

THE PARISH CONNECTION



**Tri-County Lutheran Parish
Issued on February 2, 2021**

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

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From Pastor Beth

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

The season of Lent is coming close so I would like to introduce some of the parish opportunities for growth in Christian discipleship that will begin then. To start, the verse from Acts is from the ascension of Jesus narrative. Jesus spoke these words immediately before being taken into heaven. His words give us a primary purpose - to be witnesses. To what do we witness? Unlike the early disciples, we were not present at the crucifixion. We didn't see the miracles or see Jesus after he was raised from the dead. But we still have much to talk about with others!

What is it that brings you back to worship each week? How does God give meaning to your life? If you haven't really thought about how you would answer these questions. take some time and write it out. It is important! Those who don't go to church wonder why you do. They want to know what you get out of it and how it is relevant in your everyday life. If someone invited you to an event you knew nothing about at an hour you were not accustomed to being awake and couldn't tell you why it is important to be there, would you go? Jesus wants us to be witnesses so think about your answers to the questions. It is important!

The pastoral staff is offering several opportunities to help you in becoming a more effective witness of Jesus. Vicar Care is putting together a mid-week service during Lent that has an evangelism focus. I will be leading a Bible study on the Beatitudes that will be offered on Monday evening by Zoom and Tuesday morning at St. Luke's (masked and socially distant). Pastor Sam is putting together an evangelism training that will help you go further. I'm sure this will not be the end as we are witnesses forever and there is always room for improvement.

What can you do right now? For those of you with internet access, this is easy. Share the worship service! Email the link and parish connection to friends and family. Invite them to join us on Zoom. They can be next door or across the country. If you are on Facebook, share the events posted, as each event has the Zoom link or video link. These are really easy steps that don't require training at all!

So your homework is to spend some time answering the questions: What is it that brings you back to worship each week? How does God give meaning to your life? This is a great place to begin.

In Christ,
Pastor Beth

News and Information

Please feel free to reach out to Pastor Sam ([**whiteginger20@gmail.com**](mailto:whiteginger20@gmail.com)) or Pastor Beth ([**chellman4557@gmail.com**](mailto:chellman4557@gmail.com)) should you have a pastoral care concern. If you would like to reach both pastors at the same time, please email clergy@tclparish.org.

- If you have a congregational concern, please contact your council president.
- If you have a parish concern, please contact TCLP board president Harry Avery ([**harryavery@yahoo.com**](mailto:harryavery@yahoo.com)).
- If you have a Human Resources concern, contact Phyllis Keeler at poetphyl@gmail.com or Jeannette Wilber at tam20kfw@tclparish.org.

Worship Schedule for the week of February 2-February 7 (all on Zoom)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

To Join Zoom Meeting via Telephone:

Meeting ID: 7700997419

Dial by your location

- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 7700997419

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

February 3: Book Study at 6 pm.

[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419)

February 7: Sunday Worship – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany, 10 a.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

This year on Ash Wednesday, you are invited to worship with us via a pre-recorded service that will be available on YouTube (the link will be posted in the Parish Connection as well as the Facebook pages). In addition. Pastor Beth. Pastor Sam. and Vicar Care will be offering Imposition of Ashes using the following schedule:

Vicar Care

Zion, Athens (in front of church) 9-11am

Oak Hill (front of church in view of Post Office) 3-5pm

Pastor Beth

Hudson (7th Street Park) 11:30am-1pm

St. Stephen's (church parking lot) 2-3pm

Castleton (corner in front of parsonage) 4-6pm

Pastor Sam

Chatham (Village Gazebo) 10-12noon

St. Luke's (in front of church) 4:30-6:30pm

Worship service videos can be found on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8kJUJTm_PrA-l1qlv8PJ-g

Understanding Facebook Groups and Pages

Tri-County Lutheran Parish has both a Facebook group and a Facebook page. Ever wondered why and what the difference is?

First, our group is a closed group. This means that you must be an approved member of the group to see what is in the group. The closed status lets us post things that are not meant for widespread viewing such as prayer concerns, diagnoses and other personal things. We also cannot share what is posted on the group allowing for more privacy.

The page is public. This means anyone can see what is there and members can share what is posted on the page. Please be sure that you do not put personal information on the page.

Why have both? Because we want to have a place where the whole parish is able to share information in a private manner (group) and a place where we can access shareable information (page). An example of what is on the group is when we posted gratitude prompts in November. Members shared some personal information with one another. An example of what is on the page is our worship events. We want you to share these! When you share the worship event, a copy of the event is placed on your page so your friends can see it. The easiest evangelism there is!

It is important that you do “like” all posts. We want the public to see our page. The more “likes” we have, the more prominent it is in the Facebook searches. Please take a second and click the like button to help the parish grow a social media presence. Share the worship events and other posts from the page so others may worship with us.

The TCLP Outreach Team will meet Saturday, 2/20 at 10AM via Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87898930170>) If you would like to join and you do not have Zoom capabilities, you can call Pr. Beth or Pr. Sam and we will do what we can to facilitate!

The Parish Prayer Group is meeting the first and third Tuesdays at 4PM via Zoom. If you would like to join, please contact Pastor Sam.

Also – Pastor Sam has been hearing some thoughts around to start **an all-parish Sunday School** (likely on Zoom, due to distance/Covid). To make this happen **we need volunteers to teach and lead**. Do you have a gift

for teaching and like to work with kids? Please let Pastor Sam know so we can try to get something started!

If you need food, necessities, masks, or help of any kind, please reach out to one of us. We have plenty of resources available to us in our parish and we are excited to be God's hands and feet for each other!

Opportunity to Help!!! Columbia County Meals on Wheels program is looking for volunteers. Most volunteers do one or two days a week. Most routes take about an hour to an hour and a half at the most. The volunteers do not enter the individual's home, they place the meal on a table or chair outside the door, knock, back up 6 feet and wait for the individual to answer the door. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should contact Amy Anderson, Nutrition Program Coordinator @ 518-672-5323.

Pr. Sam's MMC (Mutual Ministry Committee)

Do you have any comments, questions, or constructive critiques concerning Pr. Sam? Perhaps you really enjoyed the way she did something, or perhaps you have a suggestion. Your feedback is very much desired and appreciated. You may either contact her directly, or if you wish to remain anonymous you may contact the MMC using this email distribution list: mmcps@tciparish.org, which will automatically send an email to the entire team (except Pr. Sam.)

OR you may contact individual members:

Anne Philipp annie2919@gmail.com (C) 518-610-1335

Patty Bervy pbervy@yahoo.com (C) 518-598-7609

Karen Schubert kara3215@juno.com (H) 518-731-6751

Duane Keeler oneservantofgod@gmail.com (C) 518-610-0164

A Note from your Parish Admin, Sharon Smith

Send me your prayer additions, questions, Parish Connection updates, and anything else you may need to ask me to the new email: **parishadmin@tclparish.org**. Please submit for the bulletins and the Parish Connection as soon as possible, however by Monday, noon is preferred.

My hours are: 9 am - 3:45 pm. My lunch time is 1pm -2 pm and I will not be available during this time. You can, however, always leave a voice mail at: (518) 758-6526 or send an email to: **parishadmin@tclparish.org**

Should I have to leave the office for any reason, I will leave a note as to when I will be back. Peace, Sharon

Book Study

Book study continues! We are reading and discussing "Rising out of Hatred" by Eli Saslow. We meet every Wednesday at 6:00 pm on Zoom. If you are interested in attending, please use the following Zoom ID: 7700997419

Bible Study

The Beatitudes have much to say about our lives as disciples of Christ. Beginning in Lent we will explore the Beatitudes in depth. I will be using the book "Blessed to Follow: The Beatitudes as a Compass for Discipleship" to guide us. While it isn't necessary to have the book, some of you may like it to follow along. Please let me know if you would like me to order one for you. They are also available on Amazon, but at a higher price than direct from the publisher in a bulk order.

The Bible Study will happen at two separate times, Monday evening at 7pm on Zoom (link will be published here closer to the start date), and Tuesday mornings at 10am at St. Luke's (masked and socially distant). Hope you can join us!

TCLP Board

Harry Avery	President	<u>harryavery@yahoo.com</u>
Jackie Menagh	Vice Chair	<u>jamspirit@hardsdisk.net</u>
Duane Keeler	Recording Secretary	<u>oneservantofgod@gmail.com</u>
Chuck Race	Treasurer	<u>ctracejr@tclparish.org</u>

If you have additions, deletions, changes, etc. for the Parish Connection, bulletins, etc., please either call the Parish office at 518- 758-6526 or email: parishadmin@tclparish.org.

Thank you!

Congregation Announcements

For all congregations: We will be having worship on Zoom only.

Time of worship is 10 a.m.

Use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

EMANUEL, STUYVESANT FALLS

Contact -- Duane Keeler oneservantofgod@gmail.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

***Emanuel Lutheran Church of Stuyvesant Falls
will be holding their Annual Meeting (via Zoom)***

Feb 7, 2021 at noon.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82447215532>

Emanuel, Stuyvesant Falls 2021 Calendars have arrived. To get yours, speak to Dick Frick!

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Duane Keeler	President	
Leslie Dumont	Vice-President	
Linda Frick	Co-Treasurer	
Dick Frick	Co-Treasurer	Not on council
Chuck Albertson	Secretary	Not on council
Pr. Sam	Ex Officio member	
Pr. Beth	Ex-Officio Member	
Karen Albertson	Harry Avery	

Committees

OUTREACH	(Joint committee with St. <u>Luke's</u>)	Teresa Avery, Karen Albertson
WORSHIP	(Joint committee with St. <u>Luke's</u>)	Phyllis Keeler
PARISH SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES TEAM		Karen Albertson, Duane Keeler (Chair)

ST. LUKE'S, VALATIE

Contact -- Kara Udway Karap1969@aol.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR 2021

Ken Schomaker (treasurer) – not on Council
Tim McGlauflin
Mike Schunk
Janis McGlauflin
Dana Berntson
Ted Fiebke
Gail Paone
Karen McIntyre
Sharon Smith

St. Luke's Offering Envelopes

They're here – the 2021 offering envelopes! Stop in and get yours today!

St. Luke's 2021 Calendars

They're here, too!! Stop in and get yours when you pick up your offering envelopes!

EMANUEL/ST. JOHN'S

Contact -- Richard Fitzgerald rfatbellspond@yahoo.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pat Brundage	President
Dick Fitzgerald	<u>Treasurer</u> (not a Council Member)
Debra Garrison	Secretary
Linda Baker	
Kirk Dixon	Sexton

ZION, ATHENS

Contact -- Gethen Proper gethen7@gmail.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

Athens Annual Meeting is 2/7 at 10am

COUNCIL MEMBERS

William Darling	President	518-943-4293
Tim Mercer	Vice President	518-859-1356
Bob O'Leary,	Treasurer	845-797-6084
Gethen Proper	Church & Financial Secretary	518-755-8395
Carol Serazio		518-731-9050
Karen Schubert		518-731-1190
John Wais		518-719-5754
John Van Valkenburg		518-945-1184

The many outreach projects of Zion are made possible in large part by grants from Thrivent Financial. Every Thrivent member is eligible to apply for 2 action team grants per year. These are easy to apply for, and if you need help please ask Carrol Mercer Or Christine Wanek. If you are not a Thrivent member, but would still like to help apply for a grant, you can become a Thrivent Associate Member.

Associate Membership is \$19.95 and with that membership you are able to apply for a one-time Thrivent grant for \$250.00 for our congregation's outreach projects.

Contact Thrivent either by Phone at 845-849-1267, or at Thrivent.com.

Five Loaves Project -- MEALS FOR THE HUNGRY AND THOSE IN NEED Thursday's @ 4:30 pm

ST. PAUL'S, OAK HILL

Contact – Jackie Menagh jamspirit@hardsdisk.net 518-256 2496 (cell)

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jackie Menagh President 518-634-2026 home -- leave a message
(TBA) Treasurer
Sally Lord Secretary

A Big Thank You to all those who have been sending their Offerings in by mail or dropping them off at the church. We really appreciate your faithfulness. The work of the Church and God continues and in this time of crisis, is more important than ever.

CHRIST OUR EMMANUEL, CHATHAM

Contact – Jeanette Wilber tam20kfw@aol.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

*Christ Our Emmanuel Annual meeting will be
Saturday, Feb.13, in person, at 2:30 p.m.*

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jeanette Wilber President
Kurt Hoelter Vice President
Heidi Brennan Recording and Corresponding Secretary
Cate MacPherson
Richard Mac Donald (Mac)
Henry Bartel

Did you know there is a new way to send your offering? We have an online donation portal! Please visit our website at www.chathamLutheran.org to get started!

ST. STEPHENS, E. SCHODACK

**Contact – Alice Senrick Asenrick29@gmail.com
518-479-0819 or 518-852-1504**

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Alice <u>Senrick</u>	President	
Charles <u>Senrick</u>	Treasurer (Non-Voting member)	
Cathy Teeter	Secretary	
Brian Schell	Vice President	
Deborah Deerfield	Diane Middleton	Charles <u>Mayrer</u>

St. Stephen's has a collection basket for non-perishable foods, that are given to the Anchor in Castleton, and Doors of Hope in Sand Lake, to help people in need.

TRINITY, CASTLETON

Contact – Nicole Gardner scullynik@yahoo.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

Council Members

Anne Philipp	President
Eric <u>Knodler</u>	Vice President
Elaine Dickson	Treasurer (not on Council)
Rik Cosgrave	Financial Secretary (not on Council)

The Castleton Girl Scouts are still collecting bottles and cans and will continue to collect them until July of 2022. They can reach out to Nicole Gardner with questions or to make arrangements for pick up. She can be reached at 518-336-4077 (home) 518-312-8603 (text) or via email scullynik@yahoo.com.

Financial Secretary Needed Wondering how you can help your church. A Financial Secretary is needed. Training is available. if interested please see Rik Cosgrave or anyone on the council.

What would you like to see in “The Parish Connection?” Drop a line to the TCLP office at parishadmin@tclparish.org

Parish Administrator OFFICE HOURS: 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. Lunch is from 1-2 pm Call any time!

If you have questions regarding the Tri County Lutheran Parish or for any other church issues or pastoral concerns, please call Sharon at 518-758-6526 or email her at: parishadmin@tclparish.org and she can help direct you to the right person!

CONTACT US:

Tri-County Lutheran Parish, PO Box 158, Valatie, NY 12184

Phone: (518) 758-6526

Pastor Samantha Perret (*Parish*) Phone – 518-229-4128

E-mail: whiteginger20@gmail.com

Pastor Beth George (*Parish*) Phone – 717-364-4557

Email: chellman4557@gmail.com

Pastor Dan Hahn, (*Intern Supervisor*) Phone – 518-281-8127

E-mail --pastordanhahn@gmail.com

Vicar Carolyn Lawrence

E-Mail: Carolyn.Lawrence@LSTC.edu

TCLP Website: <https://www.tclparish.org>

CHATHAM WEBSITE: <https://www.chathamlutheran.org>

VALATIE/STUYVESANT FALLS PARISH WEBSITE: <https://www.slelc.com>

Devotions and Prayers for the Fifth Sunday after Epiphany - curated by Vicar Carolyn

A Prayer for the Exhausted by Sacred Ordinary Days

O God of restoration and renewal,

We come to You at the end of another day, and we are tired.

Our minds are spinning, our bodies are aching,

And we aren't sure where You are in all of this.

We ache for sabbath rest for our bodies and souls.

But how can we pause when work and life hang in the balance?

We're pulled in all directions--

Our communities, our commitments, our families, our futures.

We're just trying to keep it together, but we're tired from the push
and pull.

We ache for quiet in a shouting world.

Help us remember that while productivity is lauded in our culture,

You welcome us to pause in Your kingdom.

You, who call us Beloved and beckon us to lie down.

We ask for rest for every weary body and soul.

Help us not to push ourselves and others so hard

That we forget the miracle of Christ right in front of us.

Jeremiah 29:1-14 NLT

Jeremiah wrote a letter from Jerusalem to the elders, priests, prophets, and all the people who had been exiled to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. This was after King Jehoiachin, the queen mother,

the court officials, the other officials of Judah, and all the craftsmen and artisans had been deported from Jerusalem. He sent the letter with Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah when they went to Babylon as King Zedekiah's ambassadors to Nebuchadnezzar. This is what Jeremiah's letter said:

This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem: "Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce. Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away! And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare."

This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let your prophets and fortune-tellers who are with you in the land of Babylon trick you. Do not listen to their dreams, because they are telling you lies in my name. I have not sent them," says the Lord.

This is what the Lord says: "You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. I will be found by you," says the Lord. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land."

Prayer from the Ascension Service for King George I (1714)

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions.

Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord: that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, so may we henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and

peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer by Martin Luther

Almighty God, through the death of your Son you have destroyed sin and death. Through his resurrection you have restored innocence and eternal life. We who are delivered from the power of the devil may live in your kingdom. Give us grace that we may believe this with our whole heart. Enable us, always, to steadfastly praise and thank you in this faith, through your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer of Restoration from Crosswalk.com

Dear Lord,

We have seen the damage firsthand that storms can cause in our lives. We know the destruction, aching, and devastation that they cause. If we are being honest, at times it can seem impossible that anything beautiful or good can come from such sorrows. We know within our hearts that this isn't the end of the story, that You have something far greater to come.

Father, we ask today for Your hand in our lives. We pray for the restoration of our lives by Your process. That process may not look like what we would think or plan, but we know that because You see all that is, was, and is to come...that ultimately, You will do what is most compassionate and best. Father, today we come before Your Holy throne to ask for Your restoration in our lives. We submit ourselves to Your ever-loving Will and kindness throughout.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

“Our spirituality is our capacity to relate to God, to other human beings, and to the natural world. Through these relationships, we give meaning to our experience and attune our hearts and minds to the deepest dimensions of reality.”

--Dorothy Bass

“We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other. We know Him in the breaking of bread, and we know each other in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone anymore. Heaven is a banquet and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship.” **--Dorothy Day**

4th Sunday After Epiphany Sermon by Pastor Samantha Perret - based on Deuteronomy 18:15-20

God said. “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet. who shall speak to them everything that I command.”

Our Old Testament lesson this morning finds the wandering Israelites nearing the end of their wilderness time and approaching the Promised Land. Moses. their leader and prophet of God has led them out of slavery. has comforted them with messages from God. and has established order. The message has gone from God to Moses to the people - and now Moses is nearing the end of his time.

God promises to continue God’s communication with the people through another prophet. This promise is multifaceted: First. God will utilize a prophet. Second. the people must heed the words of the prophet as God’s own message. Third. the prophet must be accurate with the Word of God. Prophecy is a gift to be certain - but also carries the burden of great

responsibility. both for the prophet who must deliver the message as well as those who must hear the message and discern if the prophet is telling the truth and then must do as the Lord demands through the prophet.

A good deal of faith and trust is tied up with this method of communication between God and God's people. Even so. I can't help but think how helpful it would be today to have a definitive source of knowledge straight from God. guiding us and leading us. We have so many varied opinions. sources of information and mis-information and questions about accuracy in all areas of our lives. What is the Word of God saying to us today? Whose messages are we to trust? Where have all the prophets gone?

We don't often discuss messages of prophets these days- at least not in the sense of Biblical prophets. In the secular world there is this common idea that prophets foretell the future like a fortune-teller with a cosmic crystal ball. But Biblically. true prophets deliver messages from God when God's people go astray - when they neglect to care for their neighbor. when they embrace violence and false idols. when they turn away from God. In the Bible. true prophets spoke out about injustice and exploitation.

- Amos spoke out against those who "trample the needy and destroy the poor of the land."
- Isaiah ordered Israel to "seek justice. correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless. plead the widow's cause."
- Jeremiah warned. "woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness. and his upper rooms by injustice."
- Ezekiel explained "Behold. this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride. excess of food. and prosperous ease. but did not aid the poor and needy."

- Micah reminded "He has told you. O man. what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice. and to love kindness. and to walk humbly with your God."

Prophets are truth tellers. with a message from God. with the goal of correcting the behavior of God's people - bringing their attention to the places where justice is lacking and God's oppressed are being neglected. Prophets often have a message that we struggle with - because they tell us hard truths. remind us of our call and motivate us to do that which we have been complacent.

We are familiar with those Biblical prophets I just mentioned and time has tested their messages. Many modern theologians present the case of Dr. Martin Luther King. Jr as an example of a more recent prophet. In his Letter From a Birmingham Jail. King writes. "I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the eighth-century prophets left their little villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their hometowns; and just as the Apostle Paul left his little village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to practically every hamlet and city of the Greco-Roman world. I too am compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my particular hometown." Dr. King spoke the truth of the sin and injustice of racism to a people who didn't want to hear the message that is most certainly the Word of God.

In our lesson from Deuteronomy today. God warns that those who do not heed the message of the prophet of God will be held accountable. as will those prophets who do not deliver the message accurately. The gift of prophecy **IS** still present in our world. With so many voices in the news. media and world. how are we to accurately discern the true message that needs to be heeded or voiced? Theologian and author

Howard Wallace. offers these criteria to help us discern the true Word of God:

- The message comes from God. not from inside the prophet
- The message is life-giving and moves us to choose life over death.
- The message is discerning - it is not flashy or popular. but must be discerned.
- The message is consistent with the word that has come before.

I invite you to check messages you hear against this criteria. prayerfully consider. talk to spiritual leaders. and if possible the prophet themselves. God has not finished talking to us. God is still using prophets to share messages of repentance. calls us to action to help the oppressed and inspires us to seek justice. Just as God has repeated these messages since the beginning of time. using a variety of prophets. I have faith that God will continue to do just that. God gives us grace upon grace. and fresh opportunities to hear the message or speak a prophetic word. God does not abandon us or give up on us. even when the message falls on our deaf ears. God's grace continues to grant us second. third. hundredth chances to hear and heed the messages. Until there is justice and plenty for all - there is still a Word of love to be heard and spoken. Let us pray for open ears and open hearts to hear the Word of God spoken today. and the courage to act on it. Amen.

Tri-County Lutheran Parish
February 7, 2021 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Based on the ELW, Setting 1. Worship Leader: Pastor Beth George
Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

Announcements

Call to worship

L: The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who was in the beginning, who makes a dwelling among us, who covers us with justice and mercy.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of goodness and lovingkindness,

C: we confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have turned away from your invitation to new life. We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden. In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins, those we know and those known only to you, for the sake of the one who came to live among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

L: Hear the good news of peace and salvation! God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work, but through † Jesus Christ, made known to all people. With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace. **C: Amen.**

Hymn *Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing* **LBW 559**



1 Oh, for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great re-deem-er's praise,
2 My gra-cious Mas-ter and my God, as-sist me to pro-claim,
3 The name of Je-sus charms our fears and bids our sor-rows cease,
4 He breaks the pow'r of can-celed sin; he sets the pris-'ner free.
5 To God all glor-y, praise, and love be now and ev-er giv'n



the glo-ries of my God and king, the tri-umphs of his grace!
to spread through all the earth a-broad the hon-ors of your name.
sings mu-sic in the sin-ner's ears, brings life and health and peace.
His blood can make the foul-est clean; his blood a-vails for me.
by saints be-low and saints a-bove, the church in earth and heav'n.

Greeting

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray.

C: Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31

²¹Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? ²²It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; ²³who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

²⁴Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

²⁵To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. ²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. ²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? ²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. ³⁰Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; ³¹but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c

¹Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant it is to honor God with praise!

²**The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem, and gathers the exiles of Israel.**

³The LORD heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

⁴**The LORD counts the number of the stars and calls them all by their names.**

⁵Great is our LORD and mighty in power; there is no limit to God's wisdom.

⁶**The LORD lifts up the lowly, but casts the wicked to the ground.**

⁷Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music upon the harp to our God,

⁸**who covers the heavens with clouds and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow upon the mountains.**

⁹God provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they cry.

¹⁰**God is not impressed by the might of a horse, and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner,**

¹¹but finds pleasure in those who fear the LORD, in those who await God's steadfast love. ^{20c}Hallelujah!

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

¹⁶If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!

¹⁷For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. ¹⁸What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. ²²To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. ²³I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

C: Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

L: The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the first chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

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

³²That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And 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.

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He 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." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

L: The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the

truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants

your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the
 dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your
 church gath - ered to - day.

L: Let us proclaim our faith using the words of the Apostles Creed.

Apostles Creed

C: 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 into hell; 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 Intercession

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

A brief silence.

For the church: for ministries of healing and wholeness, for hospital, hospice, and military chaplains, for those serving in prison ministry, for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ. We pray for our Bishops, Synod Staff, Conference Deans, Pastors, Vicars, Seminarians, Church Musicians, Lay Leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For creation: for insects in the grass, clouds on the mountaintops, for cattle and the rainwater they drink, for the humility to take our place among all creatures of the earth, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations: for all who lead in cities and towns, states and countries; for community organizers, school officials, and CEOs; for international health organizations, that in times of trial, fear, or hopelessness, they find freedom in service to those most in need. We pray for military personnel, especially for John Schatzle, Matt White, Aldan Race, Daniel Main, and Angela Silliman; let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For all wearied by life's burdens: for those who are poor, for those lacking supportive relationships, for those crushed by debt, for those struggling with chronic pain or other sickness, for those exhausted from overwork or stress, and for all who cry out to you, especially Phyllis Keeler, Michelle and

Wally, Vincent Masa, Tari, Johnna, Tonya, Alicia, David and Family, Justin and Kim, Bridie G, Michelle, Lew Hotaling, Logan, Maria, Jodi, Emily, Sheila, Paula, Gloria LaCrosse, Bethany and family, Dolores Heilmann, Paul & family; Karen Lasher, Sue Haverly, Lorene Bowes, Sue Erickson, Michael Bump, Leslie, Holly, Kayla, Katie M., Josefine Payne, Joy, Nadine Davis, Emma Burnett, Michelle Majercsik, Barbara Ritrovato, Burma Cavanagh, Carmel Micalizzi , Mary Keefes, Season Hubley, Judy Paine, Bunny Otterbeck, Catherine, Cindy D., Jackie Bachman, Pat Brundage, Claus Marzahl, Arlene Zahn, Al Zahn, Margot Petersen, Vickie Achenbach, Sheri Patterson, Bill S., Kyle Stickles, Bonnie Walsh, Ivan Morales, Jacob Race, Linda Taliaferro, Grace Balint, Karen Mc Neff, Sara Scott-Fluentes, Debbie Hammond, Christi Wright, Frank Ball, Doris Hatfield, Angela & Jake; Doris Smith, Barbara Slater, Lynn LaFave, Joy H., Ed Schomaker, Pat Kingsbury, Kayte Ware, Karen Schubert, Jim Trimmer, Bill Duke, Matt White, Dorothy Teeter, Richard Springstead, Tom Sanford, Adeline Carr, Xavier Schmidt, Nancy Lansing, Bob Bedell, Kirt, Tonya, the Pfrommer family, Jack Lyons, Millie Sparks, Robert Millius, Lisa Freeman, Billy Freeman, Patty Westover, Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, for caregivers, hospice workers, and home health aides, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries centered here (*especially*); for parish nurses and visitors; for ministries of companionship and support, for the young people in this place who open us to new understandings, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed, who were called by name and now rest from their labors, that their lives serve as witnesses to the goodness of God. We pray for the family and friends of Darren Faulkner, Alice Holt, George Havlick, Michelle Rigney, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Darren Rybka, Kay Victorson, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

We pray for all those who are affected by COVID-19. We pray for those serving in the COVID-19 front lines...Allison White, Ted Fiebke, Amy Fiebke, Justine LaValley, Jason Vernon, and Jared Frick. let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Hear our prayers, O Lord, whether we speak them aloud on our lips, or in the silence of our hearts. [Pause for prayers.] let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Peace

L: I will give you all a moment to unmute yourselves... The peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

Offering

L: We offer prayers of thanksgiving and ask blessings on the offerings sent electronically or by mail for the mission of the church including the care of those in need.

Offertory

L: Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,

C: and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.

L: Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,

C: that we may be fed with the bread of life.

L: Gather the hopes and the dreams of all;

C: unite them with the prayers we offer.

L: Grace our table with your presence,

C: and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Dialogue

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Thanksgiving at the Table

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

C: 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.

*** Distribution of Communion**

Post Communion Blessing

L: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

*** Prayer After Communion**

L: Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

*** Blessing**

L: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **C: Amen.**

Hymn *I Love to Tell the Story* ELW 661

1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,
2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat
3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best

of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love.
what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!
seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.

I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;
I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard
And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,

it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do.
the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.
I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

Refrain

I love to tell the sto - ry; 'twill be my theme in glo - ry
to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

Dismissal

L: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

L: Please unmute yourselves... And all God's people say:

C: Thanks be to God. Amen and ALLELUIA!

PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS

For the Bishops, Synod Staff, our Conference Dean Jo Page, Pastor Dan, Pastor Samantha, Pastor Beth, Vicar Carolyn Lawrence, Seminarians, and Lay Leaders.

For the families and friends of... Alice Holt, George Havlick, Darren Faulkner, Michelle Rigney, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Darren Rybka, Kay Victorson.

We pray for all those who are affected by COVID-19 and especially for those serving in the COVID-19 front lines...Allison White, Ted Fiebke, Amy Fiebke, Justine Shultis LaValley, Jason Vernon, and Jared Frick.

For those serving in the military: John Schatzle, Matt White, Aldan Race, Daniel Main, and Angela Silliman.

For those in need of physical, mental, or spiritual healing: Phyllis Keeler, Michelle and Wally, Vincent Masa, Tari, Johnna, Tonya, Alicia, David and Family, Justin and Kim, Bridie G, Michelle, Lew Hotaling, Logan, Maria, Jodi, Emily, Sheila, Paula, Gloria LaCrosse, Bethany and family, Dolores Heilmann, Paul & family; Karen Lasher, Sue Haverly, Lorene Bowes, Sue Erickson, Michael Bump, Leslie, Holly, Kayla, Katie M., Josefine Payne, Joy, Nadine Davis, Emma Burnett, Michelle Majercsik, Barbara Ritrovato, Burma Cavanagh, Carmel Micalizzi, Mary Keefes, Season Hubley, Judy Paine, Bunny Otterbeck, Catherine, Lucinda & Sharon DeFlumer, Roberta Wormuth, Lincoln Page, Cindy D., Jackie Bachman, Sheri Patterson, Pat Brundage, Claus Marzahl, Arlene Zahn, Al Zahn, Margot Petersen, Vickie Achenbach, Kyle Stickles, Bonnie Walsh, Ivan Morales, Arlene Taylor, Joan Crow, Billy Crow, Robin Crow, Jacob Race, Linda Taliaferro, Sasha Shultis, Robert Millius, Shirley Bryan, the Pfrommer family, Jack Lyons, Millie Sparks, Tom Sanford, Grace Balint, Karen Mc Neff, Sara Scott-Fluentes, Frank Ball, Doris Hatfield, Angela & Jake, Robert and family, Etta Shultis, Doris Smith, Barbara Slater, Vivian Becker, Lynn LaFave, Joy H., Kirk Dixon, Ed Schomaker, Dave, Pat Kingsbury, Kayte Ware, Karen Schubert, Jim Trimmer, Joyce, Frank Johnson, Bill Duke, Patty Bervy, Carol Voeks, Matt White, Dorothy Teeter, Richard Springstead, Adeline Carr, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Xavier Schmidt, Nancy Lansing, Bob Bedell, Kirt, Debbie Hammond, Tonya, Lisa Freeman, Billy Freeman, Patty Westover, Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, Richard Fitzgerald, their caregivers, and our parish members who due to COVID19 are unable to attend In-Person worship.