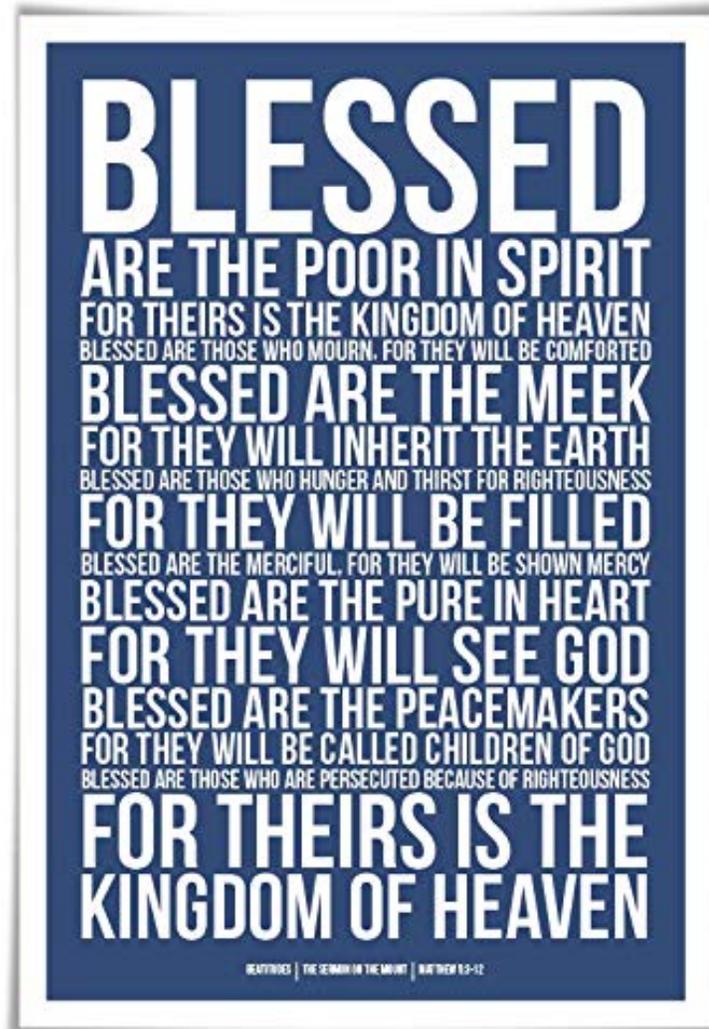


St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
January 26, 2020  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany



Thomas Mutz, S.A.M.  
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# Gathering

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

*Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.*

## **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,  
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world,  
calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,  
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.  
We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit,  
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **GATHERING SONG**

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service ELW 712

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together, **Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## FIRST READING

Micah 6:1-8

*With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.*

<sup>1</sup>Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup>Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord,  
and you enduring foundations of the earth;  
for the Lord has a controversy with his people,  
and he will contend with Israel.

<sup>3</sup>"O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

<sup>4</sup>For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,  
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.

<sup>5</sup>O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,  
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,  
that you may know the saving acts of the Lord."

<sup>6</sup>"With what shall I come before the Lord,  
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?

<sup>7</sup>Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

<sup>8</sup>He has told you, O mortal, 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?

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## RESPONSIVE PSALM

Psalm 15

**R:** *Lord, who may abide upon your holy hill?*

<sup>1</sup>Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup>**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,  
who speak the truth from their heart; R**

<sup>3</sup>they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup>**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the Lord.  
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

<sup>5</sup>They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown. **R**

## SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

*According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.*

<sup>18</sup>The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

<sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup>Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup>He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

## GOSPEL

Matthew 5:1-12

### **Glory to You, O, Lord.**

*Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.*

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The gospel of the Lord.

### **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## SERMON

## HYMN OF THE DAY

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life ELW 719

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

United in Christ, let us confess the faith we hold in common.

**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

Trusting that God hears us, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

God of liberation, you set your people free to serve others. Embolden your church, that we seek justice for the oppressed, share generously your lovingkindness, and live humbly together. Unite us as one people under the foolishness of the cross. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of the universe, your care is evident everywhere—from the foundations of the earth to the summit of the tallest mountains. Reconcile all of creation to itself and repair the environmental destruction caused by human carelessness and greed. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of the nations, you desire peace and justice among all people. Deliver us from systems of fear that seek to divide us. Guide our local and national leaders (*especially*). May their decisions empower and serve the needs of the poor and the disenfranchised. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of the oppressed, you raise up the lowly and comfort those in despair. We lift up to you all who are victims of exploitation, discrimination, and greed. We pray for those who are suffering in any way this day, especially Bobby, Patricia, Suzanne, Diane, Shane, Norma, Robert, Linda, Jack, Evelyn, Raymond, Steve, Frances, SuzAnn, Khloe, Elfren, Jimmy, Edwin, Johnny, Carly, Meredene, Jerry Vajdos, Enedina, Cody, Robert, and Norma as well as those that we name out loud or in our hearts.... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to earth in the form of a baby, whose presentation in the temple we celebrate today. Fill our own house of worship with your presence, that all who enter may encounter Christ. With all churches in the Southwestern Texas Synod we pray for each other and also for the Florida-Bahamas Synod, as well as Love of Christ Lutheran Church in Weslaco. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of life, we give you thanks for all those who have died in the faith. Thank you for the examples of our ancestors and the saints who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Confident that you are able to accomplish more than we even dare to ask, we bring these prayers before you, believing in your saving grace revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **GREETING OF PEACE**

The Lord Jesus prayed for the unity of his disciples.  
We look for the day when the church will shine forth  
in unity at his holy supper.  
The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

## Meal

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**OFFERING** An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

### **OFFERING SONG**

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil ELW 512

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

God of wonder,  
you formed us in our mother's womb,  
and from mother earth you bring forth this bread and wine.  
We place them on your table,  
together with our lives and all that you have made.  
Open the heavens to us and pour out your Spirit.  
We wait for your mercy;  
we long for your peace;  
we hunger and thirst for Jesus Christ,  
our banquet of life. **Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**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.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## **BLESSING**

May Christ, the wisdom and power of God, and the source of our life together, keep you united in mind and purpose. And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you always.

**Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG**

Blest Are They ELW 728

## **DOXOLOGY**

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow ELW 884

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Let your light shine.

**Thanks be to God.**

## For Prayerful Consideration

***Ill, Injured or Otherwise Struggling:*** Bobby Adams, Patricia Coffee, Suzanne Dietzel, Diane Dziuk, Shane Edens, Norma Foreman, Robert Fudge, Linda Henning, Jack Hockey, Evelyn Hoffman, Raymond Jenkins, Steve Kelly, Frances Kempe, SuzAnn Kroll, Khloe Martinez, Elfren Moczygemba, Jimmy Moore, Edwin Moy, Johnny Perez, Carly Rosenboon, Meredene Shockome, Jerry Vajdos, Enedina Vasquez, Cody Zaiontz, Robert Fudge, and Norma Zamzow

***For those in the military:*** Nick Adams, Anthony Alvarez, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Jon Wayne Schulz, James Skinner, Chris Sustaita, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva

***Birthdays:*** April Thompson (Feb 4), Mary Maddox (Feb 7)

## Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul's by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul's. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us. **If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance**, please signal an usher.

## Announcements

Opportunities to Learn, Worship, Pray, and Serve

**Thank you to all that contributed** time, food, and prizes for the KC Senior Activity Day.