

¹⁸For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1st Corinthians 1:18

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany – February 2, 2014

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Rev. Mark Bringman, Pastor

John Thickey, Organist

*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? Please sign the guest book as you leave worship today or the attendance pad in the pew. You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an *, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

HOLY COMMUNION

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany – February 2, 2014

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, mourners, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

Presentation of Our Lord

Forty days after the birth of Jesus we mark the day Mary and Joseph presented him in the temple in accordance with Jewish law. There they were greeted by Simeon, an aged priest who offered the song "Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace," as well as by the prophet Anna, who spoke of the redemption of Israel.

PRELUDE: 'Prelude and Air' – Robert J. Powell

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Confession (sometimes called absolution) has been a part of the Christian worship service from the beginning. In the Augsburg Confession it says this: "Our people are taught that they should highly prize the absolution, as being the voice of God, and pronounced by God's command. The power of the Keys [Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven] is set forth in its beauty."

The Confession goes on to emphasize that we do not need to list our specific sins – since God already knows them. Moreover as we have no mediator between us and God, we do not need a priest or anyone else to offer us forgiveness. Titus says this about Jesus: "He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all sin and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds." (Titus 2:14)

The order of confession and forgiveness declares God's forgiveness to us. It is a reminder that we come to worship the one who makes us right and holy. It is a great way to start our week and our worship.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**
Let us come into the light of Christ, confessing our need for God's mercy.

Holy and faithful God,

we so often choose our own way instead of yours. We think we can evade your commandments. We have spoken in ways that kill, strayed with our hearts, betrayed friends, and hated enemies. We have broken our promises. Search us deeply and create us anew. Lift the heavy burden of our sin and free us to follow your way of life. Amen.

"Call upon me," says the Lord, "and I will answer." Our God has come among us to loose every bond and set us free from all that weighs us down. Receive the forgiveness of all your sins in the name of + Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Savior. **Amen.**

***GATHERING SONG #714: O God of Mercy, God of Light**

***GREETING**

The greeting is the formal beginning of the service. After our sins are declared forgiven in the rite of confession and forgiveness, the assembly would process in. The greeting (which comes from 2nd Corinthians 13:14) is that God is in community and brings us to community.

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.
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.
Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

This comes from the gathering of the people together (the term in the Latin was collecta) was a prayer used at the beginning of the service before the procession in to worship. The prayer of the day typically has five parts: 1) the addressee, 2) a celebration of a divine attribute, 3) a petition or request, 4) an explanation of the reason for the petition and finishing with 5) a reminder that we ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In short the prayer of the day is a description of the Christian life together.

Let us pray. Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

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 "weariied" 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.

Hear 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.

PSALM 15

The psalms were songs that were chanted or sung and used in worship in Israel and Judah. They have many different authors (most were anonymous) but were reflective of the liturgy (lit. work of the people) used by the Jewish people for centuries before Christ's birth. These songs reflect many different emotions and the breadth of human experience.

1. Lord, who may dwell within your house
Or, on your holy hill?
Those who do good and speak the truth,
Whose lives are blameless still;
2. Who have no guile upon their tongues
Nor harm their neighbor's life,
But honor those who fear the Lord
And turn away from stife;
3. Who do no wrong, but keep their word
And seek no bribe or gain;
All those who do such things shall live
And safe from harm remain.

From: *A New Metrical Psalter* by Christopher Webber

Tune: Shanti ELW 375

SECOND READING: Corinthians 1:18-31

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

¹⁸For the 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,

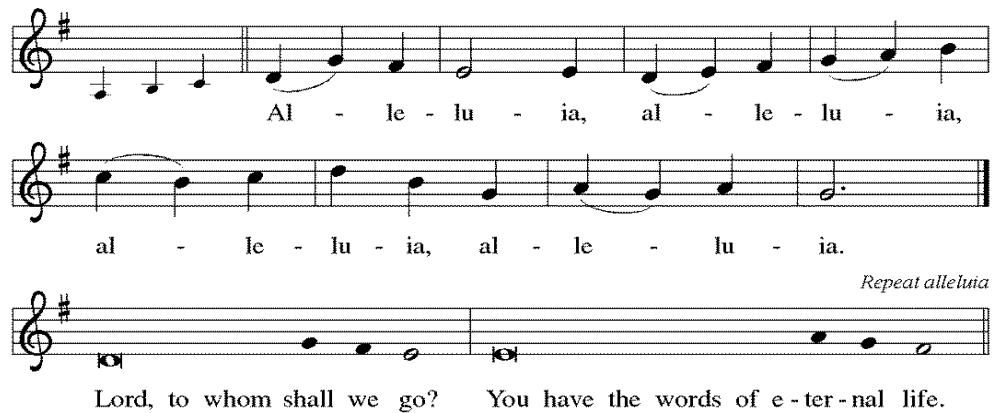
"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

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 the 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, ³¹in 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**



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

***GOSPEL READING: Matthew 5:1-12**

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

The gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you O Lord.

When 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 gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY #727: Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth

APOSTLES CREED

The Apostles Creed is one of the three creeds (statements of religious belief) that Lutherans say are universal – that is that all Christians should agree with. The Apostles Creed reflects older creeds, in particular ones used in Rome as early as the second century. Its roots therefore are the oldest, though the final form came about in the seventh century.

The apostles creed is the normative creed (Nicene for festivals, Athanasian rarely used due to length). It is a personal creed – that is we say that I the person, rather than we the group believe it. It is also the baptismal creed, mainly because it reflects the language of the great commission of Matthew 28:19 – 20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

A creed is used in every worship service to remind us what we believe, to teach us about God and to center and unify us as a group. Though the translations may change, behind the changing words is the eternal, almighty presence of God, the love of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who inspires our words and worship.

**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

Guided by the light of Christ, who has been made known to the nations, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

God, you call the church on earth to witness to the life we receive in Jesus. Help us to share your good news with the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All creation is holy. Lead us to restore the hills and valleys, lakes and rivers, forests and coastlands to the beauty you created. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Call those who are wise and powerful to use their gifts to do justice in a world longing for peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Comfort those who mourn, ease the suffering of all who are lonely or in pain, heal the sick especially Frieda, Cindy, Bill

& Kathy, Jim, Raymond, George, Wanda Jean, Helen, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Ed, Fred & Jane, and David & Ellen. Bring to your table all who hunger and thirst. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Continue to uphold this community of faith to proclaim Christ crucified and reach out to those who are poor, hungry, homeless, or easily overlooked. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Protect us in our weakness until you gather us with all your saints upon your holy hill. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Radiant God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who has made his dwelling among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY – ‘*Liebster Jesu, Wir Sind Hier*’ – Johann G. Walther
(Blessed Jesu, We Are Here)

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray. God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

***DIALOGUE**

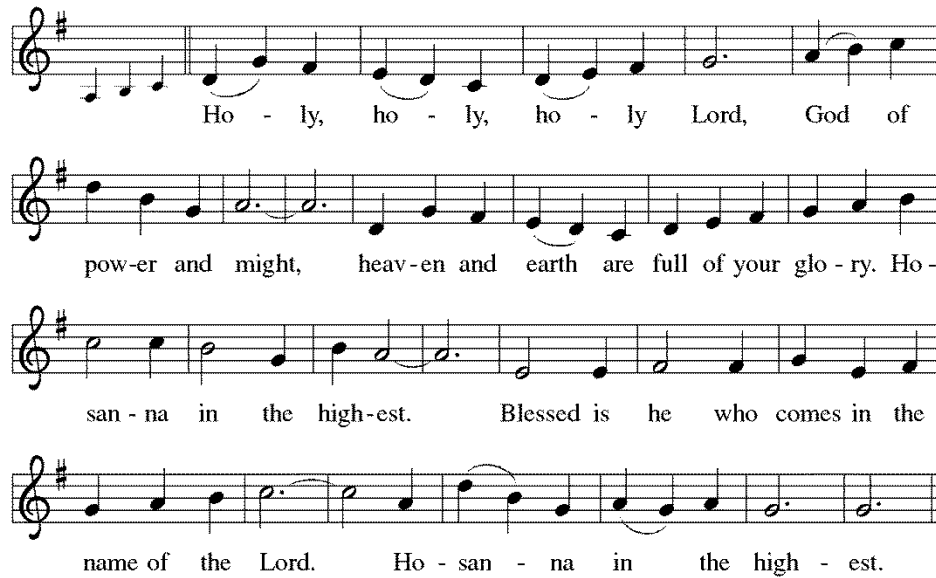
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***PREFACE**

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:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Literally comes from Isaiah 6:3 where the seraphim flying around God's throne constantly sing out "Holy, Holy, Holy". There are a number of different ceremonies that have been associated with the singing of these words. The most common one today is in two parts: for one to bow down at the beginning of the piece, in deference and respect for God. Then when we sing "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" to stand straight – for it is Jesus, the one who comes in God's name, who cleanses us from all sin and redeems us for all eternity – in him we are righteous and holy.



***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all. By your powerful word you created all things. Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations. Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son. He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.

In the night in which he was handed over, 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 preaching and healing, his dying and rising, and his promise to come again, we await that day when all the universe will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light. By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

The Lord's Prayer comes from the Sermon on the Mount, which we are reading through now. Jesus used it to teach his disciples the manner in which to pray. In the original language, the first word was similar to a Papa or Daddy – indicating a warm familiarity and love.

This is one of the first prayers that we teach our children. It is always the prayer used with communion – when we share communion with our homebound, prayers, scripture and this prayer make for the liturgy of communion. This particular translation of the Greek words is very similar to the one used in the Book of Common Prayer in 1662, making this the oldest English translation we typically use in worship.

This prayer has been translated in every language and is used by all Christians to pray in the manner our Savior taught us.

**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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Blessed are all who are called to the supper of the Lamb.

COMMUNION

In response to Jesus’ invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life and salvation as the blessings of God’s sacramental grace. All are invited forward for communion or a blessing. The area of cups bordered by green tap contains grape juice.

AGNUS DEI: Lamb of God

This song title literally means Lamb of God, a title for Jesus that comes from today’s gospel reading and from the book of Revelation. In Judaism, the Passover lamb is a symbol of the greatest act of salvation God gave his people and is a part of the Passover meal – the holiest service in the Jewish year. In Passover (c.f. Exodus 12) the blood of the lamb saves the people from the Destroyer.

In Christianity, we know that Jesus is God’s lamb sent to save the entire world, not just from Pharaoh but from the powers of sin and death. As we gather around the table for our holy meal, we are gather to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the lamb, who takes away our sin, who gives us mercy and who grants us peace.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN #728: Blest Are They

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace.
Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray. Lord, it is good for us to be here, for we have tasted your glory in this holy meal. Continue your goodness as we go out from here. Open our eyes to see your face shining in every person, and send us to be your servants in every place, for you are the life and light of all, both now and forever. **Amen.**

***BLESSING**

May the God of glory dwell in your richly, name you beloved, and shine brightly on your path; and the blessing of the almighty God, the Father, + the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

SENDING SONG #551: *The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

POSTLUDE: *'Postlude'* – R. Powell

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

8:00 am

Assisting Minister: Matt Claus

Communion Assistant:

Acolyte:

Lector:

Usher:

Attendance Last Week: 48

Weekly Budgeted Need: \$ 2,640.27

YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$ 13,201.35

YTD Actual Expense: \$ 10,945.12

10:00 am

Assisting Minister:

Missy Kramer

Communion Assistant:

Acolyte:

Lector:

Usher:

Cardinal

Attendance last year: 60+

Last Week's Giving: \$ 887.00

Year to Date Receipts: \$ 8,176.00

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