

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany | February 7th, 2021

Worship Assistant: Allie Schley

Announcements

- In-Person Worship
 - We are excited to begin in-person worship again! Please let the us know if you plan on attending in-person by calling the church office
 - Ash Wednesday is Feb. 17th. As is our custom during Lent, we will have in-person worship at 11:30 and 7:00 throughout the season. No need to RSVP for these services
- Youth Updates
 - Confirmation and Wednesday Education will be meeting in-person on Wednesday
 - SPY Team will meet in-person at 6:00 tonight
- The February countywide food distribution will be on the 10th from 2:00 - 3:30 at First Lutheran Church in Le Sueur. Please share!

Confession + Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

Holy God, you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. Amen.

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of ☩ Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn | Epiphany Carol

Ev'ry nation sees the glory of a star that pierced the night.
As we tell the wondrous story we are bathed in radiant light.
Star sent forth from highest heaven, dancing light of God's design,
Shine upon the gift that's given: Word made flesh now born in time.

Ev'ry tongue shall sing the praises of his birth in deepest night.
He is healing for the ages; He is Christ, our God's delight.
He proclaims within his being all our hopes, our great desires.
He shall die to rise, redeeming all who follow with their lives.

Once again may we discover Word made flesh sent from above.
In our neighbor, sister, brother, in the lonely and unloved.
May we touch him, may we hold him, may we cradle him with care.
As we learn to love each other, bringing hope from out despair.

Gather, God, the world together in the brightness of your day.
Fill our hearts with joy forever; help us walk the holy way.
May your justice rule the nations; may all people live as one.
Now we see our true salvation in the glory of your Son.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

Everlasting God, **you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Children's Message

First Reading | Isaiah 40:21-31

Don't you know? Haven't you heard? Wasn't it announced to you from the beginning? Haven't you understood since the earth was founded?

God inhabits the earth's horizon—its inhabitants are like locusts—stretches out the skies like a curtain and spreads it out like a tent for dwelling. God makes dignitaries useless and the earth's judges into nothing.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely is their shoot rooted in the earth when God breathes on them, and they dry up; the windstorm carries them off like straw.

So to whom will you compare me, and who is my equal? says the holy one.

Look up at the sky and consider: Who created these? The one who brings out their attendants one by one, summoning each of them by name.

Because of God's great strength and mighty power, not one is missing.

Why do you say, Jacob, and declare, Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, my God ignores my predicament”?

Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He doesn't grow tired or weary.

His understanding is beyond human reach, giving power to the tired and reviving the exhausted.

Youths will become tired and weary, young men will certainly stumble; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary.

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c

Praise the Lord! Because it is good to sing praise to our God! Because it is a pleasure to make beautiful praise!

The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem, gathering up Israel's exiles.

God heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.

God counts the stars by number, giving each one a name.

Our Lord is great and so strong! God's knowledge can't be grasped!

The Lord helps the poor, but throws the wicked down on the dirt!

Sing to the Lord with thanks; sing praises to our God with a lyre!

God covers the skies with clouds; God makes rain for the earth; God makes the mountains sprout green grass.

God gives food to the animals— even to the baby ravens when they cry out.

God doesn't prize the strength of a horse; God doesn't treasure the legs of a runner.

No. The Lord treasures the people who honor him, the people who wait for his faithful love.

Praise the Lord!

***Gospel Acclamation [online]**

Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.

Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.

Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

***Gospel Reading | Mark 1:29-39**

After leaving the synagogue, Jesus, James, and John went home with Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed, sick with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she served them.

That evening, at sunset, people brought to Jesus those who were sick or demon-possessed. The whole town gathered near the door. He healed many who were sick with all kinds of diseases, and he threw out many demons. But he didn't let the demons speak, because they recognized him.

Early in the morning, well before sunrise, Jesus rose and went to a deserted place where he could be alone in prayer. Simon and those with him tracked him down. When they found him, they told him, "Everyone's looking for you!"

He replied, "Let's head in the other direction, to the nearby villages, so that I can preach there too. That's why I've come." He traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and throwing out demons.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day | *On Eagle's Wings*

ELW 787

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in this shadow for life,
Say to the Lord: "My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!"

[Chorus]

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
Make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you, and famine will bring you no fear;
Under God's wings your refuge, with faithfulness your shield. [Chorus]

You need not fear the terror of the night, nor arrow that flies by day;
Though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come. [Chorus]

For to the angels God's given a command to guard you in all of your ways;
Upon their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. [Chorus]

And hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.

***Apostles' Creed**

Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he

ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

***Prayers of Intercession**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

For the church: for ministries of healing and wholeness, for hospital, hospice, and military chaplains, for those serving in prison ministry, for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For creation: for insects in the grass, clouds on the mountaintops, for cattle and the rainwater they drink, for the humility to take our place among all creatures of the earth, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations: for all who lead in cities and towns, states and countries; for community organizers, school officials, and CEOs; for international health organizations, that in times of trial, fear, or hopelessness, they find freedom in service to those most in need, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For all wearied by life's burdens: for those who are poor, for those lacking supportive relationships, for those crushed by debt, for those struggling with chronic pain or other sickness, for those exhausted from overwork or stress, and for all who cry out to you, especially Pastor Dave, Nancy Gjerde, and Ron Germsheid, as well as the families and friends of Gordy Ellanson Jr, Bruce Traxler, and Lenore Gentz, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries centered here; for parish nurses and visitors; for ministries of companionship and support, for the young people in this place who open us to new understandings, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed, who were called by name and now rest from their labors, that their lives serve as witnesses to the goodness of God, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

***Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***Words of Institution**

***Lord's Prayer**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

***Final Blessing**

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ☩ keep you in peace. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn | *We Are Marching in the Light*

ELW 866 (new)

We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.

We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.

We are marching, marching, we are marching, ooo -- We are marching in the light of God.

We are marching, marching, we are marching, ooo -- We are marching in the light of God.

We are dancing...

We are praying...

We are singing...

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**