

# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany



February, 2021

10:00 a.m.

## Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

### INTRODUCTION

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 +

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P 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.

**Congregation (C) Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Holy God,

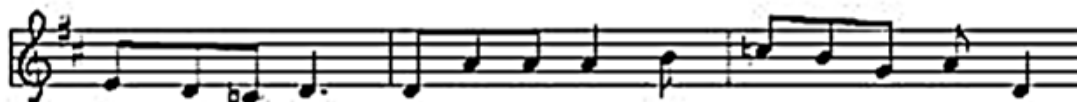
**C you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources 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.**



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark-ness  
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-t'ry, we are the old who  
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter, here we will take the  
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



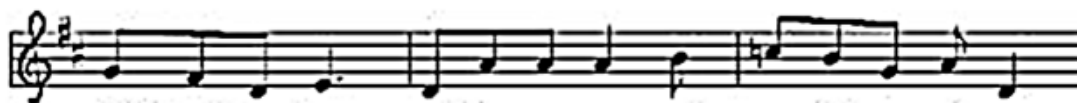
van-ish'd a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings  
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through-out all of his-t'ry,  
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,  
 light years a-way— here in this place the new light is shin-ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.  
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.  
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.  
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en, gath-er us in, the  
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in, the  
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion, give us to eat the  
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er, gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en,  
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly,  
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion  
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.  
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.  
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.  
 fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: GATHER US IN, Marty Haugen

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## GREETING

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

C And also with you.

## HYMN OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

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.

C Amen.



+ WORD +

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:21-31

*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.

Reader            The word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**PSALM: Psalm 147:1-11, 20c** *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader ¶Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises | to our God!  
How pleasant it is to honor | God with praise!

**C**      <sup>2</sup>The LORD re- | builds Jerusalem,  
         and gathers the ex- | iles of Israel.

L       <sup>5</sup>The LORD heals the | brokenhearted  
            and binds | up their wounds.

C     <sup>4</sup>The LORD counts the number | of the stars  
         and calls them all | by their names.

L            5Great is our LORD and might- | y in power;  
                      there is no limit | to God's wisdom.

**C**     ‘The LORD lifts | up the lowly,  
             but casts the wicked | to the ground.

L Sing to the LORD | with thanksgiving;  
make music upon the harp | to our God,

**C** <sup>s</sup>who covers the heav- | ens with clouds

**and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow up- | on the mountains.**

L      <sup>9</sup>God provides food | for the cattle  
         and for the young ravens | when they cry.

C      <sup>10</sup>**God is not impressed by the might | of a horse,  
         and has no pleasure in the speed | of a runner,**

L      <sup>11</sup>but finds pleasure in those who | fear the LORD,  
         in those who await God's steadfast love. <sup>20c</sup> | Hallelujah!

*Spoken after the psalm is sung:*

C      **Amen.**

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

*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.

Reader      The word of the Lord.

C      **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



### GOSPEL: Mark 1:29-39

*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.*

**P** The holy gospel according to Mark, the first chapter.

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

<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     *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

HYMN OF THE DAY     673     *God, Whose Almighty Word*

1 God, whose al - might - y word    cha - os and dark - ness heard  
2 Christ, who once came to bring,    on your re - deem - ing wing,  
3 Spir - it of truth and love,    life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,  
4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three,    glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,

and took their flight:    hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the  
heal - ing and sight;    health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -  
speed forth your flight;    move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the  
Wis - dom, Love, Might:    bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in

gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.  
lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man-kind let there be light.  
lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.  
full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.

Text: John Marriott, 1780-1825, alt.  
Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716-1796

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends: Let us pray.*

**Congregational response:** *Have mercy, O God.*

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

## OFFERING HYMN

We lift our voice-es, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an

of-fer-ing. Lord, use our voice-es, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our

lives, they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing. All that we have, all that we are,

all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.

We lift our voice-es, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you:

we are an of-fer-ing, we are an of-fer-ing.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**P** Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

**C** Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

## + SENDING +

**BLESSING** *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

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

**C** Amen.

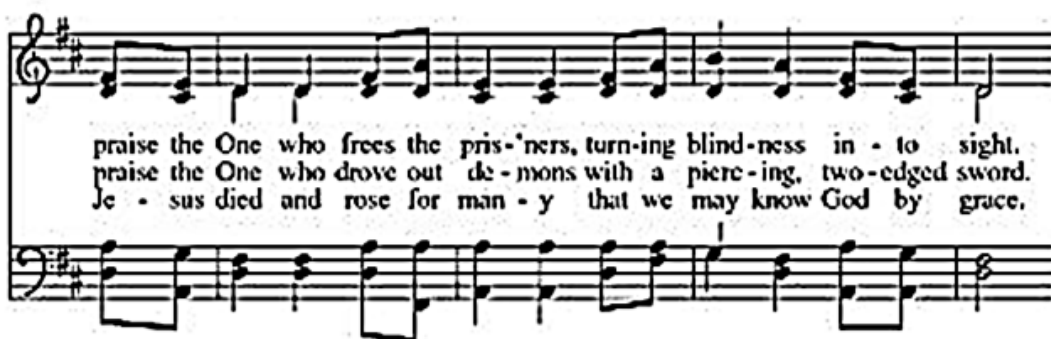
## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SENDING HYMN

**843** *Praise One Who Breaks the Darkness*



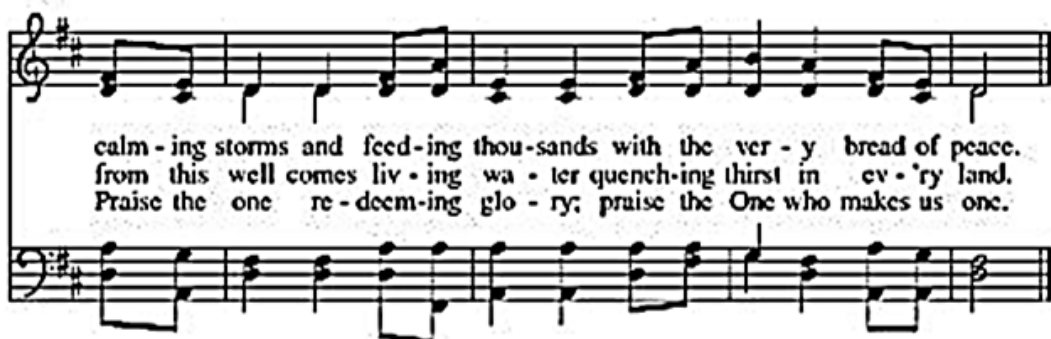
1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;  
 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;  
 3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;



praise the One who frees the pris - ers, turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight,  
 praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.  
 Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace,



Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,  
 Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;  
 Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.



calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.  
 from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.  
 Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955

Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Songs*, Part II, 1813

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## DISMISSAL

- A We believe out loud that God's mission for us is:
- C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.
- P Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.
- C Thanks be to God.

+ + +

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**FLOWERS ARE GIVEN  
TO THE GLORY OF GOD  
AND IN CELEBRATION  
OF THE UPCOMING  
53RD WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
OF BOB AND LINDA ESHLEMAN.**

### Calendar for February 7 - 14

Feb,	7	Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Worship (online), Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
	10	Wed.	Noon	Bible study (online)
	14	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship (online), Transfiguration of Our Lord

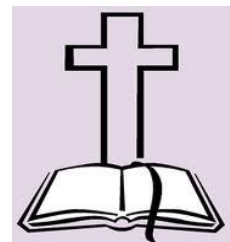
**Next Sunday's Readings, Transfiguration of Our Lord:**

[2 Kings 2:1-12](#)

[Psalms 50:1-6](#)

[2 Corinthians 4:3-6](#)

[Mark 9:2-9](#)



## PRAYER REQUESTS

***New concerns:*** Mark Canning for treatment of heart condition; prayers for healing for Mark Eagelfeld (friend of Judi Duffy), being treated for COVID.

***For the sick:*** Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor); being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Jamie Ann Meyers (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Gerhard Hofer (brother-in-law of Ridy Hofer).

***In treatment for cancer:*** Stephanie Barber; Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Tiffany Nuce and unborn baby (family of Barbara ODonnell); Chris Dickman (synod councilmember); child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl).

***For health and protection:*** For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personal, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc; all immigrant families split apart by US Government; for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those unaccounted for”.

***For prisoners:*** Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

***Other concerns:*** Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

***Church concerns:*** St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

***World concerns:*** For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.