



Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 14, 2024 + 9am

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.

The communion bread is homemade by congregation members and contains gluten and honey. For those with allergies or sensitivities, an alternative will be provided upon request.

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

CENTERING AND BELLS' CALL TO WORSHIP

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Gather in Grace

OPENING LITANY

We begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

In your wisdom, O God, you call us here to worship you.

We gather, alive to the Word of God.

You call us to be fully alive with your life abundant,
ready to listen and respond with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

We gather, alive to the Word of God.

You call us to be always watchful for your Word of wisdom,
sometimes startling and unexpected,
Sometimes still and quiet,
but always dwelling among us.

We watch and wait for the Word of God in this place.

Amen**

HYMN

"Blessed Assurance"

ELW 638

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 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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Healing Lord Jesus,

You performed miracles that helped followers become aware of
your presence and your magnificence. Surprise us today with
miracles that we desperately seek, and make your presence
known to all. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

We Hear the Word of God

COMPLEMENTARY READING

Psalm 103:6-14

- ⁶ The LORD works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
- ⁸ The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- ⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
- ¹⁰ He does not deal with us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
- ¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
- ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.
- ¹⁴ For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.

READING

Mark 1:21-2:17

²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²² They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴ and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷

They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” ²⁸ At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹ He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed by demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.” ³⁸ He answered, “Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also, for that is what I came out to do.” ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

⁴⁰ A man with a skin disease came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” ⁴¹ Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, “I am willing. Be made clean!” ⁴² Immediately the skin disease left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ saying to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded as a testimony to them.” ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the word, so that Jesus

could no longer go into a town openly but stayed out in the country, and people came to him from every quarter.

^{2:1} When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door, and he was speaking the word to them. ³ Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there questioning in their hearts, ⁷ "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸ At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves, and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? ¹⁰ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ "I say to you, stand up, take your mat, and go to your home." ¹² And he stood up and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

¹³ Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. ¹⁴ As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

¹⁵ And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and

sinner?" ¹⁷ When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON We Have Never Seen Anything Like This!

Rev. Amy Heinz

HYMN "Touch That Soothes and Heals"

ACS 939

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.**

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 enter the new year. As we join Christians of every time who have awaited Jesus' return, lead us into this new time, confident that your promises will be fulfilled. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Spirit of Truth, call us to repentance in this new year. 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.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We Share the Meal

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *“Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring* ELW 691 v1

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.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

You are holy, O God of majesty,

and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, in whom you have revealed yourself, our light, and our salvation.

Baptized in Jordan’s waters, Jesus took his place with sinners, and your voice proclaimed him your beloved. Your Spirit anointed him to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to restore sight to the blind, to free the oppressed.

He lived among us in power and grace, touching broken lives with your healing peace.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

Therefore with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy:**

SANCTUS

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

ELW p. 153

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION SONGS

“Lamb of God”

ELW p. 154

“Beautiful Savior”

ELW 838

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee”

ELW 759

BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We Serve the World in God's Name

BENEDICTION

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us, and the love of God, which enables us to love all, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body, make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”

ELW 618

DISMISSAL

We go in peace to love and serve our neighbors,
with open doors, open hearts, and open hands.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Notes, Prayers, and Thoughts

Zion Lutheran Church

Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands

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