

Ante Communion Service: January 29, 2023
4 Epiphany

Celebrant Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Celebrant Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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. **Amen.**

A moment of silence for self-reflection

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

People **God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.**

Celebrant Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Celebrant 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.**

Let us pray: **Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

First Reading **Micah 6:1-8**

Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. 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.

"O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

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.

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."

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?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
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?

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 15 *Domine, quis habitabit?*

1 Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle? *

who may abide upon your holy hill?

2 Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right, *

who speaks the truth from his heart.

3 There is no guile upon his tongue; he does no evil to his friend; *

he does not heap contempt upon his neighbor.

4 In his sight the wicked is rejected, *

but he honors those who fear the Lord.

5 He has sworn to do no wrong *

and does not take back his word.

6 He does not give his money in hope of gain, *

nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

7 Whoever does these things *

shall never be overthrown.

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.

Second Reading **1 Corinthians 1:18-31**

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. For it is written,

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

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? 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. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

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. 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; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel**Matthew 5:1-12**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 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, Lord Christ.

Sermon**Hymn****The Peace of God**

Acapeldridge

*The peace of God surpasses all that I can understand,
it keeps my heart and mind secure in Jesus’ loving hand.
When all around me falls apart, and fear consumes my soul,
sweet thoughts of peace assure my heart that God is in control.*

*When every breath conceals a sigh and unshed tears increase,
I cry out from this desert land imploring God for peace.
He answers me with gentle words to comfort and to shade,
Let not your heart be troubled, child, nor let it be afraid.*

*When evening casts its shadowed fears, that haunt me through the night,
the peace of God envelopes me, and darkness yields to light.
While smiles may mask my brooding doubts, while sight on earth is dim,
Through faith the God of peace reveals eternal peace with him.*

Nicene Creed

Said by all.

We believe in one God, the Father 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 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.

Prayers of the People

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. *Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For the peace and unity of the world;
That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;
And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
That we may treat your creation with the love of the Creator.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.
Silence. Hear us, Lord; **For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*
We will exalt you, O God our King; **And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. *Silence.*
Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them. **May they rest in your peace eternally.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray together:

**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

We pray together for Christ's presence:

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.
I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen.**

Celebrant: While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,

People: **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.**

Celebrant: Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion.

People: **The love we share becomes bread for the world.**

Blessing

May Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light to the world;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be in you, among you,
and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace and hope and joy to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Lord Bless You and Keep You [Lutkin]

Acapeldridge

*The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace.
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. Amen....*