

January 30th Worship – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Introduction to the Day

The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who creates us,
redeems us,
and calls us by name.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we have sinned against you
and your beloved children.**

**We have turned our faces away from your glory
when it did not appear as we expected.**

We have rejected your word

when it made us confront ourselves.

**We have failed to show hospitality
to those you called us to welcome.**

**Accept our repentance for the things we have
done and the things we have left undone.**

For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.

**Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe
in the glory of your Son born among us,
and reflect your love for all creation.**

Amen.

Rejoice in this good news:

In ☩ Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven.

You are descendants of the Most High,
adopted into the household of Christ,
and inheritors of eternal life.

Live as freed and forgiven children of God.

Amen.

Gathering Song “Rise, Shine, You People!”

#665

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Lesson – Jeremiah 1:4-10

⁴Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

⁶Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know
how to speak, for I am only a boy.” ⁷But
the LORD said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them,

for I am with you to deliver you,
says the LORD.”

⁹Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my
mouth; and the LORD said to me,

“Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over
kingdoms,
to pluck up and to pull down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

Children's Message

Gospel – Luke 4:21-30

²¹Then [Jesus] began to say to [all in the synagogue in Nazareth,] “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” ²³He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’” ²⁴And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. ²⁵But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” ²⁸When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Our gospel text for today overlaps with last week with that last verse: “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Last week we had Jesus come into the synagogue and the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah was handed to him, and he read from it, “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”

The crowd likes what they hear. They spoke well of him and were amazed by the gracious words that came out of his mouth. They love what they are hearing! They are thrilled!

This experience brings up the question of, why is that we go to church? Why are the folks who are in the synagogue that day in the synagogue?

For many, then and now, it is ritual. It is their tradition that on Synagogue day you go to synagogue. For others they are there because they are longing for something. They are eager to hear what the good news is for them. And, for others it is a place to reconnect, to find relationship with other believers, and to be fulfilled. Whatever the reason for going, the hope is that while there you will hear God’s word and what God is up to in the world will be revealed to you, maybe.

So, here is this crowd, having heard Jesus just finish reading to them from the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah, and they are enamored with it. Amazed by it. Until the skeptic in the crowd reminds them. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son? We know this kid. Are we sure about this?”

Jesus confronts their fear. “No prophet is accepted in their hometown.” He tells them what they are all thinking. He knows where it is headed. And he calls them on it. And, in doing so, lays out why it is that they’re wrong.

And, with all of their preconceptions about him clouding their vision and hearing for what is in their midst, they forget what he has said to them, and they forget that they were amazed by it. Their vision is so clouded, their hearing of God’s activity so distorted, by what it is nudging them into that they believe it would be easier if they could throw him off of a cliff. So, they lead him to the brow of the hill at the edge of town to do just that.

We do this a lot. We start to see revealed to us what God is up to and we realize what it would ask of us as followers to see it through. And, so often we take the much easier course of action, throw those ideas over a cliff and get on with life.

Like Jeremiah we start to make excuses. I’m too young. I’m too old. I’m too whatever else it might be that disqualifies me from doing that which God calls me to do. And so often, the temptation to throw it off a cliff wins out. Because that is easier.

Each week in our announcement slides preceding worship we have an introduction to the day which we get from our worship resource, Sundays and Seasons. These tend to serve as beautiful snippets of the gospel text, and the message therein. Today's reads:

The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.

We hear the good news that God speaks into a broken world, and the call to see our part in it, and we run the other way. The glory of the Lord was among the people in the synagogue that day, and though they were amazed by the gracious words they had heard, they were terrified by what it may ask of them. Knowing the person from which it came was a scapegoat. It wasn't because they knew Jesus, it was because they knew themselves. And, at the brow of the hill on which their city rested, ready to throw Jesus off, he passed through their midst and went on his way.

So, what do we do with it?

We see signs of God's activity all around us. We feel God's push into discomfort for the sake of life, and we shrivel. We make excuses. Too young. Too old. Too whatever other disqualifier we might dream up. But we are reminded...we are indeed called to this time and place, and God's glory is indeed revealed to us.

And we heed the warning of what happens when excuse takes over in our Gospel text. When Jesus is brought to the brow of the hill because throwing him off, discarding him, would be easier than heeding his call to action, he passes through their midst and goes on his way.

Let us hear God's call. Let us be awakened to God's action in our midst. Let us allow ourselves to be pushed into the discomfort of a Godly life. And then, let us act on it.

Thanks be to God. Amen

Song of the Day

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

#656

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

Guide your church in the ways of faith, hope, and love. Cultivate ministries and communities of compassion that bear witness to your enduring presence among us. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Teach us to live in humility on the earth. Curb arrogance that leads to destruction of natural resources and disregard for future generations. Inspire the work of scientists who urge us to live in harmony with your creation. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

You are the refuge of all who seek hope and freedom. Accompany immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers who cross borders to find safety and opportunity. Embolden leaders to draft compassionate policies on behalf of migrants and those who assist them. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things. Comfort with your love all who are lonely, fearful, or brokenhearted. Sustain the hope of all those who suffer in body or spirit (*especially Peyton, Kathy Smith, Matt Miller, Bob Hodges, Bob Kries, Jim and Sandy Nelson, Joe Christensen, Bill and Bonnie Kuehn, David Gunderson, Cassie Skinner, Keith Franson, Frank Garber*). God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your grace falls upon young and old alike. Bless the gifts of children in this congregation and in this community. Give us humble hearts to follow their leadership. Inspire us with their laughter, their insight, and their curiosity. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We praise you for those who have gone before us and now see you face to face (*especially*). Abide with us in this mortal life until we rest in the arms of your never-ending love. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

Blessed are you, O God,
Sovereign of the universe.
You offer us new beginnings
and guide us on our journey.
Lead us to your table,
nourish us with this heavenly food,
and prepare us to carry your love
to a hungry world,
in the name of Christ our light.

Amen.

Words of Institution – We invite you to find bread and wine or juice and partake in this Holy Meal.

(Holding the bread) In the night in which we was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and broke it, gave thanks and gave it for all to eat saying, “This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

(Holding the cup) Again after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it for all to drink saying, “this cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. So often as you do this, remember me.”

Once you’ve taken the elements say, We give you thanks, gracious God, for we have feasted on the abundance of your house. Send us to bring good news and to proclaim your favor to all, strengthened with the richness of your grace in your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

Communion Prayer

Sending Song

“What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine”

#774

Blessing

God, who leads you in pathways of righteousness,
who rejoices over you,
and who calls you by name,
✠ bless your going out and your coming in,
today and forever.

Amen.

Go with Christ into a weary world. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Announcements

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be Sunday, Feb. 6 following worship. Look for the Annual Reports to be out in the next week.

Giving Statements

Your End-of-the Year statements have gone out. If you have questions, please let DeAnne know.

Your offering envelopes are not being mailed out this year. Please stop by the church to pick them up.

Luther Park Events

Luther Park Annual Meeting will be Saturday, Feb. 5 at 9:30 a.m. We are in need of 3 delegates. If you are interested, please let Pastor Josh or the office know.

ChiliFest 2022 will be Sunday, Feb. 6, 12-4 p.m. Join in a day of fun and fellowship to support the ministry and mission of Luther Park. Aside from chili and hotdogs, enjoy sledding, games, crafts and much more.