

We Need Transformed Hearts

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 12, 2023

KING OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH | *Golden Valley, Minnesota*

Welcome to God's divine service among his saints in his house this morning. If you experience any kind of barrier to worship, please speak with an usher. There is a hearing assistance system available, there are activity bags for children, and the service is streamed live in the Fireside Room down the hall for small children.

Service of Preparation

PRESERVICE MUSIC

Use this time in quiet preparation for worship by looking ahead at today's Bible readings and hymn texts, and in prayer.

OPENING PRAYER

P: O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer, and Comforter, we are assembled in your presence to hear your holy Word. Please open our hearts by your Holy Spirit. Through the preaching of your Word teach us to repent of our sins, to believe in Jesus in life and death, and to grow day by day in grace and holiness. Hear us for Christ's sake.
Amen.

HYMN

O That the Lord Would Guide My Ways | #441

CONFESSION OF SIN

P: Let us bow before the Lord and confess our sins: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to you both that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and also that we have each sinned against you in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge toward your infinite mercy, pleading for your grace on the basis of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.


C: O most merciful God, you have given your only-begotten Son to die for us; have mercy upon us, and for his sake grant us remission of all our sins. And by your Holy Spirit, increase in us a true knowledge of you and of your will, and true obedience to your Word; to the end that — by your grace — we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

HYMN


Kyrie



O God the Fa - ther in heav - en, have mer - cy up - on us.



O God the Son, Re - deem - er of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.



O God the Ho - ly Ghost, true Com - fort - er, have mer - cy up - on us.

ABSOLUTION

P: Lift up your hearts to God! Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us. He has given his only-begotten Son to die for us, and on the basis of Jesus' work forgives us all our sins. To all who believe in his name he gives the power to become the children of God, and has promised them his Holy Spirit. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all. Amen.

All glo - ry be to God on high, Who hath our race be -
 friend-ed! To us no harm shall now come nigh, The strife at last is
 end - ed; God show - eth his good will to men, And
 peace shall dwell on earth a-gain; O thank him for his good - ness!

Service of the Word

Not just our actions, but our thoughts and attitudes are to be transformed as disciples in God's kingdom. We continually grow until that transformation is complete in our resurrections; and then we will be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray for obedience to God: Thank you, Jesus our Savior, for keeping God's law perfectly for us. Teach us through your Spirit to follow you and fulfill the law by a life of love. For you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 Thessalonians 4:1–12

Like the Thessalonians, we know what God wants; we understand it; and we need God's power in our hearts to help us do it more and more.

Therefore, beyond this, brothers, just as you received instruction from us about how you are to walk so as to please God (as indeed you are doing), we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that you do so even more. ²To be sure, you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³Indeed, this is God's will: that you be sanctified, namely, that you keep yourselves away from sexual immorality. ⁴He wants each of you to learn to obtain a wife for yourself in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵not in lustful passion like the heathen, who do not know God. ⁶No one is to overstep and take advantage of his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we said previously and solemnly testified to it. ⁷For God did not call us for uncleanness, but in sanctification. ⁸Consequently, whoever rejects this is not rejecting a man, but the God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

⁹Concerning brotherly love, there is no need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God, with the result that you love one another. ¹⁰In fact, you are doing so toward all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we encourage you, brothers, to do this even more, ¹¹and to make it your ambition to live a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, just as we instructed you. ¹²Do this so that you are conducting yourselves decently toward outsiders and are not lacking anything.

HYMN

Take My Life and Let It Be | #444

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 5:21–37

"You have heard that it was said" is the floor of external behavior—a minimum standard. "But I say to you" is an explanation of the ceiling, the ideal of the heart.

"You have heard that it was said to people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment.' ²²But I tell you that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause will be subject to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, 'Raca,' will have to answer to the Sanhedrin. But whoever says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of hell fire.

²³ “So if you are about to offer your gift at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother. Then come and offer your gift.

²⁵ “If someone accuses you, reach an agreement with him quickly, while you are with him on the way. Otherwise your accuser may bring you to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Amen I tell you: You will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ²⁸ but I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to fall into sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ If your right hand causes you to fall into sin, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

³¹ “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ ³² But I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, causes her to be regarded as an adulteress. And whoever marries the divorced woman is regarded as an adulterer.

³³ “Again you have heard that it was said to people long ago, ‘Do not break your oaths, but fulfill your vows to the Lord.’ ³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear at all: not by heaven, because it is God’s throne; ³⁵ and not by earth, because it is his footstool; and not by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ And do not swear by your own head, since you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷ Instead, let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes,’ or ‘No, no.’ Whatever goes beyond these is from the Evil One.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN

O What Precious Balm and Healing | #293

God's power to transform hearts and inspire obedience comes from his Word. As a tree grows and bears fruit with water, Christians can only grow and bear fruit in his Word.

¹How blessed is the man
who does not walk in the advice of the wicked,
who does not stand on the path with sinners,
and who does not sit in a meeting with mockers.

²But his delight is in the teaching of the Lord,
And on his teaching he meditates day and night.

³He is like a tree planted beside streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season,
and its leaves do not wither.
Everything he does prospers.

⁴Not so the wicked!
No, they are like the chaff which the wind blows away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶Yes, the LORD approves of the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked will perish.

What does this Psalm teach me to acknowledge?

How does the Psalmist point to Jesus?

What is the blessing of righteousness in this Psalm?

STATEMENT OF FAITH

P: Let us confess our holy faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed:

C: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

OFFERING

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PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

**C: 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.**

PRAYER

P: Let us give thanks and pray: We thank you, Almighty God, that you have built your church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone. Grant that we may be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you. We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.



C: A - men, a - men, a - men.

CLOSING PRAYER

P: O Lord, we give you our heartfelt thanks that you have taught us what you want us to believe and to do. Help us, O God, by your Holy Spirit, on the basis of Jesus' work, to keep your Word in pure hearts, so that by that means we may be strengthened in faith, perfected in holiness, and comforted in life and death. Amen.

Preacher.....Vicar Max Kerr | **Liturgist**..... Pastor Bernt Tweit
Organist (Sunday).....Karen Merseth | **Pianist (Monday)**..... Jenny Merseth



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