

3rd Sunday After Epiphany
Adaptive Worship Service
January 24, 2021



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Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Welcome! All the baptized have a calling in God's world. God calls not just pastors and deacons but also the youngest child. The story of the calling of Nathanael plays with the idea of place. Nathanael initially dismisses Jesus because he comes from Nazareth. But where we come from isn't important; it's where—or rather whom—we come to. Jesus refers to Jacob, who had a vision in a place he called “the house of God, and . . . the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:17). Jesus says he himself is the place where Nathanael will meet God.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: GraceCLW.com

ADAPTIVE SERVICE OF THE WORD

GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Introduction to the Lesson: *The book of Jonah is a comedy starring a reluctant prophet who is given a one-sentence message: Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days. Much to Jonah's dismay, the people of Nineveh repent. The point of the story is to get the reader to wrestle with the question “On whom should God have mercy?”*

Reader: Once again the Lord spoke to Jonah. 2 He said, “Go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to the people the message I have given you.” 3 So Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to walk through it. 4 Jonah started through the city, and after walking a whole day, he proclaimed, “In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed!”

5 The people of Nineveh believed God's message. So they decided that everyone should fast, and all the people, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth to show that they had repented.

10 God saw what they did; he saw that they had given up their wicked behavior. So he changed his mind and did not punish them as he had said he would.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 1:43-51

Introduction to the Gospel: *In John's gospel, Jesus' ministry begins with the call of disciples, who then bring others to Jesus. Philip's friend Nathanael moves from skepticism to faith when he accepts the invitation to "Come and see."*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to John the 1st chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Come with me!" (44 Philip was from Bethsaida, the town where Andrew and Peter lived.) 45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one whom Moses wrote about in the book of the Law and whom the prophets also wrote about. He is Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

46 "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," answered Philip.

47 When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, he said about him, "Here is a real Israelite; there is nothing false in him!"

48 Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?"

Jesus answered, "I saw you when you were under the fig tree before Philip called you."

49 "Teacher," answered Nathanael, "you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

50 Jesus said, "Do you believe just because I told you I saw you when you were under the fig tree? You will see much greater things than this!" 51 And he said to them, "I am telling you the truth: you will see heaven open and God's angels going up and coming down on the Son of Man."

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Where Nothing Is Expected

At one of his life's worst intersections, when legs trembled and steps were mired in bogs of doubt, his companion looked into the man's hollowing eyes and said, "I believe in you. I know you." Have you ever needed such a word?

The list is painfully long that names all of the circumstances and places from which it is assumed nothing good can come. Perhaps you have compiled your own catalog of those

who fall short, the irredeemable neighborhoods, or the situations beyond hope in the life of others. Perhaps you find yourself on someone else’s list, among those whose life and plight has been dismissed as “nothing good.” So it was thought of Jesus, whose life was rooted in the hillside soil of a sidetracked town—Nazareth—where nothing remarkable, not much at all, was expected to grow up. That town and its people were on the “unfavorable” list.

It is a riddle of scripture that the likes of Philip (or Peter, John, James, and Andrew—those gospel familiars) would, seemingly without discernment or a second thought, leave everything when Jesus interrupted his settled life and bid him, “Follow me.” For Nathanael, it was different. He took an honest and reasonable step back. He knew all the talk about nothing good coming from Nazareth.

So many of our stories wither and so much of who we are dies when we are confronted with the “I know about you” list of painful failures instead of a loving, hopeful invitation to “come and see” (John 1:46).

There is a mighty mercy, an opening of heaven itself before our very eyes, a retelling of each “Nazareth” in our lives if we dare to “come and see” Jesus. Then that painful, long, imposed or self-inflicted list is no longer our truth because we, in seeing Jesus, begin to see ourselves and others as Jesus does. An epiphany happens: “I believe in you.”

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Spread, Oh, Spread, Almighty Word vs. 1 & 2



- 1 Spread, oh, spread, al - might - y Word, spread the reign of God the Lord.
- 2 Tell of our Re - deem - er's grace, who, to save our hu - man race
- 3 Tell of God the Spir - it giv'n now to guide us on to heav'n,
- 4 Lord of har - vest, great and kind, rouse to ac - tion heart and mind;



Send forth our Cre - a - tor's call, heav - en's gifts ex - tend to all.
and to pay re - bel - lion's price, gave him - self as sac - ri - fice.
strong and ho - ly, just and true, work - ing both to will and do.
let the gath - ring na - tions all see your light and heed your call.

Text: Jonathan F. Bahmaier, 1774–1841; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.
Music: GOTT SEI DANK, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

Prayer Leader: For the church throughout the world, for pastors and teachers, for deacons and deaconesses, and for musicians and servers, that all proclaim the good news of God's reconciling love. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For those who provide leadership in our cities and around the world, for nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, for planning commissions and homeless advocates, that God inspire all people in the just use of wealth. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For those who are sick, distressed, or grieving; for the outcast and all who await relief (especially Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia & family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Missy, Penny, & Henry, Lisa & Ty Hauschild, Bishop Pedro Suarez, Pastor Courtney Erzkus and family, Ralph Burson, Luanne Sekel, Lorraine Chavez, Pat Fredell, Len and Nancy Sagnella, the family and friends of Rosemary Collins and Ethan Burgess, and all those suffering from natural disasters [including all those impacted by COVID-19 and other natural disasters], violence, & terror, and the family & friends of the 350,000+ people in the US & the 2 million+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19), that in the midst of suffering, God's peace and mercy surround them . Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the “Donate” button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Congregation: Amen.

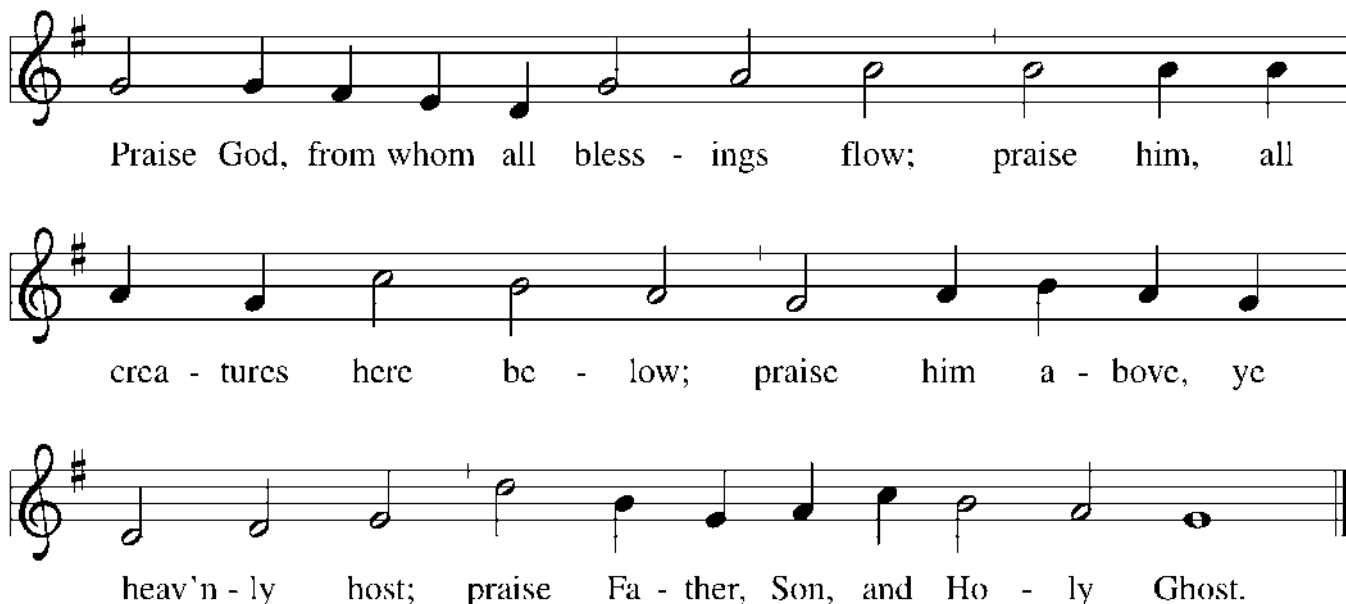
BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace .

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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