigned all to disobedience, that He may have mercy on all” (Romans 11:32). All have sinned and fallen short—every age, every ability, every race, both genders—and God has had mercy on all in Christ our crucified and risen Lord of life! Let us pray for His mercy, along with the Canaanite woman’s cry for her daughter (Matthew 21:22), even when we don’t receive an answer to our for-life prayers right away.

August 23 – Pentecost 13 – Do you remember the day you were born? No? Your Father in heaven does! So do your earthly mother and father. “Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him” (Isaiah 51:2). Every human life has a divine plan and purpose: “The LORD will fulfill His purpose for me” (Psalm 138:8)! “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things” (Romans 11:36)! Blessed are all whom God our Father in heaven forgives, saves, and justifies by faith (Matthew 16:17).

August 30 – Pentecost 14 – At the end of earthly life, we might cry out: “Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?” (Jeremiah 15:18). Don’t take your life, or anyone else’s, into your own hands. Receive St. Paul’s encouragement for all your for-life conversations: “Love one another with brotherly affection ... associate with the lowly ... live peaceably with all ... do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:9-21). Even though many of us may “taste death” before the Son of Man returns, we set our minds on the things of God—life! —and not the things of man (Matthew 16:23, 28).

September 6 – Pentecost 15 – In faith, as God’s watchmen, we humbly proclaim His Word. The faithful Word gives a true warning to the wicked (Ezekiel 33:7-8). We are called to speak boldly when lives are heartlessly ended and when God’s gifts are mocked. We also rejoice as we teach about forgiveness. In Psalm 32 we read that the Lord forgives those who acknowledge their sin before Him. In God’s plan, He allows us to be watchmen, proclaiming warnings so that all may confess their sins and have a clear conscience. Many have guilty consciences because they have rejected the truth concerning God’s gift of life. May God’s mercy lead them to rely completely on the grace of God.

September 13 – Pentecost 16 – Joseph was a man wronged, repeatedly. However, as we find him in Genesis 50, those wrongs against him did not lead him to live with bitterness or a desire for revenge. Instead, we find that God provided him with patience and compassion even against those who had so terribly sinned against him. We are often quick to anger and slow to forgive. May He work patience and wisdom in our hearts when we hear about the numerous ways God’s gifts are twisted. Thanks be to God that He is “slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love” (Psalm 103:8).

September 20 – Pentecost 17 – Thanks be to God for faithful servants of God who have lifted up the truth of God’s Word in their times. Believers who recognize the difficulties of this life often yearn to be with the Lord as Paul says, “...for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). So, today, we need not fear death or any enemy, but we can rejoice and stand firm in the Holy Spirit, speaking the truth about God’s gifts of life, eternity, and forgiveness. The

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Lord's Word makes clear that He wants people everywhere to repent and be cleansed of their sins that they may dwell with Him forever (Psalm 27:4).

September 27 – Pentecost 18 – The consistent refrain of the foes of life is something like, “You are more significant than others” or “Look to your own interests.” This refrain seeps into the everyday routine of many because it resonates with our sinful nature. In fact, we grumble at the slightest infringements on our lives of convenience. The Apostle Paul instructs each of us to “look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4). The world tries to drum into our minds that raising up children, serving those in need, caring for the elderly, and tending to those who are dying are useless pursuits. But in Christ we see the value of each life and the joy that God provides in seeing people loved.

September 29 – St. Michael and All Angels – The world we walk in today is a battlefield. As such, it is filled with messages from the enemy which attempt to convince us of the Lord's weakness and defeat. Those with fears about an unplanned pregnancy, a terminal diagnosis, or confusion about their identity are told there are no paths to peace and wholeness. But God's Word speaks of His faithful and powerful servants, the angels, who fight for the Lord, protect His people, and conquer in the name of Jesus Christ. So, may the Lord work in us humble childlike faith that rejoices in Christ's victory and the safety that He provides as He rescues us through the finished work of the Cross.

Life Thoughts in the Church Year for July-September 2026 were written by Rev. Aric Fenske, Rev. Alex Post, Rev. Dennis Norby.