

**Ante Communion Service: February 12, 2023**  
**6 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: **O God, the strength of all who put their trust in you: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because in our weakness we can do nothing good without you, give us the help of your grace, that in keeping your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

**First Reading Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

Moses said, "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess.

But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses.

Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 119:1-8**      *Beati immaculate*

1 Happy are they whose way is blameless, \*  
**who walk in the law of the Lord!**

2 Happy are they who observe his decrees \*  
**and seek him with all their hearts!**

3 Who never do any wrong, \*  
**but always walk in his ways.**

4 You laid down your commandments, \*  
**that we should fully keep them.**

5 Oh, that my ways were made so direct \*  
**that I might keep your statutes!**

6 Then I should not be put to shame, \*  
**when I regard all your commandments.**

7 I will thank you with an unfeigned heart, \*  
**when I have learned your righteous judgments.**

8 I will keep your statutes; \*  
**do not utterly forsake me.**

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 3:1-9**

Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel****Matthew 5:21-37**

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

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

"Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Sermon****Hymn****All the Way my Savior Leads Me**

*Acapeldridge*

*1 All the way my Savior leads me; what have I to ask beside?  
Can I doubt His tender mercy, who through life has been my guide?  
Heav'nly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in Him to dwell!  
For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well; x2*

*2 All the way my Savior leads me; cheers each winding path I tread,  
Gives me grace for ev'ry trial, feeds me with the living bread;  
Though my weary steps may falter, and my soul athirst may be,  
Gushing from the Rock before me, lo! a spring of joy I see; x2*

*3 All the way my Savior leads me; oh, the fullness of His love!  
Perfect rest to me is promised in my Father's house above:  
When my spirit, clothed immortal, wings its flight to realms of day,  
This my song through endless ages: Jesus led me all the way; x2*

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....*