

EARTHEN VESSELS, WHOLE AND HOLY  
THE 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 2021

7 February, 2021

Worship at 9:30 AM ✠ Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Welcome to Christ Church! This year the cycle of readings takes us to the letters to the Church at Corinth (1 & 2 Corinthians). As we read through God's Word to this growing and diverse little church we see the challenges and struggles of our day. The Word tells us that faith gives us the tools we need to follow Christ and be the church in challenging times. The Word tells us that this faith is a treasure, but that we have this treasure in "earthen vessels." How does this treasure renew us, and make us whole? Can we let it make us holy?

Our gathering on Sundays is the core, the heart of the Church. For these last months we've gathered in our hearts and across virtual means. It has been a challenge, but still we gather, and we are still Christ Church, one in the Lord Jesus, still serving, caring, worshipping. We invite you to continue to join with our sisters and brothers in faith, and to invite others to join us in worship.

GATHERING

**PRELUDE:** a time for preparation

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

We gather for worship in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us come to God in humility and confidence,  
confessing our sin before God and each other.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

God of truth and light,

**we confess that we have sinned against you.**

**We admit the things that divide us**

**within the church, among the nations,  
and in our own relationships.**

**We confess we have turned away from your light.**

**Pour out your healing light upon us.**

**Through the power and strength of the cross,**

**heal our brokenness, forgive our foolish ways,  
and make your light shine through us.**

**Amen**

The boundless riches of Christ

are the gift of God's grace to all people.

As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ,

and by his authority, I declare to you

the entire forgiveness of all your sins,

in the name of the Father, and of the + Son,

and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

## GATHERING SONG

### GREETING

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always. **And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... *silence*... Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. 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.**

## WORD

*Silence for reflection follows each reading.*

The first reading is from Isaiah the 40<sup>th</sup> chapter.

<sup>21</sup>Have 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?

<sup>22</sup>It 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;

<sup>23</sup>who brings princes to naught,

and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

<sup>24</sup>Scarcely 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.

<sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me,

or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

<sup>26</sup>Lift 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.

<sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob,

and speak, O Israel,

“My way is hidden from the LORD,

and my right is disregarded by my God”?

<sup>28</sup>Have 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.

<sup>29</sup>He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
<sup>30</sup>Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
<sup>31</sup>but 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 is read responsively by verse  
Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God!

How pleasant it is to honor God with praise!

<sup>2</sup>**The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem,  
and gathers the exiles of Israel.**

<sup>3</sup>The LORD heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.

<sup>4</sup>**The LORD counts the number of the stars  
and calls them all by their names.**

<sup>5</sup>Great is our LORD and mighty in power;  
there is no limit to God's wisdom.

<sup>6</sup>**The LORD lifts up the lowly,  
but casts the wicked to the ground.**

<sup>7</sup>Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;  
make music upon the harp to our God,

<sup>8</sup>**who covers the heavens with clouds  
and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow upon the mountains.**

<sup>9</sup>God provides food for the cattle  
and for the young ravens when they cry.

<sup>10</sup>**God is not impressed by the might of a horse,  
and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner,**

<sup>11</sup>but finds pleasure in those who fear the LORD,  
in those who await God's steadfast love. <sup>20c</sup>Hallelujah! **Amen.**

The second reading is from 1 Corinthians the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter.

<sup>6</sup>If 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! <sup>17</sup>For 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. <sup>18</sup>What 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.

<sup>19</sup>For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. <sup>20</sup>To 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. <sup>21</sup>To 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. <sup>22</sup>To 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. <sup>23</sup>I 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.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

Alleluia. Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart ,

**Let us ponder the Word of the Lord with delight. Alleluia.**

## **GOSPEL**

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the first chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>29</sup>As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And 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.

<sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." <sup>38</sup>He 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." <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **TEACHING THE WORD**

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

We have heard the Word. Now let us confess our faith.

**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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**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,**

**who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who 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.**

### **THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

Let us join our hearts, praying that the Light of Christ will shine with healing on the church, for the world, and upon all those in need.

*A brief silence. We join our hearts to pray for the world, our community, and our church.*

For the church: for ministries of healing and wholeness, for hospital, hospice, and military chaplains, for those serving in prison ministry, for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ **We pray: Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.**

For those struggling in body, mind or spirit, longing for wholeness and healing. Hear our prayers for  
-all in need of healing care, and those who cannot find or access the care they need...  
-those who are struggling to meet the needs of home and work and family...  
-all weary and stressed by trying to make ends meet, and by financial fears...  
-for all who long for peace and justice among nations and neighbors...  
Give us confidence to bring all our prayers, all our needs, all our fears to you.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries centered here (*especially*); for parish nurses and visitors; for ministries of companionship and support, for the young people in this place who open us to new understandings, Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Into your healing grace, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Life, and our Light. **Amen**

### **THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*Gathered by the Spirit we offer peace to those with us in place, or those we hold in our hearts.*

### **OFFERTORY, AS WE GATHER OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

*We offer our love, obedience and lives in thanksgiving as a response to God's gifts and mercies. Our tithes and offerings may be gathered to be given by mailed, given online at [christpipersville.org](http://christpipersville.org) or using the QR code.*

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray: God of life and light:

**We bring our tithes and offerings in thanksgiving for what you have given us:  
Our lives, our time and all that we have. Bless these gifts, and make them a blessing to others,  
that Jesus' mercy and love may shine in our world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.**

## **SENDING**

GOSPEL CANTICLE: *The Benedictus, the Song of Zachariah.*

Blessed are you Lord, the God of Israel; you have come to your people and set them free.  
**You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,  
born of the house of your servant David.**

Through your holy prophets, you promised of old  
to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us,  
to show mercy to our forebears, and to remember your holy covenant.

**This was the oath you swore to our ancestors Sarah and Abraham:  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship you without fear,  
holy and righteous in your sight, all the days of our lives.**

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
**to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

Let us join our hearts in the prayer our Savior 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**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Announcements were sent earlier in the week by USPS and email. Pastor may choose to call attention to one or more, or share announcements that were not included.*

### THE NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord, now let your your servant go in peace according to Your word.

**For mine eyes have seen Your salvation;  
Which you have prepared before the face of all people;**

A light to reveal You to the nations, And the glory of Your people Israel.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen.**

## Benediction

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus;  
and the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

**SENDING SONG: OH GOD OUR HELP #632 ELW**

1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,  
 2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;  
 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,  
 4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,

our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
 suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
 from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.  
 short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
 bears all our years away;  
 we fly forgotten, as a dream  
 dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,  
 our hope for years to come,  
 still be our guard while troubles last  
 and our eternal home!

**DISMISSAL**

Let your light shine! Dwell in peace; Go forth to serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



But we have this  
treasure in earthen  
vessels, that the  
excellency of the  
power may be of  
God, and not of us.

2 Corinthians 4:7

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*the people of Christ Church, ministers*  
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**REMEMBER TO CHECK** the church web site ([www.christpipersville.org](http://www.christpipersville.org)) for worship and meeting updates and worship videos and resources or contact the church office.

**NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP** is currently being held. Watch your email for links to the live-streamed service and the recorded service to be posted to Facebook and our website.

**OUR WEB SITE THIS MONTH** is sponsored to the Glory of God and in Honor of their loving family by The Campbells.