

January 24, 2021

3 Epiphany

Introduction to the day

As we continue through the time after Epiphany, stories of the call to discipleship show us the implications of our baptismal calling to show Christ to the world. Jesus begins proclaiming the good news and calling people to repentance right after John the Baptist is arrested for preaching in a similar way. Knowing that John was later executed, we see at the very outset the cost of discipleship. Still, the two sets of brothers leave everything they have known and worked for all their lives to follow Jesus and fish for people.



GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God. (Silence for reflection.)

Holy God, **you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin— our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us.**

We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. Amen.

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace. **Amen.**

GREETING

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG *Will You Come and Follow Me: The Summons (ELW 798)*

1. "Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?"

5. Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

WORD

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

¹The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, ²“Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” ³So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. ⁴Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” ⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. ¹⁰When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 62:5-12

⁵For God alone I wait in silence; truly, my hope is in God.

⁶**God alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold, so that I shall never be shaken.**

⁷In God is my deliverance and my honor; God is my strong rock and my refuge.

⁸**Put your trust in God always, O people, pour out your hearts before the one who is our refuge.**

⁹Those of high degree are but a fleeting breath; those of low estate cannot be trusted. Placed on the scales together they weigh even less than a breath.

¹⁰**Put no trust in extortion; in robbery take no empty pride; though wealth increase, set not your heart upon it.**

¹¹God has spoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongs to God.

¹²**Steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord, for you repay all according to their deeds.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

²⁹Brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, ³⁰and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, ³¹and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news. Alleluia. (Mark 1:15)

GOSPEL: Mark 1:14-20

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

¹⁶As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.”

¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

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

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore (ELW 817)*

1. You have come down to
the lakeshore
seeking neither the wise nor
the wealthy,
but only asking for me to
follow.

Refrain
Sweet Lord, you have looked
into my eyes;
kindly smiling, you've called
out my name.
On the sand I have
abandoned my small boat;
now with you, I will seek
other seas.

4. You who have fished other
waters;
you, the longing of souls that
are yearning:
O loving Friend, you have
come to call me. Refrain

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 INTERCESSION

Responding together to Christ's call, let us offer our prayers for all in need, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "Our hope is in you." *A brief silence.*

We pray for the church, especially our bishops, pastors, deacons, musicians, and servers, that God's Spirit empower all the baptized with wisdom to follow Christ's call. *A brief silence.*

O God our salvation, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray for Sunday schools and for all parish education, for teachers and participants, young and old, that God form the faithful even when classes cannot regularly meet in person. *A brief silence.*

O God our power, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray for the earth, its seas, lakes, and rivers, for their myriad creatures, and for those whose livelihood depends upon them, that God raise up advocates and scientists to guide an ecological care for creation. *A brief silence.*

O God our rock, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray for the nations, for our elected and appointed leaders, for President Biden and Vice President Harris, Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flannigan, for racial concord in our cities, and for those who have been considered our enemies, that God lead the world into commonwealths of justice and peace. *A brief silence.*

O God our stronghold, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray for those who are charged with maintaining an ordered society, for state and local law enforcement, and for the military, that God guide the powerful to serve the common good. *A brief silence.*

O God our refuge, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray for relief from COVID-19, for the fearful, the sick, and the dying, for medical workers, for all who await the vaccine, for the unemployed and the quarantined, that God uphold the world's people through this time of affliction. *A brief silence.*

O God in whom we trust, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray for all who are sick, distressed, or grieving, especially for . . . , that God sustain and comfort those who suffer. *A brief silence.*

O God our deliverance, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We pray finally for ourselves, that as we pour out our hearts to God, our faith in divine mercy be renewed. *A longer period of silence.*

O God of steadfast love, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

We join in thanksgiving for all your people from ancient times until today who have lived and died in faith, and we pray that at our end God unite us with them in everlasting peace. *A brief silence.*

O God of eternal might, receive our prayer: **Our hope is in you.**

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

PEACE~ The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

OFFERING *I Love to Tell the Story (ELW 661)*

1. I love to tell the story
of unseen things above,
of Jesus and his glory,
of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story,
because I know it's true;
it satisfies my longings
as nothing else would do.

Refrain
I love to tell the story;
'twill be my theme in glory
to tell the old, old story
of Jesus and his love.

3. I love to tell the story,
for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting
to hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory,
I sing the new, new song,
I'll sing the old, old story
that I have loved so long.
Refrain

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray...O God, receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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

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

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Beloved: here is bread; here is wine. Here is Jesus.
Come and be fed.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray... Christ Jesus, at this table we have feasted on your very life and are strengthened for our journey. Send us forth from this banquet nourished in body and in spirit to proclaim your good news and serve others in your name. **Amen.**

SENDING

SENDING SONG *In Thee Is Gladness (ELW 867)*

1. In thee is gladness amid all sadness,
Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By thee are given the gifts of heaven,
thou the true redeemer art.
Our souls thou wakest; our bonds thou
breakest.
Who trusts thee surely has built securely
and stands forever: Alleluia!
Our hearts are pining to see thy shining,
dying or living, to thee are cleaving;
naught can us sever: Alleluia!

2. Jesus is ours! We fear no powers,
not of earth or sin or death.
He sees and blesses in worst distresses;
he can change them with a breath.
Wherefore the story tell of his glory
with heart and voices; all heav'n rejoices
in him forever: Alleluia!
We shout for gladness, triumph o'er sadness,
love him and praise him and still shall raise him
glad hymns forever: Alleluia!

BLESSING

May the Creator strengthen you; the Beloved fill you; and the Comforter keep you in peace, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Jan. 24th 7:00 PM Synod Book Study
- Jan. 25th 7:00 PM Bible Study at Fisher
- Jan. 27th 6:30 PM All City Confirmation Event (Grades 6-8)
- Jan. 31st 9:00 AM Worship at Bygland
11:00 AM Worship at Fisher
7:00 PM Synod Book Study
- Tri-Valley MNSure Counseling- Apply for Medical Assistance, Minnesota Care or Qualified Health plan with possible tax credits, Energy Assistance, SNAP, Rental assistance and homelessness assistance.
 - To schedule an appointment call Nancy at 800-820-7263
 - February 3rd & 17th, March 3rd & 17th, April 7th & 21st
 - 10 AM-3 PM
 - Northern Dental Access Center
132 3rd St. W
Halstad, MN

GOSPEL MESSAGE

January 24, 2021

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER
EPIPHANY

In the Nets of the Kingdom

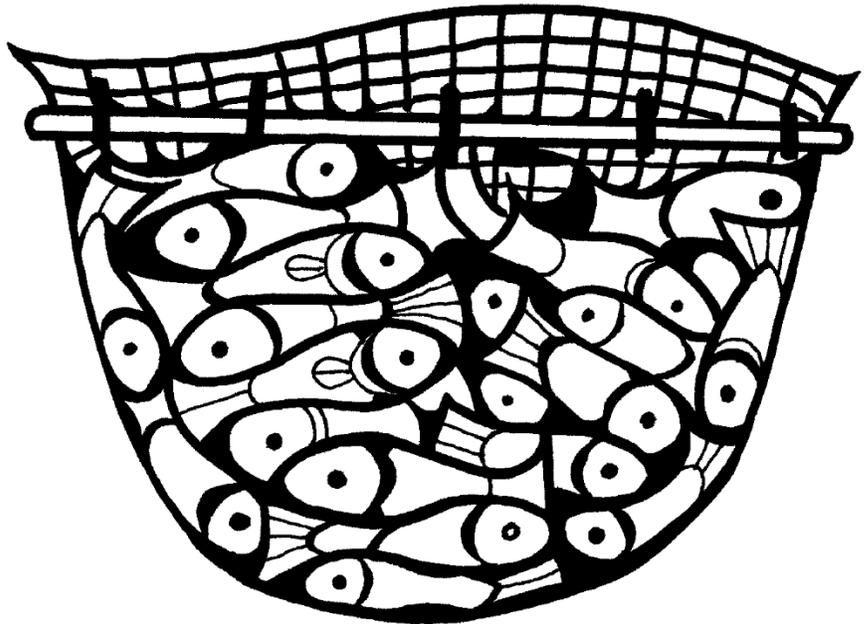
Jan, wandering seat to seat on the bus, was crossing state lines from Michigan to Wisconsin. Bruce had sent her the ticket. The two met at a church youth convention; now she was going to be his high school prom date. Here's how it happened: At the youth gathering, during each morning's worship, the two held the same green hymn book. During the afternoon Bible studies, sitting cross-legged in a circle on the floor,

she read compellingly from her red leatherette Bible. For evening reflections, the prayers she pulled from her blue plastic packet of devotions swept the room. Bruce was bedazzled. That's why he bought the ticket. When Jan stepped off the bus, she shimmered, telling him how from seat to seat along Highway 2 she had saved souls, netting fourteen converts on a colorful missionary journey.

As delighted as Jan might have been, her proselytizing was not the kind of fishing for people Jesus was after when he passed along the Sea of Galilee, calling oily fishermen to "follow me." What shook Simon and Andrew, James and John, and countless women and men throughout the ages to—immediately, impulsively—give up their nets, quit mending, abandon boats, and leave families and homes?

Jesus' wild, sea-changing challenge demands courage. It dares us into a way of living, a manner of seeing, and a risk of not knowing but earnestly believing that when he asks us to step up, something more meaningful than all we have awaits us.

Jesus' "follow me" comes amid a lifetime of rigorous monotony, in which we are constantly casting nets to catch more of what never satisfies. Jesus' "follow me" is an epiphany. It is an invitation, not to "save souls," but to be gathered and to gather the weak and despairing, to minister to the ruined and abandoned, scared and starving, to show compassion to the mean and unloving, and to embrace the great, greedy, proud, and demanding; all of this awaits us in the nets of God's kingdom.



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