

Fourth Sunday
after Epiphany
January 29, 2023
11:00 a.m.



Welcome to Worship at Zion!

RIC Sunday: "Created Whole"



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.

We Gather

WELCOME & THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

"Gather Us In" (Hymn #532, Verses 1 and 2)



- 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,




ZION
Ministries Under the Cross

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Zion is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) community, and extends God's radical welcome to all people, because we're all created in God's image.



van - ished 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.

APOSTOLIC GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

Let us pray together...**Loving Creator, you knit us together and created our innermost beings. You created us loved, worthy, and unique. You created us LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, neurodiverse and physically diverse. Help us to find our wholeness in you and live into our divinely inspired purpose. Guide us to unfold your story of love. Amen.**

We Hear & Respond to God's Word

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?

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSIVE 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.

SECOND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-9

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.

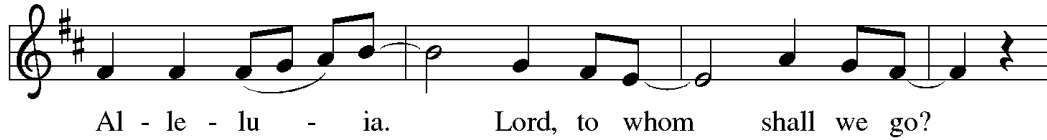
¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” ²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where 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 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, ³in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: MATTHEW 5:1-12

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

*The Pastor announces the Gospel. The assembly responds: **Glory to you, O Lord!***

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."

*The Pastor concludes the reading. The assembly responds: **Praise to you, O Christ!***

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Gather Us In" (Hymn #532, Verses 3 and 4; see pages 1 and 2)

APOSTLES' CREED

Together with all Christians of every time, place, and space, let us confess our faith, using the words of the Apostles' 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 into hell. 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 THE PEOPLE

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

We pray for our pastors, deacons, bishops, and church leaders, that they may lead us to be a loving and welcoming community in Jesus Christ. We give thanks for ReconcilingWorks and all of our Reconciling in Christ partners. We pray that the whole church may someday be a refuge for all of our LGBTQIA+ siblings. Merciful God, **send wholeness to your church.**

We pray for change. For the dismantling of systems rooted in oppression and discrimination. Make us bold in our proclamation that the lives, loves, and gifts of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, aromantic, black, brown, indigenous, incarcerated, disabled, and migrant people matter to you, and so they matter to all of us – manifest in both word and deed. Teach us to see and celebrate the stunning beauty in all you have made. Merciful God, **send wholeness to your people.**

We pray for the sustainability of our Earthly home. Guide us to care for creation, be mindful of waste, carbon emissions, and the impact of these sins on poor and marginalized communities. Merciful God, **send wholeness to our Earth.**

We pray for our siblings all around the world. We pray that governments enact laws that protect and defend the poor, marginalized, and persecuted. We pray that your hand of justice intercedes for us. Merciful God, **send wholeness to the nations.**

We pray for those that have chaos swirling with them. We pray for those that have been told they are “less than,” “wrong,” or an outcast for who they are. We pray that all of us find our true peace and wholeness of ourselves in you. We pray for those that are victims of violence at the hands of homophobia, transphobia, racism, and ableism. We pray for your mercy, love, and healing to care for them. Merciful God, **send wholeness to your children.**

We pray that our faith community and its ministries uplift and care for all of your diverse created beings. We pray that we work towards justice and peace in our own family and community. Merciful God, **send wholeness to us.**

We pray for LGBTQIA+ saints, all those have gone before us in the fight for justice, freedom, and peace. Those that have boldly stood as themselves, showing the substance you created even when the world told them to hide. Merciful God, **receive our saints in peace.**

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy wisdom. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always! **And also with you.**

OFFERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Feast at the Lord's Table

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow-er and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the power of the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us: **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.**

DISTRIBUTION

We Are Sent into the World

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

*The Pastor offers a table blessing. The assembly responds: **Amen.***

PRAYER

Let us pray together...**O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

"This Little Light of Mine" (Hymn #677, Verse 1)

DISMISSAL

The worship has ended. Now the service begins. Go in peace. Let your light shine!
Thanks be to God.

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