



St. John Lutheran Church ELCA Waseca, MN

Sunday, Jan. 29, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

GATHERING

Introduction

In today's first reading we hear, "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." Yet we know we cannot achieve perfection. Our attempts to love neighbors and even our enemies fall short of what God desires for us. Much of today's gospel reading echoes portions of the Ten Commandments. Jesus' instructions reveal a pattern of behavior that results 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.

Welcome and Announcement

(please stand)

Call to Worship

P: Show us your ways, O Lord! Lead us in your truth, and teach us.

C: Open our eyes, minds, and hearts to know your will and to follow it.

P: Reveal your vision for us, and keep us focused and faithful to what you would have us do.

C: Bring us together to worship and work for your purpose, and move us forward into your future. Amen.

Opening Hymn: *(New Music)* #1097 **Ten Thousand Reasons**

Prayer of the Day

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise *(purple)* #53 **Great is the Lord (x2)**

(please be seated)

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

First Reading: Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18

The Holiness Code in Leviticus urges people to be holy because God is holy. Holiness is lived out in consideration of those who are poor and those who are weak. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves.

¹The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

²Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

⁹When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.

¹¹You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. ¹²And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the Lord.

¹³You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. ¹⁴You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

¹⁵You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. ¹⁶You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

¹⁷You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. ¹⁸You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

R The Word of God, word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Special Music

Shine on Us

Senior Choir

(please stand)

Gospel Acclamation #7 Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.

P *The Holy Gospel according to St. Mathew the fifth chapter.*

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

Gospel: Matthew 5:21-22, 27-30, 43-48

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.

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.

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

P *The Gospel of the Lord.*

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

(Please be seated)

Children's Message (*Children will be dismissed to Sunday School*)

Hymn: (*purple*) **#18 Bind us Together**

Message **Beyond the Rules** **Pastor John Omans**

Message Song (*purple*) **#73 I Will Sing (vs. 1, 2, 3, 5)**

(Please Stand)

Apostles' Creed (*cranberry*) **pg. #105**

(Please be seated)

Reception of New Members

Steven & Nancy Graumann **Dwight Tosterson** **Mikhail Rostislavovich**
Austin Bell **Dylan DeMarce**

P: In baptism, we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God. Sisters and brothers in Christ, do you intend to continue in the covenant of your baptism among God's people in this place: to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God, to share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in word and deed, to serve all people following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth? If so, please answer: "We do and we ask God to help and guide us."

(Church Council representative)

R: Let us welcome these sisters and brothers in Christ to this community of faith.

C: We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we will give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good news to all the world!

(Presentations by Women of the ELCA and Men in Mission)

The Prayers of the Church

P: Lord, Hear our prayer

Hymn (*purple*) **#86 Let my prayer be a fragrant offering** (*Refrain only*)

The Peace

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

P Share a greeting of Christ's peace with one another.

(We share Christ's Peace)

(please be seated)

Stewardship Minute

Our congregation is a gathering of “therefore” people. We have experienced God’s great mercy. “Therefore”, we work together to proclaim that mercy in the world through both word and deed.

Thank you for our new members today. Through our ministry and mission together, may St. John Lutheran Church be a place of abundant welcome for all people. And may God fill us all with faith and hope in the promise of his inbreaking kingdom, and love that extends beyond the walls of this church to all in the world. Thanks be to God!

Offering Invitation *(offering may be placed in offering plates located at corner of side aisle)*

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray together:

P: Merciful God,

C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord’s Prayer *(purple) pg. 112 (Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name..)*

Blessing

P God, who leads you in pathways of righteousness, who rejoices over you, and who calls you by name, + bless your going out and your coming in today and forever.

C Amen.

SENDING

(please stand)

Sending Song *(purple)* **#120 Rejoice in the mission**

Dismissal

P Go with Christ into a weary world. Share the good news.

C Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Leaders in the Service

Pastor: John Omans

Pianist/Organist: Al Tonn

Guitarist: Mike Harvey

Acolyte: Savannah Schlueter

Reader: Gyles Randall

Ushers: Gyles & Carol Randall

Council Person: Alex Cooper

Videographer: Merril Schultz

Facebook Live: Curtis Yess