



Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

February 12, 2023

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.

GATHERING HYMN

COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE

ELW 804

- 1 Come down, O Love divine;
seek thou this soul of mine
and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;
O Comforter, draw near;
within my heart appear
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

- 4 And so the yearning strong,
with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the pow'r of human telling;
no soul can guess Love's grace
till it become the place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.

The Apostolic Greeting and 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:

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.**

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:] ¹⁵See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If 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. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I 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. ¹⁹I 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, ²⁰loving 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.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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.

¹Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, ³for 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? ⁴For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. ⁹For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: **Matthew 5:21-37**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord

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:] ²¹"You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' ²²But 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. ²³So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be

reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Come 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. ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If 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. ³⁰And 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.

³¹“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ ³²But 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.

³³“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.’ ³⁴But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon

Prayers of Intercession

Each petition ends “Lord, in your mercy,” and the response is “**Hear our prayer.**”

Lord’s Prayer

Let us pray together

Our Father in heaven,

**hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as is 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.**

BLESSING

The God who faithfully brings forth justice
and breaks the oppressor’s rod

✠ bless, strengthen, and uphold you,

today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN O CHRIST, OUR HOPE

ELW 604

1 O Christ, our hope, our hearts' desire,
creation's mighty Lord,
redeemer of the fallen world,
by holy love outpoured,
by holy love outpoured:

5 All praise to you, ascended Lord;
all glory ever be
to Father, Son, and Spirit blest
through all eternity,
through all eternity!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

O GOD, MY FAITHFUL GOD

A. FRITSCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CIRCLE OF PRAYER - Hunter Leisey, John Frantz, Nancy Kulp, Ed Miller, Charles Hoppman, Melissa Gress Swift, John Wesner, John Bergman, Michael Wargo, Nancy Leffler, Jan Lorah, Sandi Clemens, Nettie Kriener, Clair Sweigart, Faith Moyer, Michael A. Crowther, Eileen Leid, Reba Ranck, Grace Ranck, Dennis Goshert, Ray Fox, Deb Lorah, Jean Wolf, Karen Gardner, Kent Weinhold, Gabe Leed, Amber and Damien, Muffy Reinecker, Gene Miller, Kelly Martin, Pastor Jim Miller, Melody Ulrich, Jean Wolf, Kenny Rauch, Tyler Leed.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given in memory of loved ones by the congregation.

SANCTUARY CANDLE is given in memory of loved ones by the congregation.

TAKE NOTE – Please contact Joyce Stoner (717) 336-7077 or mark Flower Calendar in Narthex if you would like flowers or the candle to be given in honor or memory of someone. Upcoming Sundays open.

MOST CURRENT INFORMATION – Be sure and check our website regularly for updates and schedules of ongoing activities of the church. www.swamplutheran.org. Church office is open from 8:30AM-12PM daily.

ACTION FUND – Donations are sought for Swamp's Action Fund to help the needy in our community. Write "Action Fund" in the comment line of your check payable to Swamp Lutheran Church.



Michael A. Crowther
Clyde Showalter
Charles Moyer
Leona Showalter

Clarice Haws
Mary Anne Weitzel
Ella Shirk
Charles Hoppman

Shirley Achey – (neighbor of Sue Kreitz)
Susan Levan
Joan Long
Mary Kring (aunt of Linda Ream)
Lisa Buckles (friend of Sue Ellen Knauer)



When someone is put on the prayer list, we will keep them on for four weeks. After that time, they will be taken off unless you make another request to have them put back on.

OFFERING ENVELOPES – If you give via the online option, let us know by email (secretary@swamplutheran.org) or by phone to the office so that you will no longer receive offering envelopes for 2022.

FOOD BANK – Needs of the EASS food bank supported by the church are ongoing and need replenished monthly. Currently, there is a shortage of canned fruit. Thank you for helping as you are able. We distribute on the 2nd Wednesday each month.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need. As IAN devastated parts of Puerto Rico, Florida and the East Coast these areas are added to the many other areas including the Kentucky rebuilding, and the devastating situation in Ukraine and surrounding countries. Please write your check to Swamp Lutheran and place it in the Disaster Response box in the Narthex. Thank you for giving generously.

ATTENTION THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBERS. The Thrivent “Action Teams” program is an opportunity for Thrivent members to lead projects that provide service and outreach to the community. Thrivent Financial will provide funds of \$250 for each project to get started and pay for associated expenses. You may request two grants per year. Swamp Lutheran has many needs that qualify under this program. If you wish to direct your grant request to help with Swamp Lutheran’s activities, please reach out to Lori Gockley who will assist you with the process. Email: lgockley2@gmail.com or call 717-203-8551.

US FLAGS – When a US flag becomes worn, faded, torn or soiled, it should be retired and replaced with a new flag. For those of you interested in retiring your worn US flags, please bring them to the church. We will collect them in the church library and deliver them to the Reinholds VFW who will arrange for them to be retired in proper fashion. Thank you.

LAP ROBES – Thank you to those who are knitting and/or crocheting lap robes for the ongoing need of the VA Hospital. Please be aware that the church has received a donation of yarn that is available for your use. Please contact Brenda in the office.



Gently Used Sneakers Needed. Cub Pack 95 is collecting sneakers as a fundraiser. Used sneakers (pairs only; athletic shoes only) may be deposited in the bins located in the Narthex and the social hall lobby. The sneakers will be purchased from the Cubs by an organization that resells or recycles them, saving landfill space and natural resources while helping the Scouts raise money to fund their activities. Time to clean out your closets! The Cubs are **not** able to accept any non-athletic footwear including but not limited to dress shoes, heels, rain boots, sandals, slip-ons, water socks, wedges, and work boots of any kind. Questions may be addressed to Cubmaster Travis Leed at 717-381-1608 or email at pack95reinholds@gmail.com



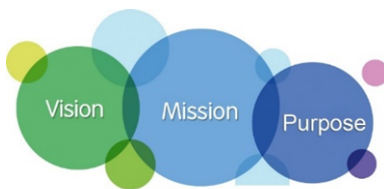
Visioning Project for Swamp's Future Stories Matter!

Stories are how we make sense of our lives. Our personal and communal stories help us see how we are part of God's story. As living variations of scripture, together we will look at our future as Swamp Lutheran Church. This is a season for us to celebrate our sacred stories, especially as we look forward with hope toward the future.

We need *your* stories to be included in a two-part visioning workshop called *Story Matters*. Please plan to attend. Pastor Richard Jorgensen and Deacon Marsha Roscoe of our Synod staff will lead us in this project.

In part one, we will reflect on the stories of our lives and our congregation. In part two, we will name how we are part of God's story. We are inviting members of every age and stage, regardless of how long you have been a member here. What matters most is that God has a story to tell through you! In this highly interactive workshop series, you are invited to come with openness to notice how God is working through our lives. We are working to secure childcare for those who need it.

Part two will be on Saturday, March 4, 2023, from 9:00 am to noon followed by lunch.



HOMEWORK for Part 2: Write down the name of a biblical story or text that reminds you of the congregation, explain briefly why you selected that story, and give it to Pastor Scott. The facilitators will use your stories to help us discern where God is calling us going forward. If you have any questions or need help, please ask Pastor Scott.



Help SLY tackle hunger in our community. From now until Super Bowl Sunday, February 12, bring a can or three of soup or other non-perishable food items to church and leave at the goal post collection point in the Narthex. Your donation benefits Swamp Lutheran Food Pantry and



Orders are being taken for Easter Lilies and Tulips. Price will not be known until the time of actual purchase. The final day for orders will be February 26. Please give the following information to the church office or to Jodi Showalter (717)413-7149.



Name _____

Phone Number _____

Lily _____ Tulip _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

We are currently accepting donations dedicated to the Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kit Project. We will be collecting items through the end of April. Donations may be given to ***Jane Lesher, Denise Null, Connie Taylor and Debbie Carvell.*** Questions to Debbie Carvell 717-336-5638.

We appreciate everyone following the guidelines listed below, as Lutheran World Relief will not send anything that doesn't adhere to these guidelines. Each kit will contain:

- One bath-size towel, (approximately 52"x27"), dark color recommended
- Two bath-size bars (4 or 5 oz) of soap, in it's original wrapping
- One adult-size toothbrush in it's original packaging
- One sturdy comb, (wide-toothed preferred), remove packaging
- One metal nail clipper, remove packaging

Wrap all items in the towel and tie with ribbons or yarn. Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed. **If you don't feel comfortable wrapping an entire kit, we will accept donations of any of the items and gladly assemble the kits!** *Hint for buying towels: Big Lots carries really nice towels that are the exact size needed for the kit. We bought some last year for a price of \$5.00 each!*

As always, thank you for making this project a success!

This Week in the Parish (February 13– February 19)

February 13	9:00AM	COVID Taskforce
	7:00PM	Handbells
February 14	6:00PM	Zoom Bible Study
February 15	7:00PM	Choir
	7:00PM	Church Council

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 22	12:00PM-1:00PM 5:00PM 7:00PM	Drive through Ashes @ Carport Ash Wednesday Supper Ash Wednesday Service
February 26	11:15AM	SLY Leaders Meeting
March 1	7:00PM	First Lenten Service Faith United, Denver
March 4	9:00AM-12:00PM	Final Visioning Meeting Followed by Lunch

DAILY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK

<i>Monday, February 13</i>	Psalm 104; Deuteronomy 32:1-14; Hebrews 10:32-39
<i>Tuesday, February 14</i>	Psalm 104; 1 Kings 17:1-16; 1 Corinthians 4:6-21
<i>Wednesday, February 15</i>	Psalm 104; Isaiah 66:7-13; Luke 12:22-31
<i>Thursday, February 16</i>	Psalm 2; Exodus 6:2-9; Hebrews 8:1-7
<i>Friday, February 17</i>	Psalm 2; Exodus 19:9b-25; Hebrews 11:23-28
<i>Saturday, February 18</i>	Psalm 2; 1 Kings 21:20-29; Mark 9:9-133

UPCOMING SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, February 19, Transfiguration of our Lord
Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

GOSPEL MESSAGE

February 12, 2023

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

A New Community

Anyone who has ever lived or worked with other humans likely knows that community is messy. We hurt each other, sometimes intentionally but often by accident. We say things we regret. We stay silent when we should speak up, or we impose our own beliefs on others when we should start by listening instead. We act rashly out of fear or ignorance or exhaustion. We trample over one another in an attempt to achieve, to win, to earn, or to protect what we assume is rightfully ours.

Jesus knows this side of humanity, and today he invites us to imagine another way. Today's gospel sounds harsh to our ears, but it might actually be an invitation into a community that looks more like the kingdom of God: a community of radical inclusivity, compassion, and care for one another. In this type of community, no one can be simply thrown aside or left behind. Honesty and integrity are the foundation of communication. People are seen in their full, beloved humanity, not as objects to be consumed or cast aside for the sake of others.

In our world today, we might wonder if such a community is possible, but in worship, we get to practice living in a community of faith together every week. Through the reading of scripture, we are reminded of the larger story of God in which we find our meaning: a living story of love, grace, and mercy. We confess our sins before one another and receive forgiveness and a fresh start. We are given our identity as God's beloved through baptism, and we are fed with Christ's own body and united with one another in holy communion. It is Christ at work in us who makes true healing and reconciliation possible, both in our congregations and throughout the world.

Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church

275 Swamp Church Road, Reinholds, PA 17569
717-336-2849

www.swamplutheran.org

secretary@swamplutheran.org

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 12:00 noon

The Rev. Scott V. Brubaker, Pastor

Cell: 717-598-4663 Email: pastor@swamplutheran.org

Sue Kreitz, Organist/Choir Director – 717-336-3272

Grady Daub, Assistant Organist – 717-917-2430

Doug Kulp, Bell Choir Director – 717-336-7798

John Frantz, Sexton – 717-606-8994

Lori Gockley, Council President – 717-733-1095

SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00AM & 9:00AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15AM

SWAMPLUTHERAN CHURCH
275 Swamp Church Road
Reinholds, PA 17569