



**Sixth Sunday After Epiphany  
Parables of the Kingdom**

**February 12, 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](mailto:office@zionstratford.org) or Pastor Amy Heinz at 608.498.5772 or [pastoramy@zionstratford.org](mailto: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**

## CENTERING

## WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 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**     *"All Are Welcome"*     **ELW 641 Vs. 1, 3, 5**

## 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 the courage 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.**

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

## **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 Stories,**

**Jesus taught us through stories and the wisdom of the shared word. Give us ears to hear the message you have for us of abundant life and extravagant love. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and Lord. Amen.**

*You may be seated for the readings.*

**We Hear the Word of God**

**COMPLEMENTARY READING**

**1 Corinthians 5:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> [Paul writes] Your boasting is not a good thing. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all of the dough? <sup>7</sup> Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

**READING**

**Matthew 13:24-43**

<sup>24</sup> (Jesus) put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, <sup>25</sup> but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and

sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. <sup>26</sup> So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. <sup>27</sup> And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' <sup>28</sup> He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' <sup>29</sup> But he replied, 'No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

<sup>31</sup> He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; <sup>32</sup> it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

<sup>33</sup> He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

<sup>34</sup> Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. <sup>35</sup> This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

"I will open my mouth to speak in parables;  
I will proclaim what has been hidden since the foundation."

<sup>36</sup> Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." <sup>37</sup> He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup> the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup> Just as

the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup>and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

**Leavened or Unleavened?**

**Pastor Amy Heinz**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *“Here On Jesus Christ I Will Stand”* **ACS 1024**

**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 v. 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**

**"All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly"**

**ELW 461**

**"We Come to the Hungry Feast"**

**ELW 479**

## **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 Savior 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** *“The Church of Christ, in Every Age”*

**ELW 729**  
**v 1,3,5**

**DISMISSAL**

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

**POSTLUDE**

**Notes, Prayers, and Thoughts**

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## **Zion Lutheran Church**

*Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands*

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