



**Fifth Sunday After Epiphany
Ask, Search, Knock**

February 5, 2023 + 9:00 a.m.

Zion-Public WiFi password: Zion54484

Congregational responses are in BOLD.

All are welcome to receive Jesus' unconditional gift of God's grace through the sacrament of Holy Communion. Regardless of your church membership or affiliation, all are encouraged to participate in communion or to come forward for a blessing.

Children of all ages are encouraged to worship with the whole community in Christ. Children's worship bags are available in the back of the sanctuary.

Page numbers that are listed are found in the front of the cranberry-colored hymnal at the bottom of the page. Hymn numbers are listed in bold, large print on the top of the page.

If you would like home communion, a hospital visit, or a conversation with the pastor, please contact the church office at 715.687.4110 or at office@zionstratford.org or Pastor Amy Heinz at 608.498.5772 or pastoramy@zionstratford.org.

Ministers: All the People of God through the love of Jesus and the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit

Pastor: Rev. Amy Heinz

Administrative Assistant: Kathy Busche

Organists: Judy Polege, Marge Redetzke, Ryan Huther

Custodian: Rod Huther

Missionaries: Steven & Bethany Friberg, Tanzania

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PRELUDE

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CENTERING

We Gather in Grace

NEW YEAR'S PRAYER OF INVOCATION

A new day has begun!

Are you ready to give God praise?

We are ready!

Are you ready to leave behind the baggage?

We are ready!

Are you ready to step out in faith?

We are ready!

Are you ready to forgive?

We are ready!

Even the one who hurt you the most?

We are ready!

Are you ready to release your doubts and fears?

We are ready!

**O Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! We are yours
and we are ready! Alleluia! Amen!**

<https://carolpenner.typepad.com/leadinginworship/church-year-new-year/>

GATHERING HYMN

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

ELW 733

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us make a hopeful confession to God.

Brief silence for individual reflection and confession.

**We seek you, God, in the spaces of our lives.
The spaces between what we've done
and what we've left undone.
The spaces between our convictions
and our actions,
the spaces between all that we hoped to do,
and what we've actually done.
We come with humility,
knowing that we can't always see
the ways we've disappointed you,
nor can we always see
the long-term effects of the good we've done.
This is a prayer for the road ahead,
which is an empty space stretching before us.
Fill us with a burning compassion
for those around us,
a love that will not let us go.
Give us courage to to give boldly,
love simply,
hope deeply,
risk greatly.
Our light is small,
our time is short,
but let it shine for you,
always, ever, all for you.
Amen.
God hears our fervent prayer.
In the name of + Jesus Christ,
our sins are pardoned.
The penalty is paid.
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

GREETING

May the love of God the Father, the grace of Jesus the Son,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide with you all.
And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Glory to God”

ACS Setting 11

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**God of Wisdom,
You encourage us to live our lives grounded in faith, patience,
and love. Help us to love others without judgment, pray on
behalf of all, and seek to do your will in response to your Good
News. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and Lord.
Amen.**

We Hear the Word of God

COMPLEMENTARY READING

Psalm 37:16-18

¹⁶ Better is a little that the righteous person has
than the abundance of many wicked.

¹⁷ For the arms of the wicked shall be broken.
but the Lord upholds the righteous.

¹⁸ The Lord knows the days of the blameless,
and their heritage will abide forever.

READING

Matthew 7:1-14, 24-29

[Jesus said] “Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ²For the judgment you give will be the judgment you get, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.

⁶ “Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.

⁷ “Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹ Is there anyone among you who, if your child asked for bread, would give a stone? ¹⁰ Or if the child asked for a fish, would give a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

¹² “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

¹³ “Enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

²⁴ “Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

²⁸ Now when Jesus had finished saying these words, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught them as one having authority and not as their scribes.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

God's Vending Machine

Pastor Amy Heinz

HYMN OF THE DAY *"There Is a Longing In Our Hearts"* **ACS 1078**

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

United with your saints across time and place, we pray for our shared world.

A brief silence.

O Triune God, grant us your gracious, guiding presence. As we join Christians of every time who have awaited Jesus' return, lead us into a new time, confident that your promises will be fulfilled.

Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Spirit of Truth, call us to repentance. Forgive us for past unfaithfulness, silence in the face of injustice, and inaction amid suffering. Move us from the desire to hoard our wealth toward faithful stewardship. Help us to share your gifts with those who cry out for daily bread. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Prince of Peace, healer and reconciler, heal the divisions in your Church and among the peoples of the world. As you prayed that we should all be one, give us new visions to enable that unity. Be with us on our ecumenical journey, and with those sisters and brothers who surround us in the great cloud of witnesses. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

God of all ages, release us from fear. Lead us forward, even as you have led your Church forward from an empty cross and tomb through millenia. Be our companion as we walk unexplored paths into an unknown future. Open us to new possibilities. Renew our hope. Grant us faith to move ahead. Be our companion until Jesus comes again. In his name, we pray.

Amen.**

We Share the Meal

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *“Accept, O Lord the Gifts we Bring”* ELW 691 Vs. 1

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Faithful God,

We look back on the year behind us and appreciate your presence with us through it. In this new year, grant that we may become more faithful, more committed to your kingdom work, more knowledgeable of your ways, more familiar with your spirit, more yielding to your instruction, and more willing to give of ourselves for others.

Accept our tithes and offerings this day as an act of faith and of worship.

In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION SONGS

"Lamb of God"

ELW p. 154

"Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup"

ELW 492

"You Satisfy the Hungry Heart"

ELW 484

BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We Serve the World in God's Name

BENEDICTION

May the God who gave us the past year and the Saviour who walked at our side each day and the Spirit who filled us with life abundant, grace this new year with peace ✝ and hope and joy.
Amen.

CLOSING SONG *"Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God"* **WOV 783**

DISMISSAL

We go in peace serving the Lord,
with open doors, open hearts, and open hands.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Lenten Service Schedule

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Worship 5:30 pm

Council is serving Soup & Sandwiches following Worship.

Donations will be going to Confirmation Camp Fund.

March 1, 2023

Worship 5:30 pm

Worship Team / Choir/ Bell Choir is serving Soup and Sandwiches following worship.

Zion Lutheran Church

Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands

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