## Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

## ~ January 28, 2024 ~

## St. John’s & St. Peter’s

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Confession and Forgiveness**  Page 94

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

***C: Amen.***

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***C:*** ***Amen.***

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

P: Most merciful God,

***C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.***

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

***C:*** ***Amen.***

**Gathering Hymn *“Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”*** Hymn #310

Vs.1 Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise;  
 manifested by the star to the sages from afar,  
 branch of royal David's stem in thy birth at Bethlehem:  
 anthems be to thee addressed, God in flesh made manifest.

Vs. 2 Manifest at Jordan's stream, prophet, priest, and king supreme;  
 and at Cana wedding guest in your God-head manifest;  
 manifest in pow'r divine, changing water into wine;  
 anthems be to thee addressed, God in flesh made manifest.

Vs. 3 Manifest in making whole weakened body, fainting soul;  
 manifest in valiant fight, quelling all the devil's might;  
 manifest in gracious will, ever bringing good from ill:  
 anthems be to thee addressed, God in flesh made manifest.

Vs. 4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord, present in thy holy word;  
 grace to imitate thee now and be pure, as pure art thou;  
 that we might become like thee at Thy great epiphany,  
 and may praise thee, ever blest, God in flesh made manifest.

**Greeting** Page 138

P: 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.***

**Kyrie** Page 138

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

P: 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.***

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Amen.***

**Hymn of Praise** Page 139

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God’s people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,

We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,

You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us;

You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

Spirit You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

In the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**Prayer of the Day**

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually revel 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.

**First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

*Today’s reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.*

**15**Moses said: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. **16**This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, ‘If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more or ever again see this great fire, I will die.’ **17**Then the Lord replied to me, ‘They are right in what they have said. **18**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. **19**Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. **20**But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak-that prophet shall die”.

**Psalm 111**

**1**Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.  
**2Great are the works, O Lord, pondered by all who delight in them.  
3**Majesty and splendor mark your deeds, and your righteousness endures forever.

**4You cause your wonders to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the wisdom.**

**5**You give food for those who fear you; remembering forever your covenant.  
**6You have shown your people the power of your works in giving them the lands of the nations.**

**7**The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice; all of your precepts are sure.  
**8They stand fast forever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the wisdom.**

**9**You sent redemption to your people; and commanded your covenant forever; holy and awesome is your name.  
**10The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who practice this have a good understanding. God’s praise endures forever.** **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the wisdom.**

**Second Reading**: **1 Corinthians 8:1-13**

*Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to*

*other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.*

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. **2**Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge, **3**but anyone who loves God is known by him.

**4**Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists” and that “there is no God but one.” **5**Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— **6**yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

**7**It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. **8**“Food will not bring us close to God.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+8%3A1-13&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-28520a)] We are no worse off if we do not eat and no better off if we do. **9**But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. **10**For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? **11**So by your knowledge the weak brother or sister for whom Christ died is destroyed. **12**But when you thus sin against brothers and sisters and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. **13**Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never again eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

**Gospel Acclamation**  Page 142

Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the

words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

**Gospel**: **Mark 1:21-28**

*Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.*

**21**Jesus and his disciples went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. **22**They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. **23**Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, **24**and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” **25**But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet and come out of him!” **26**And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. **27**They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+1%3A21-28&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-24240a)] commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” **28**At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

**Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day *“There Is a Balm in Gilead”***  Hymn #614

***Refrain: There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole;  
 there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.***

Vs. 1 Sometimes I feel discouraged and think my work’s in vain,  
 but then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again. ***[Refrain]***

Vs. 2 If you cannot preach like Peter, if you cannot pray like Paul,  
 you can tell the love of Jesus and say, “He died for all.” ***[Refrain]***

***Refrain: There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole;  
 there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.***

Vs. 3 Don’t ever be discouraged, for Jesus is your friend;  
 and if you lack for knowledge, he’ll not refuse to lend. ***[Refrain]***

**Apostles’ Creed**  Page 105

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 the People**

**“*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying***” Hymn #752

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

As we celebrate Christ embodied to human form, we pray for God’s blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer especially

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives. We trust that all who have died in rest in your loving care. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

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.**

**“*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying***” Hymn #752

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

**Peace** Page 138

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Offering *“We Give Thee but Thine Own” vs. 1*** Hymn #686

We give thee but thine own, what e’er the gift may be;

All that we have is thine alone a trust, O Lord from thee.

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray, Blessed are you, O God maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love; through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, or Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Great Thanksgiving**  Page 145

P: The Lord be with you.

***C:*** ***And also with you.***

P: Lift up your hearts.

***C:*** ***We lift them to the Lord.***

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

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

**Words of Institution**

P: 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

***C:*** ***Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.***

**Lord’s Prayer** Page 145

P: Let us pray as Jesus has 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.***

**Communion**

**Post Communion Blessing**

**Prayer after Communion**

P: God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. ***Amen.***

**Blessing**

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.

**Sending Hymn *Jesus Shall Reign”*** *Hymn #434*

Vs. 1 Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does its suc-

cessive journeys run; his kingdom stretch from

shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Vs. 2 To him shall endless prayer be made, and praises

throng to crown his head; his name like sweet per-

fume shall rise with ev'ry morning sacrifice.

Vs. 3 People and realms of ev'ry tongue dwell on his

love with sweetest song; and infant voices

shall proclaim their early blessings on his name.

Vs. 4 Blessings abound where'er he reigns: the prisoners

leap to lose their chains, the weary find

eternal rest, and all who suffer want are blest.

Vs. 5 Let ev'ry creature rise and bring peculiar

honors to our king; angels descend with

songs again, and earth repeat the loud amen.

**Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

***C: We will! Thanks be to God!***

Music and words reprinted under CCLI #1242177