

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Sunday, February 7, 2021**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the 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**

*In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus’ healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon’s mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.*

**PRELUDE**

**GATHERING**

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

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

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.

**C: Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Holy God,

**C: 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.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG: *On Eagle's Wings* (ELW 787)**

1 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!"

Refrain

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.

2 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. Refrain

3 You need not fear the terror of the night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day;  
though thousands fall about you,  
near you it shall not come. Refrain

**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.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

**C: 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.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## WORD

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

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:21-31

L: A reading from Isaiah.

*The Judeans in exile have a good reason to be hopeful: the one who will bring them to freedom is the God who created the world, the God who subdues the rulers of the earth and gives strength to those who are weary.*

- <sup>21</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
- <sup>22</sup>It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
- <sup>23</sup>who brings princes to naught,  
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.
- <sup>24</sup>Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
when he blows upon them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.
- <sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me,  
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.
- <sup>26</sup>Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
Who created these?  
He who brings out their host and numbers them,  
calling them all by name;  
because he is great in strength,  
mighty in power, not one is missing.
- <sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel,  
“My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God”?
- <sup>28</sup>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.  
<sup>29</sup>He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
<sup>30</sup>Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
<sup>31</sup>but those 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.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: 147:1-11, 20c read responsively**

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God!  
How pleasant it is to honor God with praise!  
<sup>2</sup>**The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem,  
and gathers the exiles of Israel.**  
<sup>3</sup>The LORD heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.  
<sup>4</sup>**The LORD counts the number of the stars  
and calls them all by their names.**  
<sup>5</sup>Great is our LORD and mighty in power;  
there is no limit to God's wisdom.  
<sup>6</sup>**The LORD lifts up the lowly,  
but casts the wicked to the ground.**  
<sup>7</sup>Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;  
make music upon the harp to our God,  
<sup>8</sup>**who covers the heavens with clouds  
and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow upon the mountains.**  
<sup>9</sup>God provides food for the cattle  
and for the young ravens when they cry.  
<sup>10</sup>**God is not impressed by the might of a horse,  
and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner,**  
<sup>11</sup>but finds pleasure in those who fear the LORD,  
in those who await God's steadfast love. <sup>20c</sup> Hallelujah!

## **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23**

L: A reading from 1 Corinthians.

*God entrusted Paul with the responsibility of bringing the gospel to diverse people. Hence the focus of Paul's ministry is not his own rights or privileges as an apostle but the privilege of serving God by freely sharing the good news of Christ with others.*

<sup>16</sup>If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! <sup>17</sup>For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. <sup>18</sup>What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

<sup>19</sup>For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. <sup>20</sup>To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. <sup>21</sup>To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. <sup>22</sup>To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. <sup>23</sup>I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?*

*You have the words of eternal life.*

*Alleluia. Alleluia.*

### **GOSPEL: Mark 1:29-39**

P: The holy gospel according to Mark.

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

*Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.*

<sup>29</sup>As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

<sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." <sup>38</sup>He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

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

## **SERMON**

### *Silence for meditation*

#### **HYMN OF THE DAY: *I Love to Tell the Story* (ELW 661)**

1 I love to tell the story  
of unseen things above,  
of Jesus and his glory,  
of Jesus and his love.  
I love to tell the story,  
because I know it's true;  
it satisfies my longings  
as nothing else would do.

#### *Refrain*

I love to tell the story;  
'twill be my theme in glory  
to tell the old, old story  
of Jesus and his love.

2 I love to tell the story:  
how pleasant to repeat  
what seems, each time I tell it,  
more wonderfully sweet!  
I love to tell the story,  
for some have never heard  
the message of salvation  
from God's own holy word. Refrain

3 I love to tell the story,  
for those who know it best  
seem hungering and thirsting  
to hear it like the rest.  
And when, in scenes of glory,  
I sing the new, new song,  
I'll sing the old, old story  
that I have loved so long. Refrain

## 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

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

*A brief silence.*

A: 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.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: 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.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: 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.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: 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*), let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries centered here (*especially*); 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.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: 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.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

### **SENDING**

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

### **BLESSING**

P: God the creator strengthen you;  
Jesus the beloved fill you;  
and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✝ keep you in peace.

**C: Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Postlude**

## ***Announcements***

*We express our sympathies to the family of Leona Maines who died on Sunday, January 31. Arrangements will be at the convenience of the family.*

Remember in prayer: Rowen Aldridge, Betty and Jim Allen, Luke Antolick, Bob Braucht, Dawn Hauser, Dave Kuehl, Ralph Lehman, Sara Leighow, David Mitchell, Bob and Phyllis Moriarity, Kathy Neal, Rev. Donald and Ruth Nice, Jack Rishel, Joann Rishel, Ben Saar, Jane Shaffer, John Truax, Jillian Waldman, and all of our shut-ins; the safety of our military troops around the world (Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Maddison Myers, Tyler O'Neal, Adam Shaffer, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Jenna White); Everyone affected by the fires on the West Coast; Family Promise and the homeless in our counties. Bishop Eaton, our Presiding Bishop; and Bishop Collins, Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. For our Companion Synod in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; our sister church, St. Wunibald in Heidenheim, Germany and for the New Love Center as it seeks to build a new food hub.

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  
Sarah Davidson - 570-398-0659  
Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of our son and brother, Rick Snyder.

### **Thank you**

Thank you to everyone who sent cards, prayers and phone calls to Ken for the loss of his sister.

### **Giving Plus+**

Download the "Giving Plus+" app from your app store for your cell phone.

Also available on our web site. Enter your email, make up a password, and walk through the choices to give the church an electronic donation by check or debit/credit card. People were asking if they could give electronically by debit/credit card.

**Give+ Text:** Simply send a text message to 570-865-1101 with the amount you would like to contribute. Within a few minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information. Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt of your donation via email.

### **Newsletters/Annual Reports**

Hard copies of the February/March 2021 and the 2020 Annual Report are available. If you would like a copy please contact the church office at 570-398-1676 or [stjohn@stjl.org](mailto:stjohn@stjl.org)

### **Church Envelopes**

Please call the church office Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday at 570.398.1676 to arrange pick up or drop off of your 2021 offering envelopes. Thank you.

### **The 2021 Altar Flower Calendar is now available.**

Please call or email the church to reserve your special dates in 2021. Russells fee is \$42.00. Thank you for continued support weekly.

### **“Souper Bowl Sunday” February 7**

Since 1990, young people have been leading the charge and inspiring others to collect dollars and food on Super Bowl Sunday. We will give 100% of donations to the New Love Center Food Pantry, teaming up with and changing the nation’s largest weekend of football into the largest weekend of caring. The Youth have been collecting for Souper Bowl Sunday since 1998. Please designate a special offering for Souper Bowl Giving.

### **Valentines Day**

“To celebrate Valentine’s Day we will be having a virtual reaffirmation of Wedding Vows on Sunday, February 14 during the worship service.” Couples can participate by responding to the M or W parts in the bulletin.

### **Summer Camp**

Sign up for Summer Camp at Camp Mt. Luther. Registration forms and Camp Brochures are available please see Molly. Our Christian Education Ministry encourages all our youth to attend camp and we will pay your registration fees. Church camp is a great place to grow in your faith.

## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Sunday, February 7, 2021

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

*Souper Bowl Sunday*

*Gary Johnson leading worship*

9:00 a.m. Worship Service on Facebook

No Catechism

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

10:00 a.m. Conference Clergy

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

No Prayer

Thursday, February 11, 2021

4:00 p.m. Pack Boxes

Friday, February 12, 2021

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Food Distribution

Sunday, February 14, 2021

*Transfiguration of Our Lord*

*Valentine's Day*

*Renewal of Wedding Vows*

9:00 a.m. Worship Service on Facebook

SO, JESUS HEALS PETER'S  
MOTHER-IN-LAW, AND  
**RIGHT AWAY SHE'S UP  
AND MAKING LUNCH!?**



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

**YES! HER SERVICE IS  
HER THANKGIVING.  
IT'S THE SAME FOR  
YOU.**



OH, NOT AT ALL! I'M **ACTUALLY**  
MOTIVATED BY A GRUDGING  
SENSE OF **DUTY AND GUILT.**



MARK 1:29-39



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