

**Stewardship 2025
United in Christ**



**Yesterday,
Today and
Tomorrow**

Psalm 46:7 “The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.”

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
February 16, 2025
8:00 AM Traditional Worship**

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman
Guest Preacher: Sandy Grant **Organist/Pianist:** Linda Kunz
Lector: Brenda Zarth
Acolytes: Lucas Peterson & Autumn Wendorf
Ushers: Jeffrey Morgan, Jerry Graffin, Jerry Buskager, Mark Holzuter
Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

Blessings and curses abound on the sixth Sunday after Epiphany. We would do well to listen closely to whom the “blessed ares” and the “woe tos” are directed and to find our place in the crowd among those who desire to touch Jesus. The risen Christ stands among us in the mystery of the holy supper with an invitation to live in him, and offers power to heal us all.

**CALL TO WORSHIP “Open the Eyes of My Heart” Baloché/Bettcher
1st Class Ringers**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

C: Amen

P: Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Brief silence for reflection.

P: Merciful God,

C: you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your loving kindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

P: God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In ✝ Christ, you are forgiven. In the spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

C: Amen.

Stand

HYMN: "Let Justice Flow Like Streams" ELW #717

vs. 1: Let justice flow like streams of sparkling water, pure, enabling growth, refreshing life, abundant, cleansing, sure.

vs. 2: Let righteousness roll on as others' cares we heed, an ever-flowing stream of faith translated into deed.

vs. 3: So may God's plumb line, straight, define our measure true, and justice, right, and peace pervade this world our whole life through.

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

LITANY

P: In the beginning was the Word,

C: and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

P: In the Word was life,

C: and the life was the light of all people.

P: The word became flesh and lived among us,

C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.

HYMN OF PRAISE: "God of Grace and God of Glory" ELW #705 vss. 1 & 2

vs. 1: God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your pow'r;

**crown your ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: **Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Sit

ANTHEM “Carry the Light” by Beck Chancel Choir

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 17:5-10

⁵⁻⁶ GOD’S Message:

“Cursed is the strong one
who depends on mere humans,
Who thinks he can make it on muscle alone
and sets GOD aside as dead weight.
He’s like a tumbleweed on the prairie,
out of touch with the good earth.
He lives rootless and aimless
in a land where nothing grows.

⁷⁻⁸ “But blessed is the man who trusts me, GOD,
the woman who sticks with GOD.

They’re like trees replanted in Eden,
putting down roots near the rivers—
Never a worry through the hottest of summers,
never dropping a leaf,
Serene and calm through droughts,
bearing fresh fruit every season.

⁹⁻¹⁰ “The heart is hopelessly dark and deceitful,
a puzzle that no one can figure out.

But I, GOD, search the heart
and examine the mind.

I get to the heart of the human.
I get to the root of things.
I treat them as they really are,
not as they pretend to be.”

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL CANTICLE: “Oh Word of God Incarnate” ELW #514 vs. 1

**vs. 1: O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky:
we praise you for the radiance that from the hallowed page,
a lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.**

The Gospel is announced...

P: The Holy Gospel according to the sixth Chapter of Luke.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 6:17-26

¹⁷⁻²¹ Coming down off the mountain with them, he stood on a plain surrounded by disciples, and was soon joined by a huge congregation from all over Judea and Jerusalem, even from the seaside towns of Tyre and Sidon. They had come both to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. Those disturbed by evil spirits were healed. Everyone was trying to touch him—so much energy surging from him, so many people healed! Then he spoke:

You’re blessed when you’ve lost it all.

God’s kingdom is there for the finding.

You’re blessed when you’re ravenously hungry.

Then you’re ready for the Messianic meal.

You’re blessed when the tears flow freely.

Joy comes with the morning.

²²⁻²³ “Count yourself blessed every time someone cuts you down or throws you out, every time someone smears or blackens your name to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and that that person is uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—skip like a lamb, if you like!—for even though they don’t like it, I do . . . and all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company; my preachers and witnesses have always been treated like this.

²⁴ But it's trouble ahead if you think you have it made.

What you have is all you'll ever get.

²⁵ And it's trouble ahead if you're satisfied with yourself.

Your *self* will not satisfy you for long.

And it's trouble ahead if you think life's all fun and games.

There's suffering to be met, and you're going to meet it.

²⁶ "There's trouble ahead when you live only for the approval of others, saying what flatters them, doing what indulges them. Popularity contests are not truth contests—look how many scoundrel preachers were approved by your ancestors! Your task is to be true, not popular.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Stand

HYMN: "I Shall Not Be Moved" TFF #147 vss. 1-3

***Refrain:* I shall not be, I shall not be moved. (2 times)
like a tree planted by the water, I shall not be moved.**

**vs. 1: When my cross is heavy, I shall not be moved, (2 times)
like a tree planted by the water, I shall not be moved. *Refrain***

**vs. 2: The church of God is marching, I shall not be moved, (2 times)
like a tree planted by the water, I shall not be moved. *Refrain***

**vs. 3: Jesus is our captain, I shall not be moved, (2 times)
like a tree planted by the water, I shall not be moved. *Refrain***

APOSTLE'S 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 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

P: With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A Brief Silence

P: Blessed is your church transformed by your Spirit. Give us courage to proclaim to all people the promises made true in the death and resurrection of Christ. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Blessed is creation. As earth experiences destruction from harmful practices and climate change, give us courage to help bring about its restoration. Encourage those who work in forestry to be a voice for the hidden places of creation and provide skills for its conservation. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Blessed are the nations. We pray for presidents, prime ministers, and leaders of nations. Grant that their courage will not run dry in the face of challenge, but that they will delight in the fountain of your righteousness. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Blessed are those in need. Give to all facing illness wise and caring doctors, nurses, and therapists. Draw close to those who feel far from you or who are suffering in any way. Provide an extra measure of your grace and love. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Blessed is this congregation. Like a tree planted by streams of water, we are nourished by faith in you. Provide courage in times that feel dry, trusting that you sustain us in many ways. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Blessed are those saints who now rest in your peace. Through lives of both sorrow and joy, challenge and triumph, they provide witness of faith in all times. May their lives be a witness to the living. God of grace,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

C: **Amen.**

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Sit

OFFERTORY "O God My Faithful God" Fritsch/Callahan

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

C: **Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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

P: The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness. The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Music is played as those who wish to come forward for communion come forward and kneel at the communion rail. Others are invited to commune in your pew.

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace till life everlasting.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray.

C: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

P: The Spirit of the triune God ✝ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Live in hope.

C: Thanks be to God.

SENDING HYMN: "Canticle of the Turning" ELW #723 vs. 1-3

**vs. 1: My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,**

and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.

vs. 2: Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

vs. 3: From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

POSTLUDE: "We Are Called" Haas/Burkhardt