



**RESTORING
HOPE:
CARE FOR
MENTAL
HEALTH**

SPIRITUAL CARE COMPANION

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CARE FOR
MENTAL
HEALTH



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1333 S. Kirkwood Road | St. Louis, MO 63122
888-THE LCMS (843-5267) • lcms.org/health

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INTRODUCTION

Lutherans have always understood well-being to encompass both body and soul. “Restoring Hope” is a resource designed to offer guidance and spiritual support for individuals, caregivers and others who are navigating various mental health challenges. In this resource, you will find a pertinent Scripture verse, hymn stanza, theological reflection and prayer for common mental health issues, as well as other valuable resources and information. This resource is written primarily for caregivers to read aloud to the souls for whom they are caring. Rooted in the Lutheran understanding of the theology of the cross, we approach these issues through the lens of Christ crucified.

This means that we recognize that mental health challenges do not define us. Rather, these tribulations serve to turn us away from ourselves and focus solely on Christ, who invites us to cast our burdens on Him because He cares for us (1 PETER 5:7). We pray that you are encouraged by this resource, and refreshed with the truth of God’s abiding presence and steadfast love for you in the midst of life’s trials.

If you are in an emergency situation, please call 911. If you are depressed or thinking about harming yourself or someone else, or if this is the case for someone you know, please call or text 988 from a smartphone to reach the National 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

– OVERVIEW –

WARNING SIGNS AND HELPING STRATEGIES

There are many warning signs that medical and psychology professionals identify for mental health problems and disorders. Some include:

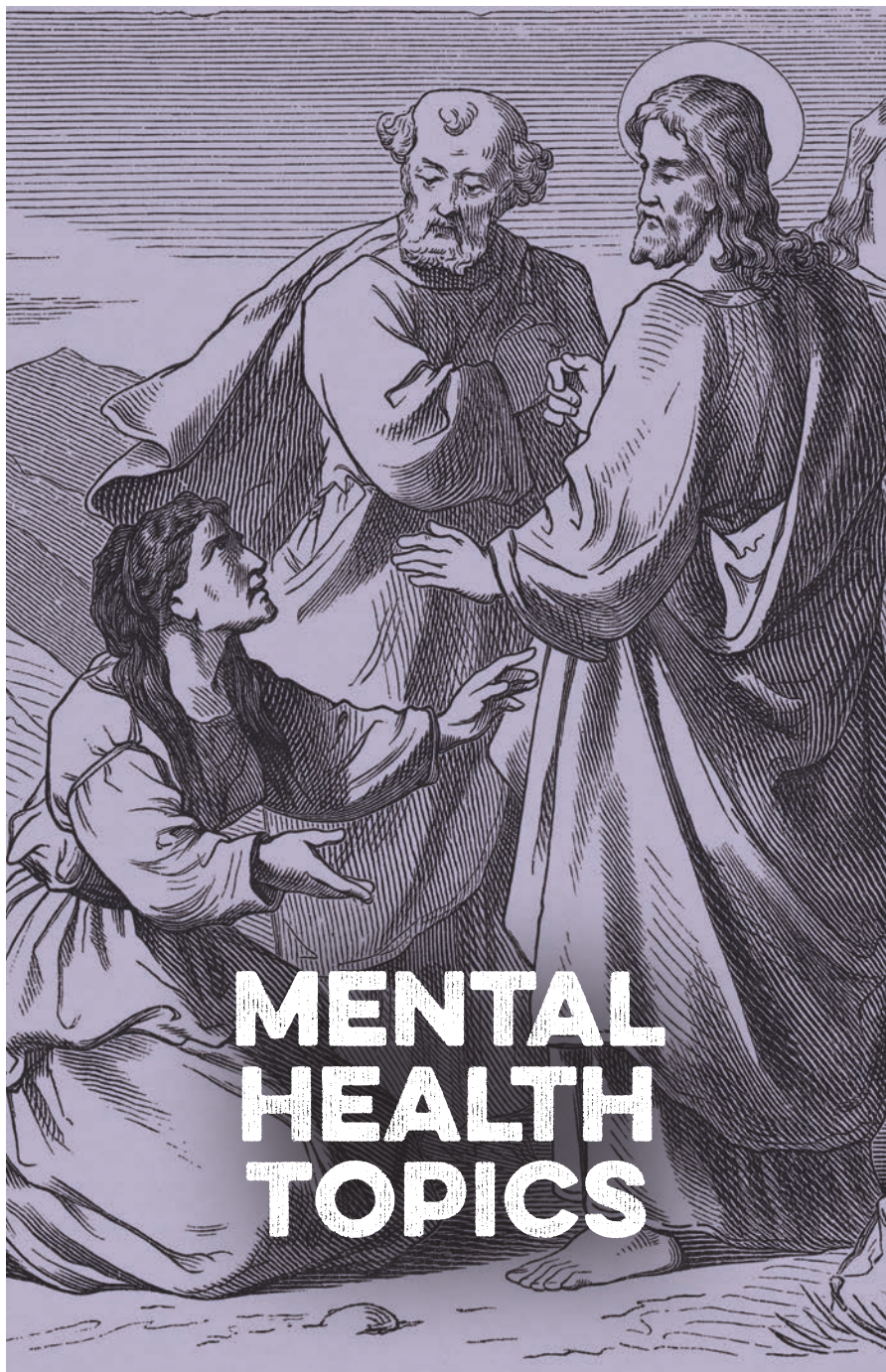
- › Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- › Seriously trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so
- › Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors
- › Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason
- › Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain
- › Seeing, hearing or believing things that are not real
- › Repeatedly using drugs or alcohol
- › Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- › Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still
- › Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities¹

The above emotions and behaviors may indicate a mental health problem or illness. If you notice these things about yourself, please get help from a medical or psychological professional and seek spiritual care from a pastor. If you notice the emotions and behaviors in a loved one or a person for whom you care, there are some simple strategies you can undertake to help the individual²:

- › Gently and compassionately ask the person about the emotions and behaviors that you observe. Plan to have a conversation that is at least 20 minutes in length.
- › Keep the person safe, including calling for immediate professional intervention (calling 911 or 988) as needed.
- › Be there for distressed individuals by listening.
- › Offer referrals to professional help, and accompany the person to get needed help.
- › Stay connected and continue to care for the person within your competency and abilities.

¹ National Alliance Mental Illness (NAMI)
<https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-by-the-Numbers/Infographics-Fact-Sheets>

² National Institute Mental Health (NIMH)
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/5-action-steps-for-helping-someone-in-emotional-pain>



ANXIETY

Most of us have experienced some type of anxiety. Being overly worried over your work, relationships, and other cares of this world is a common experience. Our Lord, however, calls us to not rely on ourselves, but to trust in Him. He invites us to cast our cares and our worries on Him alone, trusting that He will provide for our every need. This is what faith is all about. The Holy Spirit gives us faith that clings to God in the midst of life's trials and tribulations. When anxiety afflicts you, be comforted that your Savior stands ready to bear your worries and fears. Pray to Him in every trouble and every joy, continuing to receive His good gifts every week at His holy house.

PRAYER

Merciful Father, In the depths of anxiety's grip, we turn to you, seeking solace and peace for all who are burdened by fear and worry. We pray for all who wrestle with the relentless storm of anxiety, longing for relief and reassurance, especially for your servant _____. In your mercy, grant him/her Your peace that surpasses understanding. Assure him/her that You are with him/her always in Your Word and Sacraments. May he/she find rest in Your promises and Your Son, who bore all anxiety, worry and sin upon Himself, winning the victory over all of these by His death and resurrection. Continue to comfort _____, defend him/her against all evil, and bring him/her to eternal life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

— MATT. 11:28–30

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Phil. 4:6–7; John 16:33

HYMN

Salvation Unto Us Has Come (LSB 555)

- 1 Salvation unto us has come
By God's free grace and favor;
Good works cannot avert our doom,
They help and save us never.
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone;
He is our one Redeemer.
- 7 Let me not doubt, but truly see
Your Word cannot be broken;
Your call rings out, “Come unto Me!”
No falsehood have You spoken.
Baptized into Your precious name,
My faith cannot be put to shame,
And I shall never perish.
- 9 Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
For faith alone can justify;
Works serve our neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living.

COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

Our Lord delights in His whole creation, but He especially rejoices over the precious people He has made. We are all masterpieces of His workmanship, and He knows the good works He has laid out for us beforehand (EPH. 2:10). Regardless of our abilities, strengths or weaknesses, the Lord sings over His beloved children. Through Baptism He unites Himself to you and claims you as His own. That means that the Lord's might, power and protection also belong to you. Take heart in all trials, knowing that the Lord is glad in you.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You value all of creation and humanity as Your beloved children, especially all who suffer from cognitive impairment. This day we pray for Your servant _____. In the face of the uncertainties his/her challenges bring, You are the constant source of strength, mercy and refuge. Grant _____ the assurance of Your unfailing love, that he/she may find peace and comfort in You alone. Comfort him/her when he/she feels isolated, misunderstood or confused. You have made _____ Your own precious child in his/her Baptism, and his/her identity is in You. According to Your good and gracious will, grant him/her healing of mind and body and comfort in the victory of Christ crucified, for him/her. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

- ZEPH. 3:17

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 59; Psalm 71

HYMN

Jesus Loves Me (LSB 588)

- 1 Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong.

Refrain:

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

- 2 Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven's gates to open wide.
He has washed away my sin,
Lets His little child come in.
[Refrain]

DEPRESSION

A true gift of the Psalms is that they give words to our suffering. Suffering often feels vague and nondescript. Depression is real and visceral. It can make our souls feel utterly downcast. Depression can feel like a wave pulling us under to drown us in deeper waters. Turmoil and hopelessness lurk in these dark seas.

We join our voice with the psalmist and cry out even in our despair, for we have the promises of God and the certain hope of His salvation. His holy Baptism has drowned us in waves of mercy, and He remains steadfast throughout our entire baptismal life. Martin Luther reminds us that we pray for this as God's children every time we pray the Lord's Prayer. As Luther writes, "We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice" (Small Catechism, Lord's Prayer, 6th petition). We pray for this deliverance daily, and our Lord inclines His ear to our prayer and answers us. Remember, even in the dark night of the soul He preserves our life. He commands His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways (PSALM 91:11). For this sweet comfort our lips can praise Him.

PRAYER

Merciful Father, We pray for our brothers and sisters who navigate the depths of depression, longing for light and healing in their anguish, especially

for your servant _____. Send your holy angel to defend him/her against all evil of body and mind, and remind him/her that sin and shame do not define him/her. He/she is loved, valued and precious in Your sight. Be with him/her, dispelling his/her darkness and bringing him/her into Your marvelous light. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

— PSALM 42:5-6A; 7-8

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Deut. 31:8; Psalm 34

HYMN

Holy Spirit, Light Divine (LSB 496)

- 1 Holy Spirit, light divine,
Shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away,
Turn the darkness into day.
- 4 Holy Spirit, joy divine,
Cheer this saddened heart of mine;
Yield a sacred, settled peace,
Let it grow and still increase.

ANGER

Anger is not a new emotion to any of us, but some bear the cross of being more quick to anger than others. Anger is not intrinsically sinful, but often leads to sin. In First Corinthians 13, we learn that love is patient, kind and not easily angered. The sinful dangers that often accompany anger are clear throughout Scripture, and we are called to repentance. The first step in dealing with anger is to confess this sin before God. Ask your pastor for private Confession and Absolution, where you verbally confess the sins caused by your anger, and hear the beautiful Absolution of our Lord given to you. Pray to God about your struggle with anger and pray for those with whom you are angry. Christ has promised to hear and answer your prayers. Sing hymns of love, rooted in Christ's love for you, and make every attempt to reconcile with God and/or your neighbor before the sun sets for the day.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Grant patience to all those who struggle with anger, especially _____. Give him/her a spirit of humility and patience, granting him/her a repentant and forgiving heart as he/she extends the love that you have first shown to him/her. Relieve him/her of this harsh temptation, according to Your good and gracious will. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

— EPH. 4:26–27, 31

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 37; James 1:19–20

HYMN

The King of Love My Shepherd Is (LSB 709)

- 1 The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.
- 3 Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me
And on His shoulder gently laid
And home rejoicing brought me.
- 6 And so through all the length
of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing
Thy praise
Within Thy house forever!

COMPASSION FATIGUE

Are you weary? Are you burdened by the heaviness of caring for others? Our Lord knows what it is to show relentless compassion. While we are prone to buckle under the weight of endless caregiving, our Heavenly Father never grows faint, never tires, never falters. We are limited creatures, but our Creator is limitless in strength and constant in presence. We run — yes, run — to Him when we meet the end of ourselves. His rest and renewal remind us who we really are. His rest and renewal remind us that we must rest often. His rest and renewal will strengthen us for every good work He has prepared for us to do.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You are the source of all mercy and love. In the midst of our service to others, we sometimes find ourselves weary and burdened by the weight of compassion fatigue. We pray especially for your servant _____. Grant him/her wisdom to recognize that You are the source of all healing and comfort, and he/she does not bear this burden alone. Give _____ consolation and encouragement through fellow Christians, uplifting one another through Your Holy Word. Grant us grace to continue extending Your love and mercy to others, as we ourselves find refreshment through Your Word and Sacraments. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

— ISAIAH 40:28–31

HYMN

Jesus, Refuge of the Weary (LSB 423)

- 1 Jesus, refuge of the weary,
Blest Redeemer, whom we love,
Fountain in life's desert dreary,
Savior from the world above:
Often have Your eyes, offended,
Gazed upon the sinner's fall;
Yet upon the cross extended,
You have borne the pain of all.

GRIEF



Grief can take many forms, and grief can be over a multitude of things: loss of a loved one, loss of health, loss of independence, loss of a friendship and so on. In *A Grief Observed*, C.S. Lewis describes grief as a “...long, winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape.” Though there are different stages of grief, some may engulf you more than others, and your grief may come and go during this long journey. Yet you are not alone in this valley. The landscapes may change, but there is something that is constant. That is Christ’s love for you. It is OK for you to weep. Christ Himself wept

at the death of His friend Lazarus. Yet, as St. Paul writes, we do not mourn as those who have no hope. Cling to Christ and His promises to you during this time, seek comfort in the fellowship of your brothers and sisters in Christ, and be assured “Weeping may tarry through the night, but joy comes in the morning (PSALM 30:5).”

Christ promises you that there will be a time when your mourning is over, and He will wipe every tear away from your eyes.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, comfort _____ who mourns with the truth of Christ's empty tomb, that in the midst of his/her grief he/she may abide in the hope of His resurrection. Uphold _____ in faith as he/she awaits the day when You will wipe every tear from all eyes. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

— 1 THESS. 4:13–18

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Matt. 5:2–12; Rev. 21:4

HYMN

Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart (LSB 708)

- 1 Lord, Thee I love with all my heart;
I pray Thee, ne'er from me depart,
With tender mercy cheer me.
Earth has no pleasure I would share.
Yea, heav'n itself were void and bare
If Thou, Lord, wert not near me.
And should my heart for
sorrow break,
My trust in Thee can nothing shake.
Thou art the portion I have sought;
Thy precious blood my soul
has bought.
Lord Jesus Christ, my God and
Lord, my God and Lord,
Forsake me not! I trust Thy Word.
- 3 Lord, let at last Thine angels come,
To Abr'ham's bosom bear me home,
That I may die unfearing;
And in its narrow chamber keep
My body safe in peaceful sleep
Until Thy reappearing.
And then from death awaken me,
That these mine eyes with joy may see,
O Son of God, Thy glorious face,
My Savior and my fount of grace.
Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer attend,
my prayer attend,
And I will praise Thee without end.

LONELINESS

When God created humanity, He created a people meant to be in fellowship with one another and with Him. However, a sinful, fallen world means broken fellowships. We can become isolated, feeling alone even if we are in a bustling crowd. With Christ, you are never alone. Christ promises He is with you always, in the ways He has promised: His Word and His Sacraments. You are baptized into His name and welcomed into His family. And in this family, you are never alone. You are joined with all the company of heaven, Christians around the world, the saints who have entered eternal rest, angels and archangels. Reach out to your pastor, members of your church and other Christians for company. Even in the loneliest of circumstances, trust in Christ alone. He has taken you in, and you are His.

PRAYER

Merciful Lord, You are the Good Shepherd. You have promised that your goodness and mercy shall follow us all of the days of our lives, even when we feel alone. Look with compassion upon those who are struggling with loneliness, especially _____. Reassure him/her of Your love, which is like that of the shepherd who seeks and saves the one lost sheep. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, Lord, do I seek." Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation! For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in.

— PSALM 27:7–10

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 25; Isaiah 41:8–10

HYMN

God of Grace and God of Glory
(LSB 850)

- 1 God of grace and God of glory,
On Your people pour Your pow'r;
Crown Your ancient Church's story;
Bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
For the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.
- 2 Lo, the hosts of evil round us
Scorn the Christ, assail His ways!
From the fears that long have
bound us
Free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
For the living of these days,
For the living of these days.

MELANCHOLY

Satan is a distorter of truth and the master of lies. If you think you are a failure, friendless and unloved, know that these thoughts come from Satan, and that you are not alone in this suffering. Martin Luther dealt with these feelings of depression. In his tribulation he turned to Christ, just as St. Paul discusses in Galatians 2. St. Paul refocuses our minds onto Christ and Him crucified, not on us. Your life is no longer all about you, your failings, and your regrets. It's all about Christ and what He's done for you. He is the one who lives in You. This life you live is now lived out in faith. How do you know these promises are for you? Trust in the promises Christ has given you in your Baptism. Christ has called you by name, you are His, and nothing — no feelings, and no lies from Satan himself — can separate you from the love Christ has for you.

PRAYER

Almighty God, Your Son humbled Himself to the point of death on the cross for our eternal good. Until the day of His return, You provide for all our needs of body and soul. Abide with those who suffer afflictions of mind or body, including pain, sorrow, depression, anxiety or other maladies. Remember especially _____ . Continue to assure him/her that You are the source of all peace and comfort. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

— GAL. 2:20

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 34; Psalm 102

HYMN

What a Friend We Have in Jesus (LSB 770)

- 1 What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;
Oh, what needless pain we bear—
All because we do not carry
Ev'rything to God in prayer!
- 2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
- 3 Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In His arms He'll take and shield thee;
Thou wilt find a solace there.

SPIRITUAL ASSAULT



Christians will always be under the assault of the devil. What's more, the devil has an ally in the world and our fallen flesh. Satan uses the Old Adam within us to seek after idols to tempt us to fear, love and trust in anything rather than God. Even our emotions can be turned into idols, as we are tempted to trust our feelings rather than the unchanging Word of God. Yet you have an even greater ally. You have Christ, the victor Himself, who has conquered Satan, the world and our sinful flesh on the cross. When you are assaulted, take up the armor that Christ has given you to defend you against all assaults

of the devil. You are given a belt of the unchanging truth of God's Word in an age when truth is determined by each person. You are given a shield of faith, dipped in the water and the Word given to you in Your Baptism, where that divine water extinguishes the flaming arrows of the evil one. The helmet of salvation protects you from fatal blows to your head, guarding you from Satan's assaults on your soul. Finally, you are given the sword of the Spirit; that is, the Bible. This sword disarms Satan's accusations against you with God's truth.

PRAYER

Holy Father, You have given us Your own Spirit in our Baptism into Christ. Defend us from all spiritual attacks. Guard us in body and soul. Help those afflicted by any adversity, especially the assaults of the devil. This day we remember especially your servant _____. Lead (him/her) to renewed strength and peace. Assure _____ that You have won the victory over Satan, the world, and our sinful flesh in the death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and that You are with him/her always. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

— EPH. 6:10–13

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 121; 2 Cor. 4

HYMN

I Walk in Danger All the Way (LSB 716)

- 1 I walk in danger all the way.
The thought shall never leave me
That Satan, who has marked his prey,
Is plotting to deceive me.
This foe with hidden snares
May seize me unawares
If I should fail to watch and pray.
I walk in danger all the way.
- 4 I walk with angels all the way,
They shield me and befriend me;
All Satan's pow'r is held at bay
When heav'nly hosts attend me;
They are my sure defense,
All fear and sorrow, hence!
Unharmed by foes, do what they may,
I walk with angels all the way.
- 5 I walk with Jesus all the way,
His guidance never fails me;
Within His wounds I find a stay
When Satan's pow'r assails me;
And by His footsteps led,
My path I safely tread.
No evil leads my soul astray;
I walk with Jesus all the way.

TRAUMA OR TOXIC STRESS

When the cares of the heart are many, the Lord's promises are the only certain words that can quiet the soul. When events of our past or circumstances of our present overwhelm us to the point of despair, God is our refuge, our stronghold, our help. He alone does not change (JAMES 1:17) and His presence is the constant anchor in the seas of life. Anguish may continue to be at our side, but the Lord defends us against anyone or anything that does us harm. Justice is reserved for the Last Day, but our Lord's presence and consolation is ours today. Blessed be His name.

PRAYER

Almighty God, in the wake of trauma's dark shadow, we turn to You, seeking Your refuge and Your strength. Comfort all those who suffer from trauma, especially _____. Shine Your light into his/her darkness, providing him/her with a beacon of hope, Christ's love. Surround him/her with Your love and mercy, and assure him/her that You are there to bear his/her burdens, for Your yoke is easy and Your burden is light. You have endured all things in Your death, and have been wounded on our behalf. Grant Your servant healing of both body and soul according to Your gracious will, and bring him/her forth from his/her pain into Your marvelous light. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers? If the LORD had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. When I thought, "My foot slips," your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul. But the LORD has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge.

— PSALM 94:16–19; 22

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Rom. 8:35–39; 2 Tim. 1:7–10

HYMN

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less
(LSB 575)

1 My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain:

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

2 When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil.
[Refrain]

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Our bodies, minds and emotions may feel foreign to us at times. A new mother may especially experience the opposite of her expectations following the welcomed birth of a child. The evil one has a nasty way of lurking in the most unwelcomed places. And yet, the Lord abides with you. He is with you always, even in the dark hours and long nights of the soul. The shadow of His presence is not dark or domineering but is our light and our stronghold in times of despair. When we have no other words, it is the cry of faith to call out, “Lord, abide with me. I trust in you.”

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, look kindly on all who struggle with postpartum depression, especially _____. Be with the doctors, therapists, nurses and all involved in the care of those suffering from this trial, granting them wisdom and skill to serve Your precious children. Give _____ abundant support and care through Your church, that she would find healing in You alone. Grant her increased happiness in the blessings you have bestowed upon her, especially the gift of life. Assure her of your unending mercy, and that she does not bear this cross alone. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

— PSALM 91:1-2

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Prov. 3:5-6, 2 Cor. 12:9-10

HYMN

Abide with Me (LSB 878)

- 1 Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.
- 2 I need Thy presence ev’ry passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter’s pow’r?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine,
O abide with me.

SELF-INJURY



The need to feel *something* is what often lurks behind self-injury. Becoming emotionally numb after trauma and abuse is normal, but the feelings elicited by inflicting pain on oneself will not last. Christ endured unbearable pain of the body so that you wouldn't have to. Christ endured any punishment you may falsely believe you deserve for the sake of preserving your body. Today, Christ has given you tangible, physical gifts to sustain your body no matter how dark your road is. His baptismal waters are poured on your head, cleansing you of all guilt, shame and sin, and bringing

you into His holy family. Taste and see that the Lord is good as He invites you to eat His body with the bread and drink His blood with the wine in His holy supper. Hear with your own ears the words, "I forgive you" spoken by God through the pastor *to you*. Christ has knitted your body in your mother's womb, and He loves you, His creation. You are fearfully and wonderfully made, even when you feel the opposite. You are never forsaken by God. Trust in these promises of God no matter how numb or lonely you feel. His promises will bring you from this vale of tears to eternal paradise.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, remember in mercy all who are in bondage to sinful and damaging behaviors, especially _____. Be with the doctors, therapists, nurses and all involved in the care of those suffering from this trial. Give comfort to _____ through your Word and Sacraments, turning his/her gaze from his/her own body onto Your Son, crucified for him/her. By Your great love and unfailing promises, set him/her free from these vices to enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

— PSALM 139:13–14

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 68:19–20, Rom. 5:6–11

HYMN

From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee (LSB 607)

- 1 From depths of woe I cry to Thee,
In trial and tribulation;
Bend down Thy gracious ear to me,
Lord, hear my supplication.
If Thou rememb'rest ev'ry sin,
Who then could heaven ever win
Or stand before Thy presence?
- 4 And though it tarry through the night
And till the morning waken,
My heart shall never doubt His might
Nor count itself forsaken.
O Israel, trust in God your Lord.
Born of the Spirit and the Word,
Now wait for His appearing.
- 5 Though great our sins, yet greater still
Is God's abundant favor;
His hand of mercy never will
Abandon us, nor waver.
Our shepherd good and true is He,
Who will at last His Israel free
From all their sin and sorrow.

SEXUAL CONFUSION

Satan attacks Christians with different sinful temptations. Some Christians may be tempted with being quick to anger, others with greed and still others with confusion regarding sex. Sexual confusion is a temptation that attacks many Christians; you are not alone. St. Paul writes to the church in Corinth, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man (1 COR. 10:13).” More than this, Christ Himself knows exactly what you are going through. He has endured every temptation of sin, for you. Because Christ conquered Satan, sin and death on the cross, He has made you a new creation. Do not look to this world or to yourself for your identity. Look instead to who you are as a redeemed child of God. You are, as St. Peter proclaims, chosen, royal, holy, Christ’s very own person. He has called you out of the darkness of sin and confusion into His marvelous light.

PRAYER

Gracious Father, as You marked Cain and gave him Your protection despite his sin, we thank You that You have marked _____ in Holy Baptism and still protect him/her from spiritual harm despite his/her sin. We praise You for washing away our sins. Deliver us when sin and Satan attack us, assure _____ of his/her unchanging identity in You, that he/she is your dear, precious child, and renew him/her in faith and life. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

— 1 PETER 2:9

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

2 Cor. 5:17–21

HYMN

Baptized into Your Name Most Holy (LSB 590)

- 1 Baptized into Your name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak
and lowly,
Among Your saints, Your chosen host.
Buried with Christ and dead to sin,
Your Spirit now shall live within.
- 4 All that I am and love most dearly—
Receive it all, O Lord, from me.
Let me confess my faith sincerely;
Help me Your faithful child to be!
Let nothing that I am or own
Serve any will but Yours alone.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE/ADDICTION

Addiction is rooted in the same lie that Satan tells us about every other sin: once you have more, you will be satisfied. Yet soon we find out that more is never enough. What may have started as a small experiment to cope with trauma, anxiety, loneliness or pain has now spiraled out of control. Loss, confusion, guilt and shame are the only places these lies have led to. Despite all of this, Christ is your sure companion. You are not alone. He journeys with you, no matter how dark, difficult or shameful your road has been. He is with you in your weakness. He is the one who bears it all, including your fall into addiction, upon Himself. He is crucified so that you may live. He is the one who makes you whole. Find solace in your Savior today, who loves you, receives you back to His welcoming arms after every relapse, and invites you into a life filled with truth, grace and peace in Him alone.

PRAYER

Gracious God, look kindly on those struggling with addiction, especially _____, that by the aid of the Holy Spirit they would rely solely on their Savior for comfort in all trouble. Be with the doctors, therapists, nurses and all involved in the care of those suffering from this trial, granting them wisdom and skill to serve Your precious children who seek healing from this affliction. Relieve him/her of this temptation, according to Your good and gracious will. Assure _____ that his/her sins are forgiven in You, that he/she may find peace and comfort in You alone. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. — HEB. 4:15–16

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 18:2–6, Matt. 11:28–30

HYMN

Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing (LSB 421)

- 1 Jesus, grant that balm and healing
In Your holy wounds I find,
Ev'ry hour that I am feeling
Pains of body and of mind.
Should some evil thought within
Tempt my treach'rous heart to sin,
Show the peril, and from sinning
Keep me from its first beginning.
- 2 Should some lust or sharp temptation
Fascinate my sinful mind,
Draw me to Your cross and passion,
And new courage I shall find.
Or should Satan press me hard,
Let me then be on my guard,
Saying, "Christ for me was wounded,"
That the tempter flee confounded.
- 4 Ev'ry wound that pains or grieves me
By Your wounds, Lord, is made whole;
When I'm faint, Your cross revives me,
Granting new life to my soul.
Yes, Your comfort renders sweet
Ev'ry bitter cup I meet;
For Your all-atoning passion
Has procured my soul's salvation.

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Satan hates us because we love Christ. Satan is a liar and a murderer. Satan desires to distort our feelings and thoughts, and isolate us from others. In this isolation, darkness can manifest itself in our minds. We are tempted to think we are unloved and that there is no other option for us besides death. In response to this, Martin Luther encourages us to remember our Baptisms. Remember that you are loved by God, whether you feel it or not. You are forgiven, whether you think so or not. Even as life may seem to be falling apart, remember the truth: God is in charge of everything. Christ reminds us that our bodies are not our own, but our gifts. Death will not free you from your pain. Only Christ can do that. There is hope for you in Him. He has fulfilled the Law on your behalf, and He loved you so much that He died *for you*. Therefore, as Luther says, trust in the Word of God, not in your own feelings. Find company with other Christians. Avoid solitude; engage in small talk, laughing and joking. Most importantly, meditate upon verses of Scripture, finding comfort that you are a beloved child of God. Nothing can separate you from the love Christ Jesus has for you.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You are our ever-present help in times of need. Be with your dear child _____. Assure him/her of the hope that he/she has in You, that You are not far off, and that he/she is Your precious lamb. Be with the doctors, therapists, nurses and all involved in the care of those suffering from this trial, granting them wisdom and skill to serve Your precious children who seek

healing from this affliction. Comfort _____ with Your eternal love, relieve him/her of feelings of hopelessness and despair, and focus his/her eyes on You. Incline his/her ear to the promises You have made: that he/she is precious in Your sight, you have redeemed him/her through the death of Your Son Jesus Christ, and that in the waters of Holy Baptism _____ is Your dear child. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek YOU. — PSALM 9:9–10

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 118:5–7, Col. 1:13–20

HYMN

O God, Forsake Me Not (LSB 731)

- 3 O God, forsake me not!
Lord, hear my supplication!
In ev'ry evil hour
Help me resist temptation;
And when the prince of hell
My conscience seeks to blot,
Be then not far from me—
O God, forsake me not!
- 4 O God, forsake me not!
Lord, I am Yours forever.
O keep me strong in faith
That I may leave You never.
Grant me a blessed end
When my good fight is fought;
Help me in life and death—
O God, forsake me not!

GRIEVING A SUICIDE

At a time like this, it is hard not to ask “Why?”. Why did my loved one take his life? Why didn’t I see this coming? There is so much uncertainty, so much hurt, so much blame and so much grief at these times. Yet in the midst of this, know that I am with you. I grieve with you, as your brother/sister in Christ. I sympathize with you and will share the burden of your pain. Most importantly, know that in the midst of this tragedy, Christ fully shares in your pain and grief, and He carries your sorrows Himself (HEB. 12:2).

Martin Luther writes that those in the faith who die to suicide are overcome by the power of the devil, that there is hope for them in Christ, and we should trust that they are in paradise with our Savior. Because of this, as you mourn, you also have joy in Christ. You do not mourn as those who have no hope, as St. Paul writes (1 THESS. 4:13). Grieving is a part of the mourning process. Don’t think that you need to fear crying, or that you have to get your grieving over with quickly. Yes, you grieve. Yes, you mourn. Yet as a Christian, you know joy is coming. You know that your Savior conquered sin, even sin as tragic as suicide, on the cross. He has given us His victory of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Comfort yourself with this truth, and take time to grieve. Share your memories, your pain and your laments with fellow Christians and with God in prayer. Cling to the unchanging and certain promises that Christ has given you, that you will see your loved one again.

PRAYER

O Lord, you know all things, and we come before you with grieving hearts at this tragic time. In the midst of this confusion and mourning, instill in us confidence in Your promises, that You are the Resurrection and the Life. Give our restless hearts peace, and wipe away every tear of grief from our soul and body. Be with all those who mourn the death of _____, assuring them of the promises that Christ made to him/her in his/her baptism. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted from grief; my soul and my body also. — PSALM 31:9

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

John 11:25–26; 1 Cor. 15:42–49

HYMN

What God Ordains Is Always Good
(LSB 760)

- 5 What God ordains is always good:
Though I the cup am drinking
Which savors now of bitterness,
I take it without shrinking.
For after grief
God gives relief,
My heart with comfort filling
And all my sorrow stilling.
- 6 What God ordains is always good:
This truth remains unshaken.
Though sorrow, need, or death
be mine,
I shall not be forsaken.
I fear no harm,
For with His arm
He shall embrace and shield me;
So to my God I yield me.

DISORDERS



ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

Sometimes our minds move at a frantic pace. We are prone to anxious thoughts, which lead to an anxious soul. Our inner feelings come out sideways and our actions feel frenzied. The Lord is near to both the restless heart and the restless body. Although we need good rest every day, God who is our Helper never sleeps. He is always watching you, always with you. The Creator of the heavens and earth delivers help, peace and presence to you always, at all hours and in every need.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, give us such joy in pursuing what is true, just, pure and worthy of praise, that spurning the temptations of this world, we would suffer no anxiety, especially for your dear child _____. Let his/her trust be placed fully in Christ, and let his/her hope rest in the life of the world to come. Still his/her restless heart and focus his/her eyes on Christ, the fountain and source of all peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. We will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.

— PSALM 121:1-3

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 27:14; Psalm 91

HYMN

I Know That My Redeemer Lives
(LSB 461)

- 1 I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet
sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living head.
- 4 He lives to grant me rich supply;
He lives to guide me with His eye;
He lives to comfort me when faint;
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.
- 5 He lives to silence all my fears;
He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart;
He lives all blessings to impart.
- 6 He lives, my kind, wise,
heav'nly Friend;
He lives and loves me to the end;
He lives, and while He lives, I'll sing;
He lives, my Prophet, Priest,
and King.

OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER (ODD)

By faith, we believe that the salvation Christ won for us is ours already now. This is good news! Even so, it is normal for us to yearn for the perfection and completeness that is promised to all believers when Jesus returns. On this side of the Last Day, we are at war with our bodies, our behaviors, and even our thoughts and feelings. We're free from the damning consequence of our sin, but not yet freed from sinning. The Holy Spirit's work within us not only creates opportunities for good works, but also helps us to do them! Good works come in many shapes and sizes, including love and respect for parents, teachers and other authorities. Within the commandment to honor our father and mother, parents and those in authority are also commanded to love those suffering from this disorder, being patient with them, and explaining everything in the kindest way. Thanks be to God that he forgives us when we sin, but also helps us to listen to and follow loving authorities in our lives.

PRAYER

Almighty God, you have granted representatives to be in authority over us, in Your place. Grant us the willingness to submit to these authorities, so that we may lead peaceable and quiet lives. Help us to recognize that all authority comes from You. Forgive us for our anger and opposition to these authorities. Help us submit ourselves to Your Son's victory over sin, death

and the devil on the cross. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

— EPH. 2:8–10

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 51

HYMN

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing (LSB 686)

- 1 Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory
Fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore Thee;
May I still Thy goodness prove.
- 3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now, like a fetter
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.

POST-ABORTION STRESS SYNDROME

Our Lord Jesus Christ took upon the sin and the sorrow of all people when He was nailed to the cross. He was pierced and crushed for all iniquities (yes, including your iniquities) so that we might have peace with God through Christ (ISAIAH 53:5). When peace feels elusive or far from reality, we remember and pray the words of the psalmist. The Lord is near to you. He saves, and with that salvation He brings His peace. Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart and guide your mind, your thoughts, and your feelings. The Lord heals the broken-hearted and binds up all wounds (PSALM 147:3). There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ (ROM. 8:1).

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, by the firstfruits of Christ's life from the dead, You secured forgiveness for our troubled consciences. Bless also with temporal health and well-being those who suffer among us who are troubled by having had an abortion, especially _____. Assure her today that You have loved her so much that You gave your own Son to die in her place and forgive this sin. Comfort her today in the knowledge and truth that this sin has been forgiven and You remember it no more. Continue to grant her aid in this moment and, even more, true, immortal health in the world to come. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

The LORD is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

— PSALM 34:18

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 107:19–22, 1 John 1:8–9

HYMN

Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness
(LSB 563)

- 1 Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds,
in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.
- 2 Bold shall I stand in that great day,
Cleansed and redeemed,
no debt to pay;
Fully absolved through these I am
From sin and fear, from guilt
and shame.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

It is such comfort to know that our Lord is always near us. He is our safe hiding place, and our refuge when we feel lost, lonely or confused. In times of both joy and struggle, He promises to surround us with His presence. Here, the psalmist uses the word “hem” to describe how close He is to us. He literally binds Himself to us. That image alone brings peace. He also lays His hand on us with a firm yet gentle touch. Your Heavenly Father, the Creator of the universe, delights in you. Rest in Him.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You have created each person in your image, and You love your creation. Today we pray for all who suffer from autism, especially _____. Grant him/her assurance of Your steadfast love and his/her infinite worth in Your sight. Bring comfort to your servant when he/she feels overwhelmed or misunderstood, and continue to grant him/her moments of joy and peace despite the complexity of this life. Assure him/her of the eternal peace You bring through the victory of Christ’s death for him/her. We continue to entrust _____ to Your loving care, knowing that You will never leave him/her nor forsake him/her. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar ... You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

— PSALM 139:1-2; 5-6

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Deut. 31:8; Lam. 3:22-23

HYMN

The King of Love My Shepherd Is
(LSB 709)

- 1 The King of Love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.
- 2 Where streams of living water flow,
My ransomed soul He leadeth
And, where the verdant
pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.
- 4 In death’s dark vale I fear no ill
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me,
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.

BIPOLAR DISORDER

Our Lord Jesus Christ is acquainted with affliction. We do not have a God who is far removed from grief or pain. Our God can sympathize with us in our weakness, in our suffering and at our lowest points (EPH. 4:15). Voices within and without may tempt us to fall prey to our own despair, forfeiting our belief that the Lord is able to save. Yet despite the foes standing against us, the Spirit helps us cry out in faith. The promises of God become our shield against our enemies. The Lord delivers, strengthens and lifts up our souls anew each day.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we pray for all who suffer from mental health diseases, especially those who suffer from bipolar disorder. Today, we pray especially for your servant _____. Grant him/her the strength to endure the highs and lows he/she faces, reminding him/her that You are the source of order, peace and salvation. Comfort Your servant with the knowledge that You walk on this journey with him/her, that he/she is never alone and that he/she has infinite worth in Your sight, through Christ's love for him/her. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

O LORD, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me; many
are saying of my soul, "There is no
salvation for him in God." But you,
O LORD, are a shield about me, my
glory, and the lifter of my head. I cried
aloud to the LORD, and he answered
me from his holy hill. I lay down and
slept; I woke again, for the LORD
sustained me.

— PSALM 3:1–4

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Micah 7:7–8; Rom. 12:12

HYMN

Come unto Me, Ye Weary (LSB 684)

- 1 "Come unto Me, ye weary,
And I will give you rest."
O blessed voice of Jesus,
Which comes to hearts oppressed!
It tells of benediction,
Of pardon, grace, and peace,
Of joy that hath no ending,
Of love that cannot cease.
- 3 "Come unto Me, ye fainting,
And I will give you life."
O cheering voice of Jesus,
Which comes to aid our strife!
The foe is stern and eager,
The fight is fierce and long;
But Thou hast made us mighty
And stronger than the strong.

SCHIZOPHRENIA

There is plenty to fear in this life. We may worry about the future, be anxious at the present, or fear our own grasp on reality. To whom do we turn when our senses betray us? To whom do we run when we feel there's no one else to trust? "This I know, that God is for me (PSALM 56:9)." Though the evil one means us harm, the Lord delivers us from the devil's snare. We may walk before God in the light of life (PSALM 56:12-13). Trust in the Lord and let Him quiet your fears.

PRAYER

Gracious Lord, you embrace all who suffer, including those afflicted by schizophrenia. We pray especially for your servant _____. Grant him/her peace despite the tumult of his/her mind. Comfort him/her through the assurance that he/she is redeemed by Your Son's victory on the cross, a victory that brings comfort to troubled souls, and solace in the midst of confusion and fear. Assure your servant that he/she is your dear and precious child. Continue to help all of us to extend Your mercy, patience and kindness to those who bear the cross of schizophrenia. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?

— PSALM 56:3-4

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 5:6-7; Phil. 4:8-9

HYMN

In The Cross of Christ I Glory (LSB 427)

- 1 In the cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.
- 2 When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo, it glows with peace and joy.
- 4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure
By the Cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows
no measure.
Joys that through all time abide.

ACEDIA

A lack of caring, otherwise known as acedia, is a common vice that afflicts us all. The early Christian church called this “The Noonday Devil,” recognizing that fatigue and boredom usually set in during the afternoon. Acedia is a demonic attack and should be treated as such. During these times, pray to your Father in heaven. Believe and trust in His Words to you, given in His Scripture. The world, our sinful flesh and Satan himself have been conquered by Christ’s death and resurrection. Even when you may not feel anything, trust the promises that Christ has given to you. You are His redeemed child, Christ is with you and you are loved.

PRAYER

Father in heaven, preserve us from idols and sins of idleness. Grant us contentment in the vocations to which You have called us, finding joy in our labors. Assure us that the work we do has been given to us by You alone. Continue to bless us with grateful hearts so that we, in our vocations, give glory to You as we serve our neighbors. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

— PSALM 91:5–6

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 143; Rom. 12:9–13

HYMN

Take My Life and Let It Be (LSB 783)

- 2 Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love;
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.
- 3 Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only for my King;
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.
- 5 Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.
- 6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

EATING DISORDERS

An eating disorder can be a coping mechanism to manage stress or disconnect from reality. It may be an outlet to deal with major traumatic events. But eating disorders can really be summed up by one word: control. They are a way to control emotions or fears, or to handle worries on your own terms. However, this behavior denies the body its needs and makes the body an object of self-loathing.

God crafted you perfectly, in His own image. Christ values our physical bodies so much that He took on our flesh. He crucified all of your sin, the sins committed against you, and all of your imperfections. You are made a new, perfect creation in the promise of the resurrection.

Christ bears the burden of control over the entirety of creation. Cast your cares on the One who sustains you. Rest in the assurance that you can give up your control and bring your trauma, stress or whatever cross you carry to Christ Himself. He loves you, and He has made you into a perfect creation.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you are the source of all strength. Be with all those struggling with eating disorders, especially _____. Assure him/her that You bear the burdens of this world, and willingly bear _____'s burdens of trauma and stress. Grant relief to Your servant according to Your good and gracious will, assuring him/her of Your unending love and mercy. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.

— PSALM 145:18–19

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 63; Rom. 8:26–30

HYMN

O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken (LSB 439)

- 11 But since my strength will
nevermore suffice me
To crucify desires that still
entice me,
To all good deeds O let Thy Spirit
win me
And reign within me!
- 15 And when, dear Lord, before Thy
throne in heaven
To me the crown of joy at last
is given,
Where sweetest hymns Thy saints
forever raise Thee,
I, too, shall praise Thee.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

It may seem like the nightmares, flashbacks and anxiety of the horrific event you endured will never end. It may seem like the terror that surrounds you will last a lifetime. Christ, however, speaks to you through the terrors of the night. Christ proclaims to you that He shelters you under His wings (PSALM 91:4). He is your rock, your fortress and your deliverer (PSALM 18:2), and nothing can snatch you away from Him (JOHN 10:28). You feel isolated in your pain and trauma, but Christ has walked alongside you and fully understands your pain. Christ has conquered every horror of this world, even the ones that you have endured. He preserves you from every danger of body and mind, and He invites you to rest in Him.

PRAYER

Lord God, help all who walk without light in the darkness of despair and suffer from traumatic injury of mind, especially _____. Relieve him/her of the burdens and pain he/she carries, according to Your good and gracious will. Let him/her trust in Your name and rely on You to rescue and save him/her. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the Lord, who is

worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

— PSALM 18:1–3

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Psalm 23

HYMN

Evening and Morning (LSB 726)

- 1 Evening and morning,
Sunset and dawning,
Wealth, peace, and gladness,
Comfort in sadness:
These are Thy works; all the glory
be Thine!
Times without number,
Awake or in slumber,
Thine eye observes us,
From danger preserves us,
Causing Thy mercy upon us
to shine.
- 2 Father, O hear me,
Pardon and spare me;
Calm all my terrors,
Blot out my errors
That by Thine eyes they may no
more be scanned.
Order my goings,
Direct all my doings;
As it may please Thee,
Retain or release me;
All I commit to Thy fatherly hand.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



**LCMS Recognized Service
Organization Directory**

*lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy/
recognized-service-organizations/
directory*

**National Alliance Mental Illness
(NAMI) *nami.org***

**National Institute Mental Health
(NIMH) *nimh.nih.gov***

**National 988 Suicide and
Crisis Lifeline**
988lifeline.org

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lcms.org/health | health@lcms.org