

St. John Evangelical Lutheran
229 South Broad Street
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
570-398-1676

Sunday, January 29, 2023

4th Sunday of Epiphany



“This morning we are led in worship by, Mr. Gary Johnson, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Authorized Lay Worship Leaders have received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and also have been authorized by the bishop of the synod to preside at the Eucharist in specific situations.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is committed to ordained ministry as the primary means for filling the needs of this church for Word and Sacrament, but at this place in the church’s pilgrimage, the church’s inability to provide all congregations with full-time ordained pastoral ministry presents a challenge. On any given Sunday, congregations have needs that cannot be met by available ordained ministers. Therefore, because it is the bishop’s responsibility to meet the Word and Sacrament needs of the congregations in this Synod, synodically authorized lay worship leaders are trained to meet this need. On behalf of the whole church, Bishop Collins is deeply gratified by the ministry of these servants of the Gospel.”

Introduction to the Day

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

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: *Let Justice Flow Like Streams 717*

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: *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart 873*

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, 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 Micah.

First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has “wearied” Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God’s service.

¹Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

²Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth;
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³“O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

⁶“With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse.

PSALM: Psalm 15

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

²**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

⁴**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear
the LORD.**

They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against
the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

L: A reading from First Corinthians

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak

in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

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 5:1-12

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Rise Up, O Saints of God 669*

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.

Cultivate humility in your church. In gatherings of every size, teach us to boast only in the cross. Shape your church to be people of kindness, generosity, and justice. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: The foundations of the earth bear witness to your faithfulness; the mountains and hills echo with your holiness. When we mistreat your creation, show us the error of our ways. Inspire us with reverent awe to honor all you have made. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You make foolish the wisdom of the world. Raise up honorable leaders who seek justice, love mercy, and pursue peace. Frustrate plans that are corrupt, wicked, and self-seeking. Prosper the work of peacemakers (*local and international reconciliation efforts may be named*). Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Bless all whom the world rejects. Accompany those who are regarded as foolish, weak, low, and despised; reveal your power and presence at work where it is least expected. Give your life, strength, and wisdom to all in need (*especially*). Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: As with your people Israel, remind this congregation of your saving acts. Remind us how your faithfulness brought us through difficulties and sustained us despite our weaknesses. Establish the cross as the center of our life together. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray that the cargo containers of health supplies sent by Global Health Ministries will reach the areas of need around the world. Bless the work of the people who contribute to this important need – the packers, the merchants and ship captain and those who unload it so they can get to their destination in a safe and secure manner. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Praise to you for your blessed saints in every time and place (*especially*).
Trusting you accompanied them in poverty, persecution, and in every trial, we trust
you abide with your people always. 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

Explanation of choir anthem

CONGREGATIONAL CHOIR ANTHEM *How Great Thou Art 856*

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

We give you thanks, Father,
through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son,
whom you sent in this end of the ages
to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you,
through whom you created all things,
and in whom you take delight.

He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb.
He there took on our nature and our lot
and was shown forth as your Son,
born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.
He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will
and won for you a holy people;
he stretched out his hands in suffering
in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted,
in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one,
to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous,
to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection,
taking bread and giving thanks to you, said:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way 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.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection,
we take this bread and cup,
giving you thanks that you have made us worthy
to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church;
gather into one all who share this bread and wine;
fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth,
that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ;

through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father,
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both 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: *Jesus, the Very Thought of You* 754

DISMISSAL

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

C: Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remember in prayer: Rowan Aldridge, 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 helpers: Lector –Pam Wehler; Assisting Ministers – Cozette Stoltzfus, Deb Heydrich; Head Usher –Bob Wehler; Teller –Brayden Wehler; Bulletin Sponsor— Cynthia Breon.

Next week's helper: Lector –Deb Heydrich; Assisting Ministers—Joyce Braucht, Carl Schaefer; Head Usher –Bob Wehler; Teller –Brayden Wehler; Children's Church –Pam Wehler; Bulletin Sponsor –Gary and Gina Johnson; Flowers – sponsor needed.

The Sanctuary Candle is sponsored in January in honor of choir members and organists.

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

Dave Mitchell is now a resident at We Cares of Loyalsock. His address is:
David Mitchell, Room 401
We Cares of Loyalsock
1445 Sycamore Road
Montoursville PA 17754

I'm sure he would appreciate cards.

Jim Allen has been moved to Promedica (Manor Care) in Jersey Shore. Please keep him and Betty in your prayers.

Christian Education is seeking volunteers to lead Children's Church once a month. If interested please see Cathy Eisner. The 4th and 5th 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.

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 2nd floor elevator tower. It's neon green and set up for the whole year. Sign up for the Sunday you want!

Your 2023 Offering Envelopes are available in the Tower of the Church. Please pick up yours and any of your relatives. Only a small number of people use envelopes but it is an important stewardship tool. If there are no envelopes with your name on, please contact Laurel Gottschall for envelopes. It costs us \$3.60 to mail one box of \$1.30 envelopes. Please save us money and pick up your envelopes or give electronically. Forms are available from the office or you can give on-line via the Vanco app.

A Time of Celebration as we Recognize the 30th 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, Turbtoville; the members of St. John Lutheran will officially celebrate his 30th 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

ICE SKATING !! February 5. After church, we will have lunch and then drive to Sunbury. Open to all ages!

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.

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.

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, January 29, 2023

8:30 p.m. Adult Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Nave Worship Service

Pastor Away on vacation until Wednesday, February 1

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

10 a.m. Trinity Worship

6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Sunday, February 5, 2023

8:30 p.m. Adult Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Nave Worship Service

Children's Church

Catechism on own read assignment

4th Sunday of Epiphany

5th Sunday of Epiphany

Pastor Shumway will be covering for Pastor Aucker Jan 24-31 while he is on vacation. For pastoral emergencies Pastor Shumway can be reached at 570-295-5958.

