



Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 7, 2021

Welcome to St. John

St. John Lutheran Church 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422

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Nursery School website: www.stjohnsns.com

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Our Council Members are listed on our website.

Celebrating 250 years of mission and ministry, 1769-2019.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Order for Worship

Prelude ~ “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

Quartet

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the unity of heart and mind is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear,
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.

From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;
and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.

Text: John Fawcett

Music: David Cherwien

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose voice is upon the waters,
whose mercy is poured out upon all people,
whose goodness cascades over all creation.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Holy God,

C: **you search us and know us.**

You are acquainted with all our ways.

**We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—
our own sins and the broken systems that bind us.**

**We turn inward, failing to follow
your outward way of love.**

We distrust those who are not like us.

**We exploit the earth and its resources
and fail to consider generations to come.**

**Forgive us, gracious God,
for all we have done and left undone.**

**Even before the words are on our tongues,
you know them;**

receive them in your divine mercy.

Amen.

P: How vast is God's grace!
 Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus,
 our sins are washed away
 and we are claimed as God's own beloved.
 Indeed, we are forgiven.
 In the wake of God's forgiveness,
 we are called to be the beloved community
 living out Christ's justice
 and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn ~ "Arise Your Light Has Come"

1 A - rise, your light has come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
 2 A - rise, your light has come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
 3 A - rise, your light has come! All you in sor - row born,
 4 A - rise, your light has come! The moun - tains burst in song!

show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
 pro - claim the cap - tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.
 bind up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
 Rise up like ea - gles on the wing, God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
 Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825-1893
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Greeting

P: The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all.
 C: **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P: Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Children's Message

Word

First Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31

A: Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?
He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God"?
Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 147

Refrain (Cantor, then ALL)

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, who heals, who
heals the broken-hearted.

The English translation of the Psalm Response from the *Lectionary for Mass*
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How good to sing psalms to our God; how pleasant to chant fitting praise!
The Lord builds up Jerusalem and brings back Israel's exiles. **Refrain.**

The Lord heals the broken-hearted; and binds up all their wounds.
The Lord counts out the number of the stars; and calls each one by its name. **Refrain.**

Our Lord is great and almighty; God's wisdom can never be measured.
The Lord lifts up the lowly; but casts down the wicked to the ground. **Refrain.**

Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: As soon as Jesus and the disciples left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Rachel Manke

Hymn of the Day ~ “We Come to You for Healing, Lord”

1 We come to you for heal - ing, Lord, of
 2 As once you walked through an - cient streets and

4 When nights are long with wake - ful - ness, through
 5 We come to you, O lov - ing Lord, in

bod - y, mind, and soul, and pray that by your
 reached toward those in pain, come, ris - en Christ, a -

days when strength runs low, grant us your gift of
 our dis - tress and pain, in trust that through our

Spir - it's touch we may a - gain be whole.
 mong us still with pow'r to heal a - gain.

pa - tience, Lord, your calm - ing peace to know.
 nights and days your grace will heal, sus - tain.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., b. 1923
 Music: MARTYRDOM, Hugh Wilson, 1764-1824
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Apostles' Creed

P: *Together, let us confess our faith:*

**C: 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

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

A brief silence.

A: For the church: for ministries of healing and wholeness, for hospital, hospice, and military chaplains, for those serving in prison ministry, for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ, let us pray.
Have mercy, O God.

A: For creation: for insects in the grass, clouds on the mountaintops, for cattle and the rainwater they drink, for the humility to take our place among all creatures of the earth, let us pray.
Have mercy, O God.

A: For the nations: for all who lead in cities and towns, states and countries; for community organizers, school officials, and CEOs; for international health organizations, that in times of trial, fear, or hopelessness, they find freedom in service to those most in need, let us pray.
Have mercy, O God.

A: For all wearied by life's burdens: for those who are poor, for those lacking supportive relationships, for those crushed by debt, for those struggling with chronic pain or other sickness, for those exhausted from overwork or stress, and for all who cry out to you. As a community we pray for Joe, Barry, Jean, Alethia, Martyne, Callen, Kate, Ed, Maria, Cheryl, Susan, John, Jenny, Scott, Kathy, John, Eric, Tom, Jack, Jon, Sue, Lauren, Bill, Gladys, Dylan, Randy, Dorothy, Judy, Jim, Gerry, Hadley, Robert, Abby, Laura, and Donna, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

A: For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries centered here, for friends of our church; for ministries of companionship and support, for the young people in this place who open us to new understandings, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: In thanksgiving for the faithful departed, who were called by name and now rest from their labors, that their lives serve as witnesses to the goodness of God, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

A: 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.

C: Amen.

Peace

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

C: And also with you.

Anthem~ "They Who Wait for the Lord"

Quartet

Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;
But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary;
They shall walk and not faint.

Text: Isaiah 40:28-31

Music: John Carter

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

During our time away, we will not be passing the offering plates. We are grateful for all who are able to continue their support of St. John. There are three ways to share tithes and offerings:

1. Simply giving - You can arrange for a regular gift (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to be deducted from a bank account. Please contact Marcie Godby, our bookkeeper, to arrange for this (stjohn1802bookkeeper@gmail.com).

2. You may go to St. John's website, <https://www.stjohnbluebell.org/>, and under "Quick Links" hit the "Online Giving and Donations" button.

3. You may put your offering envelope (checks are preferred) in another stamped envelope and mail it to St. John: 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422 (Attn: Marcie).

Take a moment and reflect on the gifts we have received – even in these difficult days.

Voluntary~ “Meditation on Healer of Our Every Ill”

Jeremy Bankson

Offertory Hymn~ “Healer of Our Every Ill”

Refrain

Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to - mor - row,

give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.

1 You who know our fears and sad - ness, grace us with your
2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing how your grace is

Refrain
peace and glad - ness; Spir - it of all com - fort, fill our hearts.
still un - fold - ing, give us all your vi - sion, God of love.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: HEALER OF OUR EVERY ILL, Marty Haugen

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Offertory Prayer

P: O God,
receive these gifts as you receive us:
like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.
Nourish us anew in your tender care,
and empower us in faithful service
to tend to others with this same love,
through Jesus Christ, our saving grace.

C: **Amen.**

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.**

Benediction

P: God the creator strengthen you;
Jesus the beloved fill you;
and the Holy Spirit the comforter † keep you in peace.

C: **Amen.**

Sending Hymn~ "Praise the One Who Breaks"

1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;
2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;
3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;

praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners, turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight.
praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.
Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.

Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,
Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;
Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.

calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.
from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude~ “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness”

Al Roberts

Additional music links:

“Christ Be Our Light”

<https://youtu.be/r5Woe5IkNg4>

“Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good”

<https://youtu.be/jTW0uiC4jNw>

“On Eagle’s Wings”

<https://youtu.be/KbRZRLN-m20>

Assisting with Worship

Pastor

Director of Music

Lector

Prayers of Intercession

Quartet

Pastor Rachel Manke

Lawrence Baker

Ari Greyson

Andrea Greyson

Deborah Swider, Maja Lisa Fritzhuspen,
Kurt Klinger-Wilensky, Jonathan Oehler

Letter from Council President, Beth Wood

As I sit writing this letter on a snowy Monday, I find myself reflecting on my previous “Dear St. John” letter. At that time, the pandemic was still new, and my thoughts were hopeful and poetic of getting through the storm. But now, 300+ days later, it is hard to believe that we are STILL waiting for the storm clouds to disperse.

Looking back, I’m proud to think what we have done in this time. We began utilizing whatever technology we could to keep our services and functions running, from recording of worship services to committee meetings and Bible study via Zoom. Members stepped up to form a COVID-response team to help us weed through the deluge of information and establish safety protocols. We planned a socially distanced VBS and then pivoted to at-home activity bags when the weather forecast was not on our side. Youth group continued via Zoom and outdoor, masked gatherings. We had beautiful outdoor services with live music and individual communion cups. We successfully navigated the call process during a pandemic and called a new pastor to join our St. John community. St. John kept going. We never stopped. Because that is simply what needed to be done.

As we approach our annual meeting at the end of this month, I find myself much more excited than I’ve ever been for an annual meeting (although I admit, that bar was likely not very high to start.) Not only is it a time to connect as a congregation, which is something I know that many of us are missing in our lives, it is also a time to recognize the amazing things we did in 2020. It was a heck of a year, and one worth carefully recording in the history of our church.

I am incredibly thankful for the spirit, talent, and dedication of this church family. As we close the book on 2020 and continue forward in 2021, I know that we can continue to honor church traditions in whatever way possible, while also continuing to adapt and to find new ways to support the life of our church. If you have ideas or an interest in getting involved in whatever way you can during this time, please reach out to myself or one of my fellow council members. Let’s carry the spirit forward together, and in turn, let it carry us.

With thanks,
Beth Wood
Council President

