

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Epiphany 3 - January 24, 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 #85 - *“O God from God, O Light from Light”*

**O God from God, O Light from Light,
O Prince of Peace and King of kings,
To you in heaven’s glory bright
The song of praise forever rings.
To him who sits upon the throne,
The Lamb once slain but raised again,
Be all the glory he has won,
All thanks and praise! Amen, Amen.**

**Deep in the prophets’ sacred page,
Grand in the poets’ winged word,
Slowly, in type, from age to age
The nations saw their coming Lord;
Till through the deep Judean night
Rang out the song, “Good will to men!”
Sung by heav’n’s hosts in splendor bright,
Re-echoed now, “Good will!” Amen.**

**That life of truth, those deeds of love,
That death of pain mid hate and scorn -
These all are past, and now above
He reigns, our King once crowned with thorn.
Lift up your heads, O mighty gates!
So sang the angel hosts again.
Lift up your heads - your King awaits.
We lift them up, Amen, Amen.**

**Sing to the Lord a mighty song;
Sing to his name, his glories tell!**

**Sing, heav'nly hosts, your praise prolong,
And all on earth, your anthem swell!
Worthy the Lamb for sinners slain!
Forever let the song ascend!
Worthy the Lamb enthroned to reign,
Glory and pow'r! Amen, Amen.**

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: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: "Get up. Go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh just as the word of the Lord had commanded. Now Nineveh was a great city to God. It required a three-day walk. Jonah walked through the city for a day, and he called out, "Forty more days and Nineveh is going to be overthrown!" The men of Nineveh believed God. They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least. When God saw their actions, that they had turned from their evil way, God relented from the disaster which he said he would bring on them, and he did not carry it out. (EHV)

Psalm 62

Refrain: The mighty Lord is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

**My soul finds rest in 'God alone;
My salvation 'comes from him.**

**He alone is my rock and my sal'vation;
He is my fortress, I will never be 'shaken.**

**Find rest, O my soul, in 'God alone;
My hope 'comes from him.**

Refrain: The mighty Lord is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

**Though your rich'es increase,
Do not set your 'heart on them.**

**My salvation and my honor de'pend on God;
He is my mighty rock, my 'refuge.**

**Trust in him at all times, O 'people;
Pour out your hearts to him, for God is our 'refuge.**

**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: The mighty Lord is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

I also say this, brothers: The time is short. From now on, let those who have wives live as if they have none; those who weep, as if not weeping; those who rejoice, as if not rejoicing; those who buy, as if not possessing; and those who use the world, as if not getting any use out of it. For the way of life that belongs to this world is passing away. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching, preaching, and healing every disease. Alleluia.

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

After John was put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. "The time is fulfilled," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near! Repent, and believe in the gospel." As Jesus was going along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, since they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will make you

fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. Going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat mending the nets. Immediately Jesus called them. They left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him. (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 #453 - “Come, Follow Me, the Savior Spoke”

**“Come, follow me,” the Savior spoke,
“All in my way abiding.
Deny yourselves; the world forsake;
Obey my call and guiding.
Oh, bear the cross, whate’er betide;
Take my example for your guide.”**

**“I am the light; I light the way,
A godly life displaying.
I bid you walk as in the day;
I keep your feet from straying.
I am the way, and well I show
How you should journey here below.”**

**“My heart abounds in lowliness,
My soul with love is glowing,
And gracious words my lips express,
With meekness overflowing.**

**My heart, my mind, my strength, my all
To God I yield; on him I call.”**

**“I teach you how to shun and flee
What harms your souls’ salvation,
Your hearts from ev’ry guile to free,
From sin and its temptation.
I am the refuge of the soul
And lead you to your heav’nly goal.”**

**Then let us follow Christ our Lord
And take the cross appointed
And, firmly clinging to his Word,
In suff’ring be undaunted.
For those who bear the battle’s strain
The crown of heav’nly life obtain.**

**The Sermon: Mark 1:14-20
 “Will You Be The Lord’s Fisherman?”**

From the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, there has been an interesting phenomenon in the world, known as **work**. I think it is safe to say that **nobody** works for **nothing**, but the things **for** which they work are actually quite **different**. Some people work only for the **money**. As long as they are paid a fair and livable wage, they are **happy**. Others work for the **satisfaction** it provides. There is a tremendously satisfying feeling in knowing that you have done something **well**, or that you have successfully **mastered** a challenge, or that you have **helped** someone else. These people are happy just to know that their talents are **needed**, and their services are **appreciated**. But for the **Christian**, there is still **another** reason for working - a very **important** reason. **Work** gives us the opportunity to serve our **Lord** - to do what pleases **Him** - and to do what furthers the welfare of His **kingdom** on the earth.

Now, wouldn’t it be nice to find a job which successfully meets **all** of the above reasons for working? Such a job **exists**, and it can be **yours**, if you become a **fisherman - The Lord’s Fisherman**. Being a full-time laborer in the Lord’s kingdom as a pastor, teacher, or staff-minister provides you with a livable wage, a tremendous amount of satisfaction, and the assurance that you are helping to further God’s kingdom here on the earth. I’d like you to think about your future

very **seriously** today as we consider the question, “**Will You Be The Lord’s Fisherman?**”

Some of you might be saying, “**Sure**, I’d like to work full-time for the Lord, but what does it **take**? Do I have the **qualities** for which Jesus is looking in His fishermen?” Let’s see if we can **find out** from our text for today. We read, “*As Jesus was going along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, since they were **fishermen**. Jesus said to them, ‘Come, **follow me**, and I will **make you fishers of men**.’*” Notice that the disciples didn’t come to **Jesus** and **ask** if they could help. It wasn’t **their** idea to tag along with Jesus, so they could see the **wonders** He would perform, or hear the amazing **words** He would speak. It was **Jesus’** idea. He came to **them**, and **asked** them to fill the positions which He had **established** for them.

It is both **interesting**, and also **comforting**, to know that Jesus didn’t ask Peter and Andrew a lot of **questions** about what **talents** they had, or about the things they **could** or **could not** do. Instead, He asked only one thing of them. He asked them to **follow Him**. Can **you** follow Jesus? Of **course** you can - you’ve been **doing** it from the time of your **baptism**! It’s the most natural thing in the world for those who **love** Jesus, to **follow** Jesus.

But, **following** Him was just the **beginning**. From **there**, Jesus **took over**, and began to make these followers into pastors and teachers. He didn’t expect them to be prepared **already**, but instead, He promised to **train** them personally. Jesus said, “*I will **make you fishers of men**.*” I’d like you to put yourself back into **grade school** for a moment. Imagine how **unreasonable** it would have been for a teacher to give us 100 **algebra** problems to solve, when we were just learning how to **add** and **subtract**! We would have been completely **overwhelmed** and said, “I just **can’t** do it. I don’t know **how**!”

Jesus’ **disciples** would have said the same thing. “Lord, we are fishers of **fish**, not fishers of **men**! We don’t know **what to do**!” It was going to take some **time**, but they would gradually **learn** what to do as they followed **Jesus**. They would hear **His** words, and see **His** works. They would witness His **suffering** and **death**. They would view His **empty tomb**. And after His resurrection from the dead, Jesus would prove to them that He was **alive** again, and He would **continue** to teach them what His resurrection **meant** - for **them**, and for **all** people. But **none** of those things could take place for them, unless they **first** followed **Jesus**. Jesus’ disciples had their **work** cut out for them.

Did you ever stop to consider who the followers of Jesus **were**? Among the original 12 there were several **fishermen**, a **tax collector**, and even a political **activist**. Among **others** who followed Jesus, Luke was a **doctor**, while Paul was a **Pharisee**. They were just **ordinary, normal** people - people who had come from different **backgrounds** - people who had differing amounts of **education**. But, the one quality which **connected** them all, was that they all **followed Jesus!**

And with that in mind, we'll turn the spotlight back to **you** again. The Lord has given each one of you different **talents** and different **abilities**. He has brought you together into this Christian congregation from different **backgrounds**. But there is one common tie which binds us all **together**: Jesus has revealed Himself to us as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world - and so, **we follow Him**. Now the question remains, how will we **respond** to the Lord's invitation when He says, "*I will make **you** a fisher of men?*"

Now, I **realize** that not **everybody** is cut out to be a pastor or a teacher. But that **doesn't** mean that you can't serve as His **fisherman**. In more recent years, our Synod has been making use of a training program for **staff ministry**. The people who enter **this** part of the Lord's work will be equipped to **assist** pastors, teachers, and the members of congregations in areas of ministry like **youth work, family ministry, evangelism, and administration**. It's just one more avenue which allows individuals to serve the Lord with the talents He has **given** to them.

Hopefully, some of you are at least **considering** full-time work for your Lord as a pastor, teacher, or staff minister. And even if you're not considering it for **yourself**, you might think about it for your **children** or **grandchildren**. But anyone who has **gone fishing** can tell you that there is a tremendous difference between **wanting** to catch fish, and actually **catching** them! A good fisher of **fish** needs the right **equipment** - and so does a good fisher of **men**. Fortunately for us, the Lord **supplies** us with all the right equipment. We **know** it's the right equipment, because it has already been **tested** by our Lord Jesus **Himself**.

This equipment comes in a **simple** and **compact** package. It is a **message** - a message of **Good News** - the message of the **Gospel**. In our text we hear that, "*After John was put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee, preaching the **gospel** of the kingdom of God. 'The time is fulfilled,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near! **Repent, and believe in the gospel.***" When God sent Jesus to the earth, the kingdom of God was **nearer** than it had ever been before. In Christ's **life, death, and resurrection** are found the key to **our** eternal life.

That is extremely **Good News** - and our **response** to that news is to **repent**. Dear friends, face the real **depth**, and the **extent** of **sin** in your heart and life. Look at how **far away** you are from the holiness and purity which God **demand**s. **Repent** of your sins, and **believe** the **Gospel**. Recognizing that we are sinners does **not** mean that we have to carry the **burden** of those sins. That's where **believing** takes over. We believe the **Good News** that **Jesus** is the Lamb of God who **takes away** the sin of the world. So, don't even **try** to carry the burden of your sin. Place it on the shoulders of **Jesus**, the One who wants to carry that burden **for** you, and let Him take your sins **away** - far, far away!

That's the **equipment** which Jesus gave to His disciples - a divine **message**, with the divine **power** to bring lost mankind the **hope** of eternal life. That's what it means to be **The Lord's Fisherman**. What about you? Would you like to help your neighbor deal with the greatest **problem** he faces, and do the **Lord's** work at the same time? Would you enjoy **comforting** a child, or **reassuring** an adult that God loves them dearly, and that in **Jesus** He has **forgiven** all their sins? The position is **there**, the equipment is **waiting**, and you have heard the Lord's promise, "*Come, follow Me, and I will **make** you fishers of men.*" In conclusion, let's bow our heads in **prayer**:

Lord Jesus, we praise You for the sacrifice of **love** which You made on the **cross** for all mankind. We thank You for causing us to be **caught** in the net of the **Gospel**, which Your **fishermen** threw out to us in Your Word and Sacrament - bringing us to faith in **You** as our Savior. Do not allow the casting of the net of the Gospel to **cease** because of a **shortage** of willing fishermen. Move the hearts of young men and women throughout our Synod, so that they may begin **preparing** to join the ranks of Your fishermen - that in our **pulpits**, in our **classrooms**, and throughout the **world**, Your life-saving **Gospel** may be **shared**, and Your work may **continue**. Amen.

Prayers:

Lord Jesus Christ, You came to seek and to save that which was **lost**. It is truly a blessed and faithful saying that You, God's own Son, came here to suffer and die to **redeem** us sinners. O Savior, fill our hearts with such firm **reliance** in You that we will be **prepared** at all times, should trouble or death overtake us. May we successfully endure **any** trials that may test us. In life and death, in prosperity and diversity, in good times and in bad, draw our hearts **closer** to You. Whatever our station in life, help us to **glorify** You by true faith; and patient, godly living.

Give to all who have been **careless** in spiritual matters a second chance to **repent** of their backsliding, and to strive, with the Holy Spirit's aid, to be **fruitful** in doing good works. Lord, help us not to become weighed down with **earthly** matters, and give us the desire to apply our hearts to **heavenly** wisdom. Have **mercy** on our human weaknesses, and **forgive** our many sins. Finally, make us **partakers** of Your glory in heaven.

And finally, we ask You to bless our **Congregation Meeting** today. Help our voting members to understand the great **privilege** and **responsibility** which belongs to them. Let there be **no divisions** among us, that we may faithfully carry out our **purpose** as a congregation - to grow in our **own** faith, and to **share** the joyous Gospel of salvation with many **others**. 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 #560 - "I Hear the Savior Calling"

**I hear the Savior calling! The gospel comes to me.
My eyes once closed in blindness are opened now to see
That I myself was helpless to live eternally.
But, dying, Christ did save me. And now he calls for me!**

**I hear the Savior calling! He leads a soul to me.
A soul in bitter anguish, one needing to be free.
The gift I have to offer is Christ, my Lord's decree
That all have been forgiven - My Savior calls for me!**

**I hear the Savior calling! He gives this charge to me;
To serve best I'm able, whate'er the call may be.**

**Thus hand in hand with others who share the gospel
key
We spread the gospel tidings - My Savior calls for me!**

**I hear the Savior calling! He changes hearts for me.
From door to door I witness to share my Savior's plea;
Yet nothing can be added, no word on bended knee,
Beyond the simple gospel - My Savior calls for me!**

**I hear the Savior calling! His call has urgency!
Each moment souls are dying; soon comes eternity.
And so, my precious Savior, this is my humble plea;
Prepare me for my mission for you are calling me!**

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 #561 - "Lord, Speak to Us that We May Speak"

**Lord, speak to us that we may speak
In living echoes of your tone.
As you have sought, so let us seek
Your straying children, lost and lone.**

**Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead
The wand'ring and the wav'ring feet.
Oh, feed us, Lord, that we may feed
Your hung'ring ones with manna sweet.**

**Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach
The precious truths which you impart,**

**And wing our words that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.**

**Oh, fill us with your fullness, Lord,
Until our very hearts o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word
Your love to tell, your praise to show.**