

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Epiphany 2 - January 17, 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 #86 - *"The Only Son from Heaven"*

**The only Son from heaven,
Foretold by ancient seers,
By God the Father given,
In human form appears.
No sphere his light confining,
No star so brightly shining
As he, our Morning Star.**

**Oh, time of God appointed,
Oh, bright and holy morn!
He comes, the King anointed,
The Christ, the virgin-born,
Grim death to conquer for us,
To open heav'n before us
And bring us life again.**

**Awaken, Lord, our spirit
To know and love you more,
In faith to stand unshaken,
In spirit to adore,
That we, through this world moving,
Each glimpse of heaven proving,
May reap its fullness there.**

**O Father, here before you
With God the Holy Ghost
And Jesus, we adore you,
O Pride of angel host.
Before you mortals lowly**

**Cry “Holy, holy, holy,
O blessed Trinity!”**

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: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

The boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days. Prophetic vision was not common. Now it happened that Eli’s eyes had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see. Once when Eli was lying down in his place and God’s lamp had not yet gone out, Samuel was lying down in the Lord’s temple, where God’s ark was. The Lord called Samuel, and Samuel said, “I am here.” He ran to Eli and said, “I am here, since you called me.” Eli said, “I did not call. Lie down again.” So he went and lay down. Then the Lord called once more, “Samuel!” So Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “I am here, since you called me.” He answered, “I did not call, my son. Lie down again.” Now Samuel had not yet experienced the Lord’s presence, that is, the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel for the third time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, “I am here, since you called me.” Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the young man. So Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and once again lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there and called as he had the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” (EHV)

Psalm 67

Refrain: Let the people praise you O God. Let all the people praise you.

**May God be gracious to us and 'bless us
And make his face shine up'on us;**

**May your ways be 'known on earth,
Your salvation among all 'nations.**

**May the nations be glad and 'sing for joy.
For you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations 'of the earth.**

Refrain: Let the people praise you O God. Let all the people praise you.

**Then the land will yield its 'harvest,
And God our God, will 'bless us.**

**God will 'bless us,
And all the ends of the earth will 'fear him.**

**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: Let the people praise you O God. Let all the people praise you.

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

“All things are permitted for me” - but not all things are beneficial. “All things are permitted for me” - but I will not allow anything to control me. “Foods are for the belly, and the belly is for foods, but God will do away with both of them.” However, the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then remove the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute is one body with her? For it says, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is within you,

whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. He said to me, “You are my servant in whom I will display my splendor.” Alleluia.

Gospel: John 1:43-51

The next day, Jesus wanted to leave for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to him, “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” “Come and see!” Philip told him. Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said about him, “Truly, here is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.” Nathanael asked him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered, “Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus replied, “You believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that!” Then he added, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.” (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 #283 - *“Speak, O Savior; I Am Listening”*

Speak, O Savior; I am list’ning,

**As a servant to his lord.
Let me show respect and honor
To your holy, precious Word,
That each day, my whole life through,
I may serve and follow you.
Let your Word e'er be my pleasure
And my heart's most precious treasure.**

**Oh, what blessing to be near you
And to listen to your voice!
Let me ever love and fear you;
Let your Word still be my choice.
Many hardened sinners, Lord,
Flee in terror at your Word,
But to all who feel sin's burden
You give peace and words of pardon.**

**Lord, your words are waters living
Where I quench my thirsty needs.
Lord, your words are bread life-giving;
On your words my spirit feeds.
Lord, your words will be my light
Through death's cold and dreary night;
Yes, they are my sword prevailing
And my cup of joy unfailing.**

**As I pray, dear Jesus, hear me;
Let your words in me take root.
May your Spirit e'er be near me
That I bear abundant fruit.
May I daily sing your praise,
From my heart glad anthems raise,
Till my highest praise is given
In the endless joy of heaven.**

**The Sermon: 1 Samuel 3:1-10
 “When The LORD Speaks, Listen!”**

One of the most important topics for couples who are planning to get married to **focus** on, is the topic of **communication**. I'm sure that most of us are

aware of the **importance** of communication in an individual's life, but that's true even **more so** in **married** life. Good communication is **vital** for a healthy relationship between husband and wife. Think about how many **frustrations** and **arguments** have been caused by a **lack** of communication. One spouse says **one** thing and the other spouse **hears** something else - or worse yet, maybe isn't even **listening** at all. This morning, our text **focuses** on the topic of **communication**. But we're not going to hear advice about communication between a husband and wife in a marriage; rather, we're going to hear about **God's** communication with His **people**. Today's lesson on communication can be summed up very simply with the sentence - **When The LORD Speaks, Listen!**

Right away in the first verse of our text, we realize that these words tell us about a time when communication between God and His people was at a very **low** point. We read, "*The word of the LORD was **rare** in those days. Prophetic vision was **not common**.*" This text comes at the time in Israel's history at the very **end** of the period of the **judges**. In the Book of Judges we can see a very definite **pattern**. God's people would **rebel** against the LORD, and follow after other **gods**. As a result, things would get really **bad** for them - **so** bad, that they would **return**, and call out to the **LORD** for help. In answer to their pleading, the LORD would send a **deliverer** (known as a **judge**), and the judge would **rescue** the people in an **amazing** way. Nevertheless, it wouldn't take long before the people would again rebel **against** the LORD, and the same cycle would **repeat** itself. This happened time and time again, and the people never seemed to figure out that their problems always **began** when they turned **away** from the one true **God**. I'm sure there were also a few **faithful** people that remained in the land during those times, but they were **few** and far **between**. So, it's not at all **surprising** that, "*The word of the LORD was **rare** in those days.*" This **lack** of God's Word was a part of God's **judgment** against the people's **unbelief** and **rebellion**.

But our text for today marks a critical **shift** in Israel's history. Starting with the prophet **Samuel**, the LORD was going to begin **speaking** with His people on a much more **regular** basis. Samuel would become the **first** in a line of **resident** prophets who would **constantly** bring the Word of the LORD to His people. It all began with the **LORD** in His **mercy**, deciding that He was going to speak to **Samuel**. Our text reads, "*Now it happened that Eli's eyes had begun to grow **dim**, so that he could not **see**. Once when Eli was lying down in his place and God's lamp had not yet gone out, **Samuel** was lying down in the Lord's **temple**, where God's ark was. The Lord **called** Samuel.*" Now at **first** when the LORD called, Samuel didn't even **recognize** His voice. We're given the **reason** for that in verse 7 of our text. There we read, "*Now Samuel had not yet **experienced** the Lord's*

*presence, that is, the word of the Lord had not yet been **revealed** to him.*” This was something **new** for Samuel, and although he didn’t recognize the LORD’s calling at **first**, it wouldn’t take very long before Samuel would know the LORD’s voice **very well**, as he served God as a faithful **prophet**.

We are living in a time which is **very different** from the time of our text. In reality, the Word of the LORD isn’t **rare** for us at all. We don’t have to **wait** for the LORD to send us a **prophet** like Samuel so we can hear His Word. Especially here in America, we have God’s Word in **written** form available to us **constantly**. Year after year, the Bible is the number one selling book in our country by a wide margin. It’s the one book that we have at least **one** copy of in our house, if not two, or three, or even **more**. So, in **our** culture, the Word of the LORD is **not** rare. We have the **opportunity** to **read** and **hear** the LORD’s Word every day of every week. Unfortunately, fewer and fewer people are actually **listening** to that Word as they read and hear it.

So, in spite of all the Bibles which people have on their shelves or coffee tables right in their own homes, there are many times when we can sadly say that the Word of the LORD **is** rare in people’s lives. It’s not that the LORD has **withheld** His Word from us. But rather, it’s that people often withhold **themselves** from His Word. That happens when people don’t **open** their Bibles and **read** them. It happens when they neglect making use of opportunities to **worship** God. Or even when they **do** come to worship, they don’t actually **hear** the Word, because they’re **disinterested**, or they get **distracted**. So, God’s Word just gathers **dust** in their lives. The question is, how long can the Word of God be **neglected** or **ignored** before God decides to **withhold** it from us, as He did from His **Old** Testament people during the days of their rebellion?

Thankfully even **then**, God didn’t **completely** remove His Word from His people, and in our text for today He was ready to start speaking to them **again** through the words of a prophet who was still a young **boy** - through **Samuel**. But as I said earlier, at **first**, Samuel wasn’t able to **recognize** the Word of the LORD. That’s where the **older** and **wiser** priest, Eli, could **help**. But it even took **him** a while before **he** realized what was happening. Our text concludes, *“The Lord called Samuel for the **third** time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, ‘I am here, since you called me.’ **Then** Eli realized that the **Lord** was calling the young man. So Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘**Speak**, Lord, for your servant is **listening**.’” So Samuel went and once again lay down in his place. The Lord came and **stood** there and called as he had the **other** times, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ Then Samuel said, ‘**Speak**, for your servant is **listening**.’”* And from that

time on the LORD **did** speak to Samuel, not just **once**, but time and time again. Through the prophet **Samuel**, the LORD would start bringing His message to His people on a regular basis once again.

We need to understand that being a **prophet** was not something that was **easy** for Samuel. Some of the things the LORD told him to speak were very **difficult** messages. In fact, the very **first** message Samuel received was a message of **destruction** for the family of his mentor, **Eli**. Eli had become like a second **father** to Samuel, and yet, Samuel had to **tell** him that God was going to **judge** him and his family, for the horrible actions of Eli's **sons**, Hophni and Phinehas - actions which Eli **knew** about, but didn't attempt to **correct**. Later on, Samuel would **also** have the difficult job of telling King **Saul** that his **kingdom** was coming to an **end**, because he had **disobeyed** the LORD. Nevertheless, Samuel **spoke** these messages, as **difficult** as they were, because he **knew** they were messages from the **LORD**. But Samuel **also** had the privilege of speaking many **wonderful** messages from the LORD, as well as actually **anointing David** to be the **next** king over Israel - the **greatest** king in their entire history, as well as a predecessor of the **Messiah**, Jesus Christ.

Eli's advice to **Samuel** is the same advice I would offer to **you** today. When the LORD **speaks** to you in His Word, say, "*Your servant is **listening**.*" We need to realize that we aren't only servants of **God**, but we are also servants of His **Word**. God's Word has **authority** over our lives. Our sinful **nature** and our **society** don't really want to **hear** that. **Nothing** is supposed to be our **master**. **We** are supposed to be in **control**. So our **natural** inclination is to **read** and **hear** the Word, but when it says something that doesn't seem **right** or **logical** to us, then we'll just **ignore** it.

That's a **bad choice**. In fact, it shouldn't even be an **option** for us. Instead, just as **Samuel** had to **speak** those **difficult** messages when he received them from the LORD, we need to **listen** to **all** of God's Word - the **Law** as well as the **Gospel**. That means that when God's Word exposes **sins** in our lives which we are particularly **fond** of, we can't just **brush it off**. We need to **listen** to our God and His Word, turn **away** from those sins in **repentance**, and **rejoice** in the **guidance** and **protection** which the LORD **provides** for us.

Both the Law **and** the Gospel are **important** messages. God wants us to **know** that our sins **separate** us from Him. He wants us to **know** that if we continue to **hang on** to those sins, they will **destroy** us. But God **also** wants us to **know** that when we come to **Him** with our sins, He will **forgive** us through His **Son**. He

wants us to **know** that Jesus lived a **perfect** life in our place, and that He **died** on the cross to **pay** for our sins. God wants us to **know** that through **Jesus** we have **eternal** life. He **wants** us to know these things - and we **do know** them. We **know** them because we have heard Him **speak** those words to us in His **Word**. We've heard it **preached** here in church. We've read it in our Bibles at **home**. We've studied it in **Bible** class. We've **heard** it, and we know that it's **true**. So **When The LORD Speaks, Listen!** - because His messages to us are **always** messages which we **need** to hear, and they are messages which we also **love** to hear.

My prayer today is that throughout this new year, our lines of communication with God will remain **clear**. First of all, let's always recognize **where** God speaks to **us** - in His **Word** and **Sacraments**. Secondly, when we hear Him **speaking** there, let's always **listen** to His message - whether it comes from His **Law** or from His **Gospel**. And finally, after we've **listened** to His message, let's always **respond** to it with our **own** words in **prayer**. That will **complete** the one circle of communication which is most **vital** in our lives - communication with the one true **God** - communication which will strengthen our **faith**, and bring us into an ever closer **relationship** with our Savior. Amen.

Prayers:

O Jesus Christ, King of kings, and Lord of lords, let all the earth **honor** and **revere** You. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. We thank You for clearly **speaking** to us in Your **Word**, that we who labor under a heavy burden of sin and troubles may always come to You, and find **rest** for our souls. Through the love which You have shown us by suffering and dying for our sins, give us **boldness** to call on Your name for **all** our needs. Give us **courage** to ask for Your **forgiveness** when we sin, and to seek Your **comfort** and **assurance** in all our troubles. Whenever we need a greater measure of **strength** to carry out our daily tasks and Christian duties, or **guidance** to conduct our everyday affairs, teach us to ask for these things from **You**. Let us never hesitate to approach Your throne of grace for **healing** from sickness, **help** from troubles, **solutions** to problems, and **rescue** from peril. Lead us to pray each day for the promised gift of Your **Holy Spirit**, because we need Him to open the Scriptures for our understanding, so we may always recognize **Your** voice in **Your** Word.

Blessed Jesus, give us faith to trust that You are our **Savior** from sin; and our **Lord**, who has all power in heaven and on earth. Enable us to always be confident that You will **hear** and **answer** us. You are the God who governs all things. In Your hand alone lies all peace and harmony. Dear Lord, grant us Your

heavenly peace, that we may serve You in true reverence, and **praise** Your holy name among all the nations. 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 #469 - *"Take My Life and Let It Be"*

**Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

**Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for thee.**

**Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from thee.**

**Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
Ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.**

**Take my will and make it thine;
It shall be no longer mine.**

**Take my heart - it is thine own;
It shall be thy royal throne.**

**Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for thee.**

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 #249 - “God of Mercy, God of Grace”

**God of mercy, God of grace,
Show the brightness of your face.
Shine upon us, Savior, shine;
Fill your Church with light divine,
And your saving health extend
To the earth’s remotest end.**

**Let the people praise you, Lord!
Be by all that live adored.
Let the nations shout and sing
Glory to their Savior King,
At your feet their tribute pay,
And your holy will obey.**

**Let the people praise you, Lord,
Then enjoy your rich reward!
God to us his blessing give,
We to God devoted live,**

**All below and all above
One in joy and light and love.**