

St. John Evangelical Lutheran  
229 South Broad Street  
Jersey Shore, PA 17740  
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Sunday, February 12, 2023

*6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Epiphany*



### **Introduction to the Day**

*In today's reading from Deuteronomy we are called to choose life by loving and obeying God. Much of today's gospel reading echoes portions of the Ten Commandments. Jesus' instructions to the crowd reveal a pattern of behavior that honors both God and the neighbor, resulting in life and health for the whole community. We too are invited to embrace these commandments, not out of fear of retribution, but because God has promised that to do so means life for us.*

### **SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS**

### **PRELUDE**

### **GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who makes all things new,  
whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One, source of our renewal,  
**we confess that we are wrapped up in sin,  
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have not practiced your righteousness.**

**Our hearts have turned away from you.**

**For the sake of the world you so love,**

**forgive us,**

**that we may be reconciled to one another**

**for the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

Thus says our God:

“The former things have come to pass  
and new things I now declare.”

God’s mercy makes us new.

We are forgiven in the name of † Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG:** *Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling 582*

### **GREETING**

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

**C: And also, with you.**

**Hymn of Praise:** *Day by Day 790*

### **Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray.

**O God, the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

### **Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

L: A reading from Deuteronomy

### **First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

*The LORD sets before the people of God a clear choice. Life and prosperity will come to the faithful; loss of the land will be the consequence of disobedience. Choosing life entails loving and holding fast to the Lord. Life in God’s presence presupposes the promise made to the ancestors.*

[Moses said to the people:] <sup>15</sup>See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life

and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

L: Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse.

**PSALM: Psalm 119:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>Happy are they whose way is blameless,  
who follow the teaching of the LORD!

<sup>2</sup>**Happy are they who observe your decrees  
and seek you with all their hearts,**

<sup>3</sup>who never do any wrong,  
but always walk in your ways.

<sup>4</sup>**You laid down your commandments,  
that we should fully keep them.**

<sup>5</sup>Oh, that my ways were made so direct  
that I might keep your statutes!

<sup>6</sup>**Then I should not be put to shame,  
when I regard all your commandments.**

<sup>7</sup>I will thank you with a true heart,  
when I have learned your righteous judgments.

<sup>8</sup>**I will keep your statutes;  
do not utterly forsake me.**

L: A reading from First Corinthians

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9**

*Human leaders in the church are not the ones who control ministry. Rather they are coworkers who belong to God, the one who truly controls and continuously empowers the ministry of the church.*

<sup>1</sup>Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, <sup>3</sup>for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? <sup>4</sup>For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

<sup>5</sup>What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. <sup>6</sup>I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. <sup>7</sup>So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. <sup>8</sup>The one

who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. <sup>9</sup>For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly stands.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION p. 142**

*Alleluia Lord to whom shall we go?*

*You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, Alleluia.*

P: The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

**Gospel: Matthew 5:21-37**

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts his followers to embrace standards of righteousness that exceed legal requirements and traditional expectations.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>21</sup>“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup>But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire. <sup>23</sup>So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup>Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

<sup>27</sup>“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ <sup>28</sup>But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

<sup>31</sup>“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ <sup>32</sup>But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a

divorced woman commits adultery.

<sup>33</sup>“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ <sup>34</sup>But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup>or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## **SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** *Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways 772*

**APOSTLES CREED** (*p. 105 at the beginning of the hymnal*)

### **Prayers of Intercession**

A: Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Inspire your church that it may be a sign of life throughout the world. From the exploration of faith with children and new believers to missionaries and bishops, shape lives of faithfulness, so that all find abundant life in your ways. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Nourish your creation. Accompany all who plant and water. Bless the work of farmers; provide for subsistence farmers facing drought and climate change. Guide the work of agricultural scientists toward sustainable ways to feed the world. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Give growth where there seems to be no hope for life. In nations and regions where reconciliation seems impossible (*especially*), empower peacemakers with your Spirit. Where death holds sway through violence, disease, and hunger, equip relief workers to bring hope. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Nurture all in need (*especially*). Bring healing to all who experience trauma caused by systems of injustice and destructive relationships. Give courage to those

struggling to repent and those seeking reconciliation. Sustain all who work for restoration (*local restorative efforts may be named*). Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Encourage this congregation. Call us to a common purpose and keep us from quarrelling. Turn our hearts toward you and guide our leaders, so that our choices may be lifegiving for all. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Help us in raising up new talent for Global Health Care promotion and healthcare systems. Assist those leaders presently serving to come alongside the newer volunteers in order to give them the experience and insight they seek. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A: Thanks be to you for the lives of all who have died in Christ. Teach us to follow them in your ways and gather us with them into the promise of eternal life with you. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

**Amen.**

## **Responding in Love**

### **Our Offering of Music**

#### **CHOIR ANTHEM *Every Good Gift***

#### **OFFERTORY**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit with me.*

*Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.*

*Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.*

#### **OFFERING PRAYER**

A: Liberating God,  
you break the bonds of injustice  
and let the oppressed go free.

Receive these offerings in thanksgiving  
for all your works of merciful power,  
and shape us as people of your justice and freedom.

You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior,

**Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING P.144** *(in the beginning of the hymnal)*

**Dialogue**

**Preface by the Pastor**

**Holy Holy Holy**

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

### **Words of Institution**

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.  
You are most holy,  
and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish  
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world  
to fulfill for us your holy will  
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and 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 sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,  
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,  
and the promise of his coming again,  
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,

not as we ought but as we are able;  
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving  
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,  
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,  
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ  
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,  
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,  
may be formed to live as your holy people  
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

**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**

**SIT**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: Come and taste the joy of God!

### **COMMUNION**

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*and each person may respond* **Amen.**

**COMMUNION SONG** *Lamb of God You Take Away p. 146*

**SONG AFTER COMMUNION** *Jesus, Name Above All Names*

(repeat twice)

*Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,  
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word*

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A: Holy One,  
we thank you for the healing  
that springs forth abundantly from this table.  
Renew our strength to do justice,  
love kindness,  
and journey humbly with you.

**Amen.**

### **SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

### **BLESSING**

P: The God who faithfully brings forth justice  
and breaks the oppressor's rod  
✠ bless, strengthen, and uphold you,  
today and always.

**Amen.**

**SENDING SONG: *All Creatures, Worship God Most High! 835***

### **DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Remember in prayer:** Rowan Aldridge, Jim Allen, Donna Batschelet, Cora Bowes, Ron Brundrick, Agnes Cryder, Don & Helen Delaney, Joanne Fisher, Joann Hall, Mick Miller, David Mitchell, the Snyder family, Charles and Candace Welshans, and all of our shut-ins.

We also remember in prayer Family Promise; Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – ELCA; Bishop Craig A. Miller - USS; for our Companion Synods in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; and we pray for peace in Ukraine and an end to war.

We pray for the safety of our military troops around the world including Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Ben Cramer, Trevor and Nehemiah Eberhart, Patrick Hamlin, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Steven Moore, Maddison Myers, Tyler O'Neal, Adam Shaffer, Richie Speicher, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, and Jenna White. We also lift up in prayer their families who strive to keep a normalcy in the family and continue on often with added stress.

Special thanks to this week's helper: Lector –Karen Aucker; Assisting Ministers—Bill Ely Jr and Ken Dougherty; Head Usher – Christine Barner; Teller –Gina Johnson; Children's Church – Molly Hollick; Bulletin Sponsor –Gary and Gina Johnson.

Next week's helpers: Lector –Grace Welshans; Assisting Ministers --Joyce Braucht and Carl Schaefer; Head Usher – Christine Barner; Teller –Gina Johnson; Children's Church – Cathy Eisner; Bulletin Sponsor— Gary and Gina Johnson; Flowers—Theresa Levins

The Sanctuary Candle in February is in memory of our Gram Yost by Nicole, Hannah, Bryan and Adalynn.

The flowers on the altar are in honor of Pastor's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination.

The Lutheran Church Women's Prayer Chain is a vital ministry of St. John Lutheran. Anyone in need of prayers is asked to contact any of the following persons:

Gloria Ely – 570-873-3597      Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

**Christian Education** is seeking volunteers to lead Children's Church once a month. If interested please see Cathy Eisner. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays are open.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO RESUME NURSERY.** We are in need of adult and teen volunteers to supervise toddlers/babies in the nursery during church. Please contact Molly Hollick, or Ken Dougherty if you would be willing to help out or have any questions. Our hope is to get enough volunteers to have a monthly rotation cycle.

**NURSERY TOYS.** Molly and I will be cleaning out the nursery in a few weeks and throwing away broken toys. We will be looking for some toys that can replace the ones we will be getting rid of. If you have any toys that are like new and have all their pieces and you would like to donate to the church nursery we would be very appreciative. If you could put them in one of the classrooms upstairs that is not being used that would be great. Thank you so much! Carol Yost

**Annual Offering Statements** are available in the tower of the Church. Please pick up yours and any relatives to save us postage.

Volunteers are needed to sponsor the weekly **flowers**. A sign-up sheet is on the wall in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor elevator tower. It's neon green and set up for the whole year. Sign up for the Sunday you want!

**A Time of Celebration as we Recognize the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pastor Aucker's Ordination.** While Pastor Aucker was officially Ordained into the Public Office of Word and Sacrament Ministry on a snowy day on February 6, 1993, at Zion Lutheran, Turbotville; the members of St. John Lutheran will officially celebrate his 30<sup>th</sup> Ordination Anniversary on February 19 when Bishop Miller is available to come and worship with us at 9:30 a.m. A meal will be provided after worship to all who come. No reservations are necessary. Please join us for this joyous occasion.

### **Youth Ministry**

**Souper Bowl Sunday, February 12** – The Youth of St. John will be taking up a special collection on that Sunday to have emergency food and funds for those in our community in need. Any donations of canned or boxed goods are appreciated and will be kept here at St. John for people without food in the Jersey Shore area.

**Camp Mt. Luther** has a new way to send out their summer camp flyers and registration. There is a QR code available here at the church on the bulletin board and in the annual report that you scan and read. You can download the registration, medical, and other forms from the QR code. Turn in registrations to Molly Hollick.

**GROW in the Snow Looks at Baptism:** All youth in 6-12th grade and their youth leaders are invited to attend this synod youth retreat on March 17-18. The theme of this year's will be baptism. Experience your Creator, play winter games and find refreshment in the peace of camp in winter. The retreat is from Friday night to Saturday afternoon, but there is an option for youth and leaders to come just for the day on Saturday. Each registered group should provide one adult (21 or over) for every seven youth and at least one adult for each gender represented. Cabin assignments will be made based on available adults and the number of youth attending. To register contact Pastor Aucker or Mrs. Eisner. A flyer and registration form are coming soon!

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Sunday, February 12, 2023 *6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Epiphany*  
 8:30 p.m. Adult Sunday School  
 9:30 a.m. Nave Worship Service  
 Souper Bowl Collection

Monday, February 13, 2023  
 1:00 p.m. Bible Study

Wednesday, February 15, 2023  
 10:00 a.m. Trinity Worship  
 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Time at Shore Diner  
 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Sunday, February 19, 2023 *Transfiguration of our Lord*  
 8:30 p.m. Adult Sunday School *Celebration Pastor's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination*  
 9:30 a.m. Nave Worship Service with Bishop Craig Miller  
 Children's Church  
 10:30 a.m. Brunch celebration Pastor Aucker!



