

January 31, 2021 – 4th Sunday After Epiphany

Prelude

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come! Let us give thanks to the Lord with whole hearts. Ps. 111

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Glory be to the One whose wonders are to be remembered.

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

The Lord feeds the righteous with truth.

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Come! Let us give thanks to God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The One who pardons, heals, and strengthens all who repent calls us to name our failings and our hopes.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy and all-powerful God, who commands all spirits, comforts those in distress, and casts out destructive forces, we confess that we are unable to do your will. We protect what is familiar and reject what is unknown. We admire those with courage but excuse ourselves when we falter from the truth. We forget that you are always with us, and that with you all things are possible. Forgive us, lead us, make us new. Remove our desire to heed false prophets, and show us your way; in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

The God who made you and knows your every thought, hears you now and forgives you all your sin. You have been redeemed through Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Savior, who is Alpha and Omega, all in all.††

Gathering Song: ELW #520 - *“Dearest Jesus, At Your Word”*

Greeting: 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.

Kyrie

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

The prophet speaks with God's authority

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 111

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Ps. 111:10)

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

²**Great are your works, O LORD, pondered by all who delight in them.**

³Majesty and splendor mark your deeds, and your righteousness endures forever.

⁴You cause your wonders to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion.

⁵You give food to those who fear you, remembering forever your covenant.

⁶You have shown your people the power of your works in giving them the lands of the nations.

⁷The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice; all of your precepts are sure.

⁸They stand fast forever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity.

⁹You sent redemption to your people and commanded your covenant forever; holy and awesome is your name.

¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise endures forever

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Limits to liberty: the case of food offered to idols

¹Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him. ⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. ⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸“Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin

against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:21-28

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The healing of one with an unclean spirit

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message: *Epiphany Sermon Series*, Bishop Susan Johnson, National Bishop.

Sunday, January 31, 2021

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Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching — with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Grace to you and peace in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. And greetings to you from your siblings in Christ from coast to coast to coast that make up this part of the family of God that we call the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Mark's gospel is really interesting. At least to me it is! It is so compact, so fast moving. In some ways. It's like the *Readers Digest* condensed version of the gospels.

This morning's gospel lesson starts at only the 21st verse of the 1st chapter. But in the 20 verses prior we have heard John the Baptist proclaim prepare the way of the Lord, Jesus has been baptized, then tempted in the wilderness and then the first disciples have been called. That is compact writing!

Today's gospel lesson is also jam packed. Jesus teaches at the synagogue in Capernaum as one who has authority. A man approaches, full of an unclean spirit. The spirit taunts Jesus. Jesus rebukes the spirit and calls the spirit out. The crowd is amazed at both the teaching and the healing and Jesus' fame spreads.

Jesus teaches with authority and the unclean spirit taunts him. What does this mean to us in our times when the phrase "fake news" has entered our regular conversation?

Jesus is not just any self-proclaimed prophet. He is the holy one of God. Even his enemies recognize this. When the unclean spirit speaks out, Jesus calls out what is not right. He names the evil.

Martin Luther King Jr. said "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

What do these statements of Jesus and of Martin Luther King Jr. mean to us right now in the light of the happenings that have been taking place at the capitol in the United States?

The current pandemic has become the focus of much of our lives. The temptation is for us to be very inward looking, focused on our bubble, and

our work, and our provinces' restrictions and numbers of cases and numbers of deaths.

But the realities of COVID call us to look out beyond ourselves to see the ways that the pandemic is pointing out and underlining disparities and structural inequities around the world and in Canada.

In Canada there are higher incidence rates of COVID in poorer and racialized communities. Many in those communities also experience more severe symptoms often due to underlying health conditions due to poverty. Women in the workforce have faced more challenges than men have. They often bear the primary burden of childcare and homeschooling and have fallen farther behind in terms of the gendered pay gap.

There has also been an increase in domestic violence in Canada and around the world as lockdowns have increased both stress and proximity.

We may be concerned because there are worries about us not having enough vaccine to keep up with our capacity to vaccinate. Yet there are many developing countries that have still not received any vaccine. And recent news has shown that countries that are willing to pay above market value for vaccines are able to jump the queue and procure them faster.

When I think about these things and then look back on today's text, Jesus' actions cause me to ask these questions.

First what is the evil, what is the injustice, what are the evil spirits that need to be named and confronted around us?

Second, how can we, like Martin Luther King Jr. and like Jesus "stop being silent about things that matter." For to do this is to participate in the new life that Jesus promises us.

It is hard for us to know how and when to speak out. We would usually rather wait for things to change and problems to go away.

But speaking out to injustice, speaking out to lies, is part of Jesus' command to love our neighbours. It is a way we show our commitment to the common good. It is a way that we can follow the way of Jesus and live by his example.

I recently heard Archbishop Linda Nicholls talk about the moral injury that people are experiencing. So many things happening around us that break our understanding of what our moral code is. Even after the pandemic ends, we will need to continue working to address this moral injury. We will need to follow Jesus in speaking out against injustice, working for healing, and building up healthy community. But we are not alone.

In this time of Epiphany we begin by remembering the wise ones who followed a star to find the Christ child, the light of the world. In the season of

Epiphany we reflect on how we are called to follow and share that light. Jesus continues to call to each of us to follow him and sends the spirit to nurture the gifts we have been given to work to build God's reign among us. It is the source of our light, our hope, our love and our strength. Amen.

Hymn of the Day: ELW #617 - *"We Come to You for Healing, Lord"*

Prayers of the Faithful

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

For all who share the gospel and proclaim freedom in Christ throughout the world: prophets, teachers, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders; for the church and its ministries, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For all God's works in creation: plants and animals, water and soil, forests and farms; and for those tasked with protecting our natural resources and all that exists, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For government and leaders: cities and nations, rescue professionals and legal aid attorneys, elected officials and grassroots organizers; for all responsible for the well-being of civil society, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit: those who are sick and hospitalized, those living with incurable disease, those struggling with mental illness, those who are hungry or homeless, and all in any need, Florence, Jason, Harold, Richard, Flora, Dorian, Sharon; for caregivers, hospice workers, and home health aides, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the concerns of this congregation: We Pray for the Call Committee of the Zion Lutheran Church, as they prepare to call a new pastor. Pray we focus on what matters: a person who loves Christ, His Word, and His church. Pray the new pastor will be a person of Christ-like character. Let us pray.

Have mercy O God

For the covenant God made with us in the waters of baptism, in thanksgiving for the baptized who have died in the Lord, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

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.
Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

As actions of grace and love, let us offer our gifts and lives to God.

OFFERING PRAYER

Holy, awesome God we bring gifts of paper and coin, symbols of our gratitude and our love. Bless these symbols, That they may become acts of love and grace Bless us and our gifts, That we may transform the world with love and grace In gratitude and hope , we pray, Amen

Music During Preparation of the Lords Table

COMMUNION

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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 Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Communion Hymn: *"Lamb of God"*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

POST COMMUNION MUSIC

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of all grace ✝ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN : ELW 655, *“Son of God, Eternal Savior”*

SENDING OUT

Go out from this place to a world fully known by God.

Where there is fear, remember the authority of Christ Jesus.

Where there is need of love, give it.

Where there is pain, bring peace.

For you are loved by the One who redeems, and freed to live by the Word of life.

Go In Peace, Christ Is With You!

Postlude

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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News and Announcements:

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special

Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Harold Hampel, Richard Hubert, Flora Schrie, Dorian Verch, Sharon Watt.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings, a week later.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

1. With the restriction of the Covid pandemic we have begun using Zoom as a communication tool. I have purchased an account that can be accessed by other committees in the congregation. Please contact Jean for the account name and password. If you would like help with how to use Zoom please let me know. Susan Dupuis

2. We want to say a special "Thank you" to everyone who has given a special offering to our Stained Glass Window account. We now have enough money to complete this project. We are in the early stages of making plans to upgrade the entrance to the building from the parking lot. This area has deteriorated over the years and needs attention. If you would like to make a special donation we would suggest that you consider the building account. Susan Dupuis

3. Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082

COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR - ABOUT THE EVENT

It's cold out there. The Coldest Night of the Year is a covid-safe, family-friendly walk to raise money for charities serving people experiencing homelessness, hurt, and hunger. Walk virtually or in-person on February 20, 2021 – there's a place for everyone!

About Our Cause

The Coldest Night of the Year is a moment when tens of thousands of Canadians step outside the warmth and comfort of home and shine a light of welcome and inclusion.

Together, we're collecting donations that fund critical services at a local charity partner who serves and supports vulnerable families and individuals in our CNOY community.

- **We walk** through the cold and dark on **February 20, 2021** to declare our concern for people who have no home, and take shelter in nooks and crannies.
- **We walk** for those whose days are a battle to house and feed their families, and whose nights are filled with fear and frustration.
- **We walk** for those driven from home by violence and abuse. And we walk for people overwhelmed by isolation, guilt and despair
- **We walk** humbly, realizing that anyone can lose their footing and then lose everything else.

Each step we take brings someone closer to safety, health and home, as together, we raise funds for organizations whose commitment and work transforms peoples' lives.

Please help anyway that you can. Call Ellen @ 613 732 7649 if you have any questions

Your Social Ministry Committee

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Leena Jensen

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Susan Dupuis

Projectionist: Diane Hammel

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

This Week at Zion – February 1 – 7

Tuesday **7p.m.** Narcotics Anonymous

Wednesday **1pm** Staff Mtg.

Thursday **10am** Recording of Epiphany 5 Service

