

ST. TIMOTHY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Worship At Home

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Sunday, January 31, 2021

This service is intended to be done alone or with your loved ones. The prayer and readings are the assigned ones for this Sunday.

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

Opening Prayer: Let us pray. Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings: First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20 – Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: 111

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 - Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28 – The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Reflection: *Having read these readings, think on this:* There are indeed, right now, false prophets, people who mislead and betray others by what they say, pretending to speak in God's name. We too, as Paul says, can use our religious knowledge to hurt others. How can the fire and the voice of the living God save us from this misuse of religion? Listen. Jesus' teaching ministry begins in an importantly strange way in Mark's Gospel. Nothing is said of what he actually teaches. And he oddly silences the unclean spirit who knows who he is. Religious knowledge is already being re-worked. In Mark that silence continues through the whole Gospel until at last Jesus is finally silenced on the cross. But this crucified Jesus is risen, and by the power of the Spirit he comes to our assemblies and to our homes. He is himself the new teaching, the promised prophet, the fire and voice of God in a way we can encounter. In him God knows us. And the word of this Holy One of God does heal us and turn us in kindness and care toward the others around us.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship #886).

Prayers of Intercession: *Then pray these prayers for our church and world:* Let us offer to God both our praises and our petitions for all in need, responding to each prayer with the words "**Hear us and help us.**" *A brief silence.* Faithful God, we praise you for sustaining the church during this difficult time. We pray that you give to all preachers and teachers the power of your prophetic Spirit, that their words will proclaim the comfort and challenge of Christ. Lead to yourself all those who have become captive to false prophets and empty promises; free them and embrace them in your mercy. O faithful God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Bountiful God, we praise you for continuously creating the earth and nourishing its creatures. We pray that you restore lands and waters that have been harmed by human misuse. Raise up advocates for an ecological way of life, and guide us toward an appropriate use of government in preserving the earth's natural resources. O bountiful God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Ruling God, we praise you for an inauguration and the days following that were free from violence and marked by hope. We pray that you to give wisdom to our elected and appointed officials, to political parties, and to grassroots organizers, that in all things they endeavor to serve the common good. Guide our nation out of the ways of prejudice and into equality and justice for all. O ruling God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Compassionate God, we praise you for each day of health and well-being, and we pray for all who are sick or suffering. Comfort those with mental illness or emotional distress, those institutionalized, or living on the streets, or residing in our homes. We praise you for the development of COVID-19 vaccines, and we pray for their fair and prompt distribution. Increase in our land a commitment to limit contagion to others. Visit all who have contracted the coronavirus and all who are experiencing the long-term effects of COVID-19. Strengthen medical workers and home health aides. Receive our prayers for those we name before you. O compassionate God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Reconciling God, we praise you for your Spirit of wisdom and concord. We pray for all who make ethical decisions, whether in homes, in churches, or in societies. Keep families from quarreling over which foods to eat. Instruct us when to preserve the past and when to institute change, when to maintain our own preferences and when to yield to others. O reconciling

God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Gracious God, we give you praise for your continuous untold blessings, and we offer you now the petitions of our own hearts. O gracious God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Eternal God, we praise you for your servants of time past whose words and actions have inspired our lives. We mourn those who have died of Covid-19. Unite us with all our beloved dead now through our memories and at the end of time in your presence. O eternal God, we pray: **Hear us and help us.** Into your hands, merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your loving care, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "There is a Balm in Gilead" (ELW #614)

We continue our worship with this prayer: Holy God, Light of the universe, Teacher of truth, Giver of goodness, we hear your Word in the Scriptures, proclaiming to us your wisdom and inviting us to follow your call. For speaking this Word, we thank you, O God. **We thank you, O God.**

Your Word came among us in Jesus, our brother, who preached your righteousness, healed the sick, and revived the brokenhearted. For giving us this Word, we worship you, O God. **We worship you, O God.**

By your Spirit bless all who receive this Word, that upheld by the mystery of the body of Christ, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son. For sustaining us with your Word, we praise you, O God. **We praise you, O God.**

Blessed are you, holy God, around us, with us, and in us, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

We end with reciting the Blessing: God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter + keep you in peace. Amen.

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Announcements and Further Prayer Requests

- Join Pastor Tom on Tuesday evenings at 7 PM on ZOOM as he leads us in a Bible study on Moses. You can find a link on our website or call in to 1-929-205-6099 using Meeting ID# 843 9728 2129 and passcode 349704.
- Please keep in your prayers the following individuals: Sean Fallon, Margaret Miller, Janet W., the family of Victor Markus, Philip Paul and Jennifer Buchanan, Beverly and Jim Penman, Dan Kramer, Joyce Zimmerman, Brian Volo, Diane Kraft, Rick, Mike, Olivia Williams and family, Cathy Niccola, Matt Stzaba, Ben Richard, Joanne M., Robert Miller, Louis Volo Jr, Dottie Roehrig, Karen Geng, Sylvia and Joe Smith, Lorraine Pfohl, Jerry Peete, Tamara Proctor, Cheryl Rosati, Rosaria Phillipone, Robin Bengalio Richard, the Maris Family, Charlene Faleski, and those we name out loud and in the silence of our hearts.
- For those that have no choice but to flee their homes, that they find refuge, compassion, and stability for a fresh start.
- For those struggling in their faith, that they experience the presence and comfort of God and are strengthened through it.
- For all those who have experienced trauma, that they find healing and come to know internal peace and wholeness.