

Sunday, February 1, 2015

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 4



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Church Secretary: Mary Braun

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will LIVE and SERVE through FAITH

we will ACT with LOVE and KINDNESS

we will GIVE hope and SUPPORT to all.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.
Please notify usher if you would like assistance

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INTRODUCTION

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these 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 trumps any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OPENING HYMN:

“Shall We Gather at the River”

#423 ELW

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who spoke light into creation,
who calls us to listen and follow,
who sends us to shine like stars.

Amen.

Let us come before God, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy and merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against our sisters and brothers and against you.
We cherish the values of this world. We cause others to stumble.
The earth is wounded by our excess. Have mercy, O God.
Forgive us, renew us, and raise us up on eagles' wings, that we may do your will with courage and delight.

Amen.

Hear the voice from heaven: "You are my own, my beloved."
God gives power to the weary and strengthens the powerless.
Be cleansed, be healed, for in the name of + Jesus Christ,
I declare to you the forgiveness of your sins and the revealing of God's reign.

Amen.

GREETING

Sisters and brothers in Christ, beloved children of God:
grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**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.**

FIRST READING:

1 Corinthians 8:1–13

Paul is concerned about how 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 a sister or brother to sin.

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth — as in fact there are many gods and many lords — ⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols?

¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

PSALM (ELW):

Psalm 111

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. (Ps. 111:10)

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

²**Great are your works, O LORD, pondered by all who delight in them.**

³Majesty and splendor mark your deeds, and your righteousness endures forever.

⁴**You cause your wonders to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion. R**

⁵You give food to those who fear you, remembering forever your covenant.

⁶**You have shown your people the power of your works in giving them the lands of the nations.**

⁷The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice; all of your precepts are sure.

⁸**They stand fast forever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity. R**

⁹You sent redemption to your people and commanded your covenant forever; holy and awesome is your name.

¹⁰**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise endures forever. R**

GOSPEL:

Mark 1:21–28

The story has barely begun, and already the battle is joined. Jesus sides with humanity against every force that would bring death and disease. These forces recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. This, however, is only the first fight. The war will go on much longer.

²¹They went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.

²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching — with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

SERMON HYMN: “Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling”

#608 ELW

OFFERTORY SONG: “Let Us Break Bread Together”

#471 ELW

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Called to know, love, and follow you, O God, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Prophetic God, inspire your church to speak with authority and act with strength where the powers of evil are most oppressive and human hearts yearn for dignity and compassion. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Drive out the demons of greed and carelessness that wound creation through pollution and over use. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Send prophets of wisdom and courage to our nation. Move us beyond partisan divisions to a common search for liberty and justice. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Healer of our every ill, bring hope and solace to those who struggle with depression. Set free those burdened by feelings of guilt, shame, and worthlessness. Visit the sick with your compassionate Spirit (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Strengthen the witness of preachers, teachers, and all who proclaim the gospel in the assembly and the witness of parish nurses, counselors, spiritual directors, and all who proclaim the gospel in their vocations. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, the saints listened to your voice and you freed them to live and love for you. Open our ears to hear you and follow their example of faith and courage. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Trusting your love and healing, O God, we commend to you all for whom we pray, knowing you will hear and answer, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Response to God's Word Last Week/Month

Attendance: Sunday, January 25, 2015: 85

January Operating: \$10,309

Building Fund for December: \$500

THIS WEEK AT Bethesda February 2 through February 8, 2015

Monday	2/2	7:00 pm	AA/Alanon
Tuesday	2/3	1:00 pm	Double Deck Pinochle
Wednesday	2/4	8:00am	Bible Study
		9:30 am	Hardanger
		11:00am	Bible Study
		1:30-4:30pm	4H
Thursday	2/5	8:00am	ROMEOS
		10:30am	Worship & Music Committee
		12:30 pm	Fun Timers
Friday	2/6	10:00 am	Bone Builders
Sunday	02/8	9:00 am	Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attendance Registry Please sign and pass the attendance registry which you will find in the pew. This is a new process we are trying. This will replace the green cards. Information will be gathered for Evangelism.

Learning Opportunity for Everyone in our Congregation Bishop Patricia Lull from the Saint Paul Area Synod will be the keynote speaker on “Discipleship Today”, along with a variety of practical workshop options to attend. Saturday, March 14, 1-4 pm, Grace Lutheran Church in Mora. There is no charge plus coffee and refreshments will be served.

Coffee Servers Needed Signup sheets are to the left of the serving window by the kitchen. Please check it out and take your turn.

Ash Wednesday Potluck and Service There will be a potluck on Wednesday, February 18, at 5:30pm and Service at 6:30pm and every Wednesday during Lent.

Sunday Services Note that all Sunday Services will be held at 9:00 am during the months of January, February and March.

2015 Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly Quilt Auction is May 1-2 at Breezy Point Resort. The Synod quilt auction team has decided to expand the usual offering of beautiful quilts to ‘quilts and all things quilted!’ Create a quilt or quilt item for the auction or plan to take a spring road trip with friends and attend. Money raised goes to the ministry of the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Contact Amy Loken at 218-525-3933, Ruth Mills at 320-679-3462 or Mary Jo Mettler at 320-279-2010.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY Please remember your can of soup or \$1 offering to our local food shelves.