

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Epiphany 1 - January 10, 2021

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #226 - *“To Your Temple I Draw Near”*

**To your temple I draw near;
Lord, I love to worship here.
Here are sacrament and Word;
Here believers meet their Lord.**

**I through Christ am reconciled;
I through Christ become your child.
Abba, Father, give me grace
In your courts to seek your face.**

**While your glorious praise is sung,
Touch my lips, unloose my tongue,
That my joyful soul may bless
Christ the Lord, my righteousness.**

**While the prayers of saints ascend,
God of love, to mine attend.
Hear me, for your Spirit pleads;
Hear, for Jesus intercedes.**

**While I listen to your law,
Fill my soul with holy awe
Till your gospel brings to me
Life and immortality.**

**While your ministers proclaim
Peace and pardon in your name,
Through their voice, by faith, may I
Hear you speaking from the sky.**

**From your house, when I return,
May my heart within me burn,
And at evening let me say,
“I have walked with God today.”**

Confession of Sins:

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

P: Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

First Lesson: Isaiah 49:1-6

Listen to me, you coastlands. Pay attention, you faraway peoples! The Lord called me from the womb. When I was inside my mother, he mentioned my name. He made my mouth like a sharpened sword. He hid me in the shadow of his hand. He made me a polished arrow. He concealed me in his quiver. He said to me, “You are my servant Israel, in whom I will display my glory.” But I said to myself, “I have labored in vain. I spent my strength and came up empty, with nothing. Yet a just verdict for me rests with the Lord, and my reward is with my God.” But now the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to turn Jacob back to him, so that Israel might be gathered to him, so that I will be honored in the eyes of the Lord, because my God has been my strength - the Lord said: It is too small a thing that you should just be my servant to raise up only the tribes of Jacob and to restore the ones I have preserved in Israel, so I will appoint you to be a light for the nations, so that my salvation will be known to the end of the earth. (EHV)

Psalm 2:

Refrain: Great are the works of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Great are the works of the Lord.

**Why do the nations ‘conspire
And the peoples ‘plot in vain?**

**The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together
a’gainst the LORD
And against his A’noointed One.**

**Refrain: Great are the works of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Great are the
works of the Lord.**

**The One enthroned in ‘heaven laughs;
The LORD ‘scoffs at them.**

**Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath,
‘saying,
“I have installed my King on Zion, my ‘holy hill.”**

**I will proclaim the decree ‘of the LORD:
He said to me, “You are my Son; today I have become your ‘Father.”**

**Glory be to the Father and ‘to the Son
And to the Holy ‘Spirit,
As it was in the be’ginning,
Is now, and will be forever. ‘Amen.**

**Refrain: Great are the works of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Great are the
works of the Lord.**

Second Lesson: Acts 16:25-34

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Instantly all the doors were opened, and everyone’s chains came loose. When the jailer woke up and saw that the prison doors were opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted with a loud voice, “Don’t harm yourself, because we are all here!” The jailer called for lights, rushed in, and fell down trembling in front of Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.” They spoke the word of the Lord

to him and to everyone in his home. At the same hour of the night, he took them and washed their wounds. Without delay, he and all his family were baptized. Then he brought Paul and Silas into his house and set food before them. He rejoiced, because he and his whole household had come to believe in God. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. John was clothed in camel's hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. He preached, "One more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals! I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with you." (EHV)

The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn #89 - "To Jordan's River Came Our Lord"

**To Jordan's river came our Lord,
The hrist, whom heav'nly hosts adored,**

**The God from God, the Light from Light,
The Lord of glory, pow'r, and might.**

**The Savior came to be baptized -
The Son of God in flesh disguised -
To stand beneath the Father's will
And all his promises fulfill.**

**As Jesus in the Jordan stood
And John baptized the Lamb of God,
The Holy Spirit, heav'nly dove,
Descended on him from above.**

**The from God's throne with thund'rous sound
Came God's own voice with words profound:
"This is my Son," was his decree,
"The one I love, who pleases me."**

**The Father's word, the Spirit's flight
Anointed Christ in glorious sight
As God's own choice, from Adam's fall
To save the world and free us all.**

**Now rise faint hearts: be resolute!
This man is Christ, our substitute!
He was baptized in Jordan's stream,
Proclaimed Redeemer, Lord supreme.**

**The Sermon: Mark 1:4-11
 "Listen To The Voices"**

Listen To The Voices. Under most circumstances, I would **not** offer that to you as **good** advice. Down through the ages hundreds of people have heard **voices** - voices which seemed to have **no** origin, or at least an **uncertain** origin. Listening to those voices usually meant **trouble**, as it did for **Joan of Arc**, whose listening got her **burned** at the stake. Also, the false prophet, **Mohammed**, the founder of the Islamic religion, thought he was going **insane** (which he probably was) when he heard **voices** speaking to him in the middle of the desert - voices which told him to start a new religion. And more recently, mass **murderers** and **assassins** have testified that they heard **voices** which were telling them to **kill** members of their

family, or some public official. It was certainly **not wise** to listen to those voices. However, the voices in our **text** are quite **different**. They have an easily **recognizable** origin, and they are well **worth** listening to.

The **first** of the voices in our text is the voice of a **preacher**. Our text begins, “*John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and **preaching** a baptism of **repentance** for the **forgiveness** of sins.*” This preacher of **repentance** and **forgiveness** was **John the Baptist** - a messenger sent to prepare the way for the Lord - and we heard all about him back in the middle of **December** during the season of **Advent**. John’s purpose was to make a clear, straight path for the Lord - a path which had no obstacles to go around. He would **clear away** the obstacles of **sin** in people’s lives by preaching a message of **repentance**. John brought his message to thousands of people in a **simple**, but **effective** way. John the Baptist wasn’t worried about where he **lived**, or what he **wore**, or what he **ate**. He considered **God’s Word** to be much more **important**, and by his own appearance and lifestyle, he attempted to turn the thoughts of the people **away** from **selfishness** and self-**indulgence**, toward **higher** things.

That message of **repentance** and **forgiveness** is still important for us **today**. Many times we get ourselves thinking that we don’t **need** to repent. The devil, the world around us, and our own sinful nature try to convince us that our sins aren’t really all that **bad**. Just **ignore** them. They won’t **bother** anybody - at least, not that **much**. And in **time**, they may even **go away** all by themselves. But of course, we realize that those suggestions are just **lies** from the devil, and in **fact**, we need to be **constantly** living lives of **repentance**. We **sin** every day - more times and in more ways than we **realize**, or can even possibly **imagine** - so, we need to **repent** of those sins **every day**. If we **don’t**, then we are choosing to continue to **carry** those sins **ourselves**. And **we** don’t have the **power** to effectively **carry** those sins, or to get **rid** of those sins. They will just continue to **rot us away** from the inside out, until our lives are nothing but **hollow**, **empty** shells. We need to **repent** - to turn those sins over to **Jesus**, for the **forgiveness** that He alone can offer.

Jesus Himself held John the Baptist in the **highest** regard. He said, “*Amen I tell you: Among those born of women there has not appeared anyone **greater** than John the Baptist.*” Yet, John understood that in **every way**, Jesus is **superior** to him. John didn’t even consider himself worthy of being the very **least** of the **servants** of Christ - the one who would stoop down and untie His **sandals**, and who would then wash the **grime** and **dirt** off from His **feet** after miles and miles of walking from town to town. There can be no doubt about the superiority of **Jesus**. **John** knew it, and he also made sure the people **knew** it. The voice of the

messenger always directed the people to the **message** - to **Jesus**.

The **other** voice in our text did the same thing. We read, *“And a **voice** came from **heaven**: ‘You are my **Son**, whom I love. I am **well pleased** with you.’”* This voice was the voice of **God** - the eternal **Father**. Actually, the voice was an **echo** of a message which God had already declared long ago. In Psalm 2 the Lord said, *“I have installed my **King** on Zion, my holy mountain.’ I will proclaim the decree of the Lord. He said to me: ‘You are my **Son**. Today I have begotten you.’”* As Jesus was being **baptized** in the Jordan River, God openly declared Him to be His **Son**, and that He would be the **King** over all. Jesus wouldn’t only be the Ruler over the **heavenly realms**, but He would also rule over the **hearts** of men. If only all people would **listen** to the voice of **God**, and not **rebel** against the **rule** of Jesus in their lives!

Later in his Gospel, Mark tells us that this same voice of God the Father was **reechoed again** on the Mount of Transfiguration, as Jesus appeared in all His **glory** to His disciples; Peter, James, and John. In Chapter 9 we read, *“A **cloud** appeared and overshadowed them, and a **voice** came from the cloud, saying, ‘This is my **Son**, whom I love. **Listen** to him.’”* Listening to **Jesus** is the **key** to staying on the right **path** - on **God’s** path.

And that brings us to the **third** voice in our text - an **unspoken** voice - the voice to which both John the Baptist and God the Father **point** us - the voice of **Jesus**. His voice cries out, *“Come to Me, and I will give you **rest**, and **light**, and **life**, and **love**.”* His voice cries out, *“**Love God** most of all. **Serve Him** with all your **heart**, and with all your **soul**, and with all your **mind**.”* Can we possibly **hear** that voice of Jesus **continually** calling out to us in His Word, and **not listen** to it? That’s what happens if we **ignore** the Word of God. That’s what happens if we choose to follow a path **other** than the one which **Jesus** has chosen for us. That’s what happens if we think of **ourselves** first, placing God and others farther down in our list of **priorities**.

And finally, the baptism of **Jesus** should remind us of our **own** baptism and its **blessings**. We carry that baptism **with** us every day of our lives, so it serves as a **constant reminder** of who we are. We are **God’s** children - **precious** and dearly **loved** members of His **family** - sons and daughters of the King of kings. We have been **forgiven** of all our sins, and because we have been united to Jesus through our baptism, we have been **removed** from the homelessness of this **earthly** existence, to live with Him **forever** in the eternal glories of heaven.

Dear friends, we have now **left** the Christmas Season, and we have entered into the season of **Epiphany**. This is a time when God plainly **shows Himself** to us and to **all** people. Therefore, it is a fitting time for us to **Listen To The Voices**. We know their **source** - it's easily **recognizable**. And we know their **purpose** - it's **clear**. So, **Listen To The Voice** of John the Baptist - the voice which encourages us to **repent** of our sins, to **turn away** from them and to **turn back** to God. **Listen To The Voice** of God the Father - the voice which was well-pleased with the work of His Son, whom He sent into the world to be our **Savior**. And **Listen To The Voice** of Jesus - the voice which invites us to **come** to Him, and to share in **all** the blessings which He has earned for us - who also invites us to **thank Him** for those blessings by **servicing Him** with our lives. **Listen To The Voices**. **This** time it's **good** advice. Amen.

Prayers:

Dear Savior, Jesus Christ, we are thankful for the great gift of **love**, which You poured out for us in sacrificing **Yourself** for our sins. We also thank You for the gift of **faith**, by which we **receive** Your redemptive work, and make it our own. Lord, it is Your will that **none** should perish, for You are Lord of **all**. Therefore, give us a **love** for souls that will cause us to **reach out** to others with the **Gospel**, that we may be **useful** servants in Your Kingdom. Help us to tell them of the sacrifice **You** made for their sins. Make us **devout** and **able** messengers for You, by filling us with Your **Holy Spirit**.

Through that same Spirit, cause the words of salvation, which we offer to others, to be received in their hearts by **faith**, that they too may know the **joy** and **gladness** that fills our souls. May we never become **disheartened** in our efforts to speak the Gospel to others, nor be **ashamed** to declare and defend Your name. Help us recognize and seize **every** opportunity to testify of the only way to salvation - Your **cross**.

Destroy the power of every **evil** force which works **against** the Gospel, and remove every **hindrance** to the swift movement of salvation's message in the world. Help us see our personal responsibility to **support** the Gospel work being done on our behalf by our **missionaries**, wherever they labor in this sin-burdened world. Give us **generous** hearts to give **abundantly** from our earthly means for their support, and also remind us to **pray** diligently for Your rich blessings on their message.

Make us **bold** and **faithful** fishermen in Your kingdom. Help us to use our time, talents, and treasures to win souls for **You**. Through Your Holy Spirit,

provide us with whatever courage, zeal, love, and abilities we need to carry out our tasks. Amen.

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.**

Hymn #709 - *"Christ, Your Footprints Through the Desert"*

**Christ, your footprints through the desert
Led to Jordan's flowing stream.
There you heard the herald crying
Israel's old prophetic dream:
"He is coming! He is coming!
He will cleanse the earth with flame!
Sinners, plunge beneath the waters!
Wash away your guilt and shame!"**

**Christ, you heard the stirring summons
As by Jordan's bank you stood;
Bathed, though sinless, with your people
In the river's cleansing flood.
High above, the heavens opened;
Came the Spirit as a dove;
Spoke a voice beyond all hearing:
"See my Son, the one I love!"**

**Son of God, the road from Jordan
Led at last to Calv'ry's hill,
There upon the cross forsaken,
You fulfilled the Father's will.**

**Lamb of God, we see you dying,
Sinless, yet for sinners slain.
But where death rose up to triumph,
You began your glorious reign!**

**God, in Baptism you have made us
One with Christ, our risen Lord;
Freed us, claimed us, cleansed, forgiven
Through the water and the Word.
Help us hear your urgent summons,
Calling us to serve you now.
Send us forth, your sons and daughters,
With the cross upon our brow.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Blessing:

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

Hymn #299 - *“All Who Believe and Are Baptized”*

**All who believe and are baptized
Shall see the Lord’s salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ,
They are a new creation.
Through Christ’s redemption they shall stand
Among the glorious, heav’nly band
Of ev’ry tribe and nation.**

**With one accord, O God, we pray:
Grant us your Holy Spirit.
Help us in our infirmity
Through Jesus’ blood and merit.**

**Grant us to grow in grace each day
That by this sacrament we may
Eternal life inherit.**