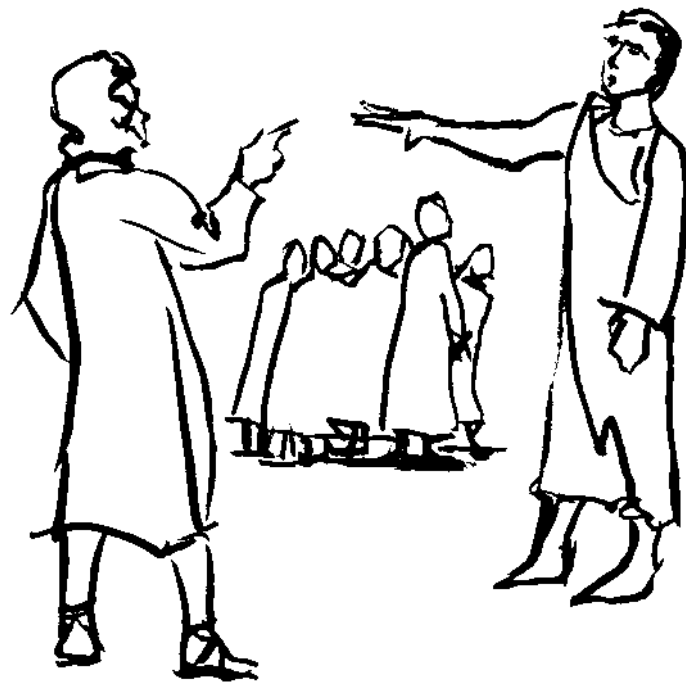


4th Sunday After Epiphany
Adaptive Worship Service
January 31, 2021



1812 North Highland Avenue
Clearwater, Florida 33755
Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! For the church there are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

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: Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Introduction to the Lesson: *Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.*

Reader: Now, concerning what you wrote about food offered to idols.

It is true, of course, that "all of us have knowledge," as they say. Such knowledge, however, puffs a person up with pride; but love builds up. 2 Those who think they know something really don't know as they ought to know. 3 But the person who loves God is known by him.

4 So then, about eating the food offered to idols: we know that an idol stands for something that does not really exist; we know that there is only the one God. 5 Even if there are so-called "gods," whether in heaven or on earth, and even though there are many of these "gods" and "lords," 6 yet there is for us only one God, the Father, who is the Creator of all things and for whom we live; and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created and through whom we live.

7 But not everyone knows this truth. Some people have been so used to idols that to this day when they eat such food they still think of it as food that belongs to an idol; their conscience is weak, and they feel they are defiled by the food. 8 Food, however, will not improve our relation with God; we shall not lose anything if we do not eat, nor shall we gain anything if we do eat.

9 Be careful, however, not to let your freedom of action make those who are weak in the faith fall into sin. 10 Suppose a person whose conscience is weak in this matter sees you, who have so-called “knowledge,” eating in the temple of an idol; will not this encourage him to eat food offered to idols? 11 And so this weak person, your brother for whom Christ died, will perish because of your “knowledge”! 12 And in this way you will be sinning against Christ by sinning against other Christians and wounding their weak conscience. 13 So then, if food makes a believer sin, I will never eat meat again, so as not to make a believer fall into sin.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1:21-28

Introduction to the Gospel: *Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.*

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

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 21 Jesus and his disciples came to the town of Capernaum, and on the next Sabbath Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. 22 The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught, for he wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority.

23 Just then a man with an evil spirit came into the synagogue and screamed, 24 “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you here to destroy us? I know who you are—you are God's holy messenger!”

25 Jesus ordered the spirit, “Be quiet, and come out of the man!”

26 The evil spirit shook the man hard, gave a loud scream, and came out of him. 27 The people were all so amazed that they started saying to one another, “What is this? Is it some kind of new teaching? This man has authority to give orders to the evil spirits, and they obey him!”

28 And so the news about Jesus spread quickly everywhere in the province of Galilee.

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Could He Be the Only One?

Who: Jesus, disciples, observant go-to-worship folks honoring the sabbath. And, yes, a man with an unclean spirit. (Could he be the only such soul in the congregation?)

What: Reading holy words, the domain of scribes and scholars, and a shocking teaching given “with authority.”

Where: In the synagogue.

When: On the sabbath.

Who is this one who cried out in the congregation? Was he a scared thief creeping from his hiding place? A lanky kid exhausted from bawling outside locked doors? An old man gasping beneath piles of ill-gotten wealth? A young woman cursing heaven by day and hell by night for reasons no one dares to name? A stumbling fugitive worn down by a lifetime of running? A robust profiteer, master of deception? An unjust judge solemnly wearing a robe woven from threads of secret favors? A miser in a mansion perched above slums? A hoarder of vengeance nursing metastasized hatreds? Have you seen, met, or known any of these among the congregation?

The one with an unclean spirit cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?” (Mark 1:24). Jesus silences the unclean spirit. But Jesus will not be the destroyer. The crucified one does not crucify. He does not build and fill prisons; he sets free. He does not shun, avoid, and send away; he calls the accursed to himself. He does not condemn the sinner; he rescues and saves.

Yes, they in the synagogue that day and we in the church this day are amazed. Jesus’ teaching with authority contradicts all the rules that anchor us to a spirit of despair. Good news, indeed.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

There Is a Balm in Gilead vs. 1 & 2

Refrain



There is a balm in Gil-c - ad to make the wound-ed whole;



there is a balm in Gil-c - ad to heal the sin - sick soul.



- 1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
- 2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,
- 3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;

Refrain



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."
and if you lack for knowl - edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BALM IN GILEAD. African American spiritual

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 all who share the gospel and proclaim freedom in Christ throughout the world: prophets, teachers, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders; for the church and its ministries. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For the concerns of this congregation: those who travel, those absent from worship, those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries; for the people of God in this place and for other needs in our community. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit: those who are sick and hospitalized, those living with HIV/AIDS, those struggling with mental illness, those who are hungry or homeless, and all in any need (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 400,000+ people in the US & the 2.2 million+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19), for caregivers, hospice workers, and home health aides. 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.

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.

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.

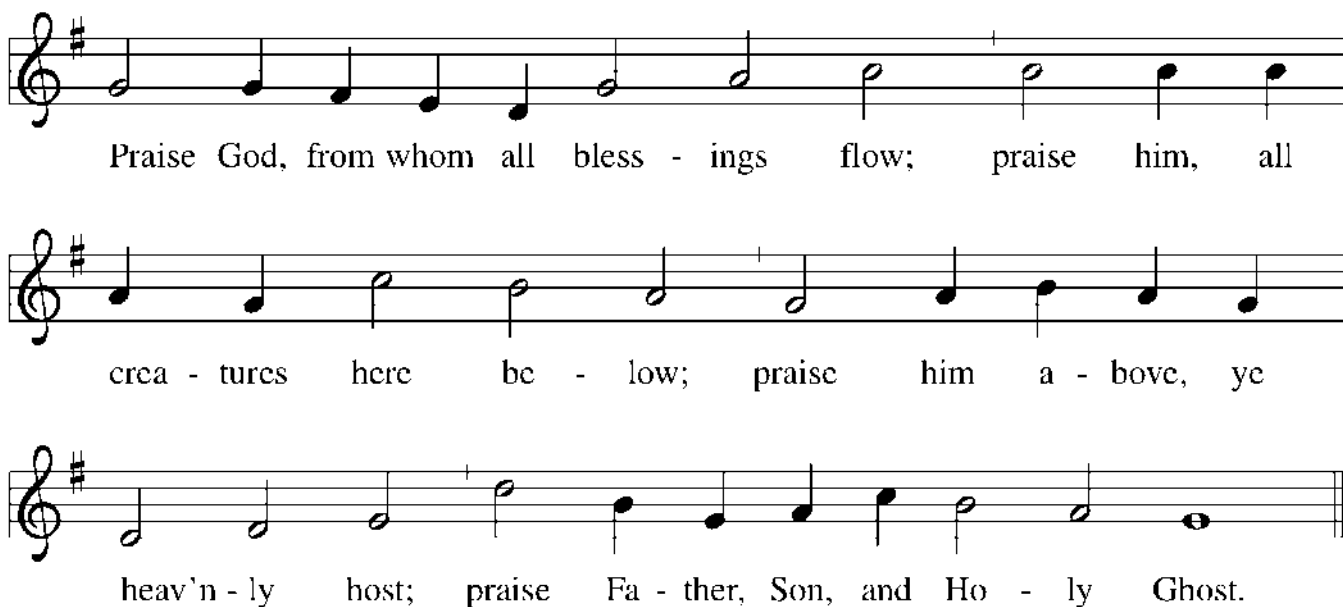
BLESSING

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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