

Worship for the Fourth Sunday After Epiphany – January 28, 2024

PRELUDE

GATHERING

We gather together in worship, because we don't do this alone, but as a community formed around Jesus Christ. "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." —Matthew 18:20

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM:

When we remember our baptism, we are remembering that through water and word we were made Children of God. "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." -Galatians 3:27

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✝ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

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 HYMN – LBW#242 “Let the Whole Creation Cry”



- 1 Let the whole cre - a - tion cry, “Glo - ry to the Lord on high!”
- 2 War - riors fight - ing for the Lord, --proph - ets burn - ing with his word,
- 3 Men and wom - en, young and old, raise the an - them loud and bold,



Heav'n and earth, a - wake and sing, “Praise him, our al - might - y king!”
those to whom the arts be - long add their voic - es to the song,
and let chil - dren's hap - py hearts in this wor - ship take their parts;



Praise him, an - gel hosts a - bove, ev - er bright and fair in love;
Kings of knowl - edge and of law, to the glo - rious cir - cle draw;
from the north to south - ern pole let the might - y cho - rus roll:



sun and moon, lift up your voice; night and stars, in God re - joice.
all who work and all who wait, sing, “The Lord is good and great!”
“Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly One; glo - ry be to God a - lone!”

Text: Stopford A. Brooke, 1832–1916, alt.
Music: SALZBURG, Jakob Hintze, 1622–1702, adapt.

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.

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.

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



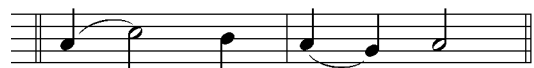
☒ Lord, have mer - cy.

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.



☒ Lord, have mer - cy.

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



☒ Lord, have mer - cy.

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



☒ A - men

HYMN OF PRAISE



A This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



B Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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.

WORD

We weekly hear the story of God in scriptures, sermons, and creeds because there are so many stories told in this world and there is a real danger that we will forget our own. "So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty." —Isaiah 55:10-11

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

[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. 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." Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. 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. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. 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."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 111



The fear of the LORD is the be - gin - ning of wis - dom.

Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with | my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the | congregation.

**Great are your | works, O LORD,
pondered by all who de- | light in them.**

Majesty and splendor | mark your deeds,
and your righteousness en- | dures forever.

**You cause your wonders to | be remembered;
you are gracious and full | of compassion. R**

You give food to | those who fear you,
remembering forev- | er your covenant.

**You have shown your people the power | of your works
in giving them the lands | of the nations.**

The works of your hands are faithful- | ness and justice;
all of your pre- | cepts are sure.

**They stand fast forev- | er and ever,
because they are done in | truth and equity. R**

You sent redemption to your people
and commanded your cove- | nant forever;
holy and awesome | is your name.

**The fear of the LORD is the begin- | ning of wisdom;
all who practice this have a good understanding.
God's praise en- | dures forever. R**

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

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

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.” Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—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.

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. "Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 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? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:21-28

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

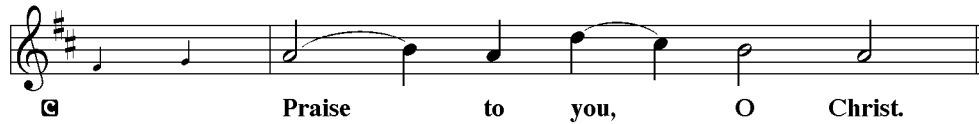
P The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 1st Chapter.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, 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." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another,

“What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The Gospel of the Lord.



SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY WOV#737 "There is a Balm in Gilead"



There is a balm in Gil-e-ad to make the wound-ed whole;



there is a balm in Gil-e - ad to heal the sin-sick soul.



1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,

2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can-not pray like Paul,

3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.

you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."

and if you lack for knowl-edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Text: African American spiritual
 Music: BALM IN GILEAD, African American spiritual

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

PRAYERS

As we celebrate Christ embodied in 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 (especially Thomas Aquinas whom we commemorate today). We trust that all who have died 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.

OFFERING

We give thanks, because it helps us recognize that all good things come from God. We practice being thankful. "We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly." —2 Thessalonians 1:3

*"We Are the People of God"
Chancel Choir*

-Beall/Carter

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Let us pray,
Merciful God,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MEAL

When we receive Holy Communion, we consume what we are, the Body of Christ. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." —1 Corinthians 11:26

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 him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. Sharing our life, he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:

Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.

You have filled all creation with light and life;

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Through Abraham you promised to bless all nations.

You rescued Israel, your chosen people.

Through the prophets you renewed your promise;

and, at this end of all the ages, you sent your Son,

who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom

and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, gracious Father, with this bread and cup
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.

And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
the spirit of our Lord and of his resurrection,
that we who receive the Lord's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place,
and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the u - ni - ty
 of the Ho - ly Spir - it, all hon - or and glo - ry is
 yours, al - might - y Fa - ther, now and for - ev - er. A - men

Let us pray as our Lord taught us:

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.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
 Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
 Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;
 grant us peace, grant us peace.

Music During Distribution

“Jubilate, Amen”

-arr. Ruby Shaw Hollis

Traditional Air

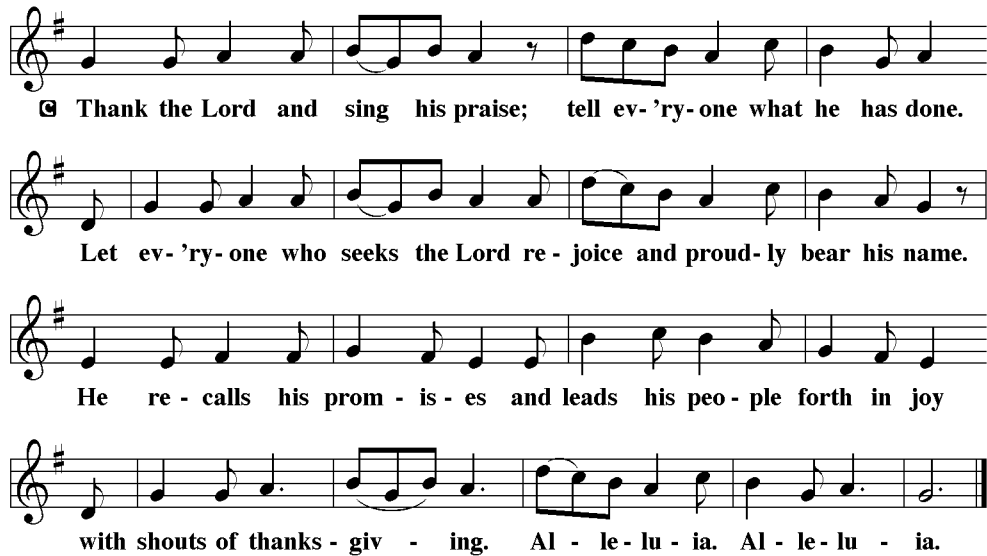
-arr. Kelly Ye

Handbell Choir

May Christ’s body and blood strengthen and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

BENEDICTUS



☞ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.

Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.

He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy

with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

SENDING

We are sent out to be salt and light, revealing God’s love to a world that needs it. “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”—John 20:21

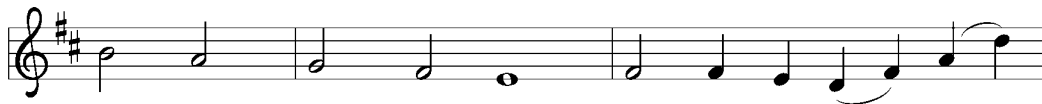
BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN LBW#530 "Jesus Shall Reign"



1 Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun does its suc -
2 To him shall end - less prayer be made, and prais - es
3 Peo - ple and realms of ev - 'ry tongue dwell on his
4 Bless - ings a - bound wher - e'er he reigns: the pris - 'ners
5 Let ev - 'ry crea - ture rise and bring pe - cu - liar



ces - sive jour - neys run; his king - dom stretch from
throng to crown his head; his name like sweet per -
love with sweet - est song; and in - fant voic - es
leap to lose their chains, the wea - ry find e -
hon - ors to our king; an - gels de - scend with



shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.
fume shall rise with ev - 'ry morn - ing sac - ri - fice.
shall pro - claim their ear - ly bless - ings on his name.
ter - nal rest, and all who suf - fer want are blest.
songs a - gain, and earth re - peat the loud a - men.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
Music: DUKE STREET, attr. John Hatton, d. 1793

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Setting 2

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