



Sunday, February 4, 2024

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Thought: The world is filled with broken people, but when they are touched by Jesus, life happens. Healing of mind, body, or spirit happens. The assurance that things will be all right grows. As Christians, we are the beneficiaries of this blessing, and the instruments of it as well. “What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.” -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Prelude – Lillian Pinkston

Welcome and Announcements

Prayer Concerns

Sharing of the Peace

Call to Worship

L: We are crucified with Christ.

C: It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us,

L: For to live is Christ and to die is gain.

C: Come, Lord Jesus. May your loving Holy Spirit fill us in this time of worship.

Gathering Hymn – “O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come” ELW #610

<https://youtu.be/mY8YhWVMim8>

Riverside

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen

Confession and Forgiveness

P: O Holy One, we confess it is not easy for us to confront the sins that divide us from you and from one another.

A time of silence for reflection

We confess together...

C: We prefer prayer to be comforting, not challenging or correcting; assuring, not inquiring or requiring. Forgive us for failing to trust your purposes for our lives, and that you come to us not with the itching desire to punish but with the incarnate reach to heal and save us.

P: Draw us close to you, O God, that we may live faithfully and love graciously, as you have come to us in Jesus Christ and forgive our sins.

C: Amen.

Kyrie

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen and Amen.

Hymn of Praise – “We All Are One in Mission” ELW #576

<https://youtu.be/w0AmVKrX6xg>

Riverside in Lincoln Nebraska

Prayer of the Day

L: Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint.

C: 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.

Preparing for the Word

L: God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

C: The Lord lifts up the downtrodden; God opposes the oppressors. Sing to the Lord! With thanksgiving make melody to our God and share His Word.

The Word

Old Testament reading – Isaiah 40:21-31

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.

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.

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

Psalm 147:1-11, 20

The Lord heals the brokenhearted.

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!

Epistle reading - 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

A servant for the sake of the gospel.

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.

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

Holy Gospel – Mark 1:29-39

<https://youtu.be/JubbBeWteNg?si=6JfRfcJGuV9iS5tg>

The Holy Gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you O Lord.**

Healed to serve.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

Message – "Lifted to Serve"

<https://youtu.be/bNgJnOXR-C4?si=AH6xAwoqEbDjLHbu>

<https://youtu.be/8oqsAZiOFjE?si=XEZojLEHGnu80oJL>

Hymn of the Day – "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"

ELW #843

<https://youtu.be/5VwjcpXJVb8>

Koine

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 Intercession

P: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

L: Everlasting God, you bring your healing power to the church. Give your church a spirit of unity and prayer, that we discern your way for us in the world. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Creator of the ends of the earth, you make the grass grow and send rain for the soil. Bring your creation into harmony and balance. Give animals their food and provide healthy shelter for your people. Inspire us to honor the miraculous beauty of all you have made. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: God without equal, your steadfast love endures forever. Bring the leaders, elected officials, and peacekeepers of our towns and countries into understanding and unity. Guide them to serve with compassion and understanding. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: God who strengthens, you lift up with your hand any who are suffering. Heal those who are brokenhearted and strengthen the weak and all in need (*especially*). God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: God who gives power to the faint, challenge us to share the faith stories of what God has done in our lives. Open us to receive the unique ways God is at work in your people, especially those whose perspectives challenge our own. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: God who calls each star by name, we remember all who have died. Shelter all who mourn with your mercy and care, and give us hope in your promised salvation. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Offering/Offertory Music – “In Thee Is Gladness”

ELW #867

Offertory Prayer

L: Almighty God, through the power of your grace you have transformed us

C: from sin’s slaves to your own children.

L: Transform us again, by your Spirit –

C: that we may be your servants.

L: Accept these gifts.

C: They are signs of service.

L: Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right give our thanks and praise.

Preface

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

Consecration

The Lord's Prayer

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

Communion Music – Lillian Pinkston

Communion Blessing – Pastor

Post Communion Prayer

L: Filled with this rich food, O Christ

C: we are strengthened to accomplish what you came to do.

L: Send us out, O Christ,

C: to proclaim your message throughout the world.

L: You are the Lord forevermore.

C: Amen.

Benediction from Number 6 – Pastor

Sending Hymn – “Rise Up, O Saints of God! ELW 669

https://youtu.be/a6Tk_ML6k2w

St. Paul's UCC Church

Dismissal

L: Made whole to serve, we go rejoicing.

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude – Lillian Pinkston

*I Can Do All Things
Through Christ Who
Strengthens Me*

PHILIPPIANS 4:13



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