

Sunday February 12, 2023

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Pastor James Muske

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Prayer Chain Contacts: Char Berg 320-684-2102 or

Darlene Christensen 320-279-0097

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER & CARE LIST:

YEAR END TAX STATEMENTS are available in the Fellowship Hall, please pick them up.

OFFERING ENVELOPES for 2023 are here! Please pick up your envelopes in the Fellowship Hall.

GIVE ELECTRONICALLY There are “Simply Giving” forms available in the Narthex and on our website. Never have to remember your check or envelope on Sundays.

SIGN UP TO RECYCLE There is a signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall to take recycling to Westerland’s in Malmo every 2nd and 4th week of the month. If you can help, please sign up.

HOSPITALITY HOSTS NEEDED! Sign up on the bulletin board next to the serving counter in the Fellowship Hall. There are treats in the freezer to serve if you don’t bake.

ISLE COMMUNITY LENTEN CANTATA “Touched by the Christ” You are invited to join Isle Community Lenten Choir and participate in an enriching musical and spiritual experience. First Rehearsal Feb. 19th at Faith Lutheran Church in Isle. Registration begins at 2:15pm, rehearsals 2:30-4:00pm Sundays in Lent. Performance on Good Friday, April 7, 2023, at 7:30pm. See poster in Narthex for more information.

HEARTLAND CONFERENCE WOMEN’S SPRING GATHERING

Saturday, March 25th, 2023, from 8:30am to 1:00pm at First Lutheran Church in Aitkin. See the poster on the bulletin board in Narthex.

THIS WEEK AT Bethesda

February 13, 2023 – February 19, 2023

Monday	2/13	9:00am	Women’s Devotion
		11:30 am	Cards
		7:00 pm	AA/Alanon
Tuesday	2/14	9:00 am	Quilters
Wednesday	2/15	9:00 am	Women’s Bible Study
Thursday	2/16	8:00 am	ROMEOS
Sunday	2/19	9:00 am	Worship Service <i>in person & live stream</i>

OPENING HYMN: “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

#656 ELW

(Please Stand on the last Verse)



1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris-tian love;
2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
3 We share our mu - tual woes, our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
4 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;



the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
and per - fect love and friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who makes all things new, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One, source of our renewal,

we confess that we are wrapped up in sin, and cannot free ourselves.

We have not practiced your righteousness. Our hearts have turned away from you. For the sake of the world you so love, forgive us, that we may be reconciled to one another for the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Thus says our God: “The former things have come to pass and new things I now declare.” God's mercy makes us new. We are forgiven in the name of ✚ Christ our Savior.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God,

the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Please be seated

SCRIPTURE

FIRST READING: Ruth 1:1-14

In the days when the judges judged, it happened that there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and their two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.

Then Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left, she and her two sons. They abducted Moabite women for themselves; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the second, Ruth. And they lived there about ten years. They also died, both of them, Mahlon and Chilion, and the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.

Then she got up, she and her daughters-in-law and she returned from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Faithful One had considered God's people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they journeyed together on the road to return to the land of Judah.

Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return, each to your mother's house. May the Holy One deal kindly with you, as you have done with the dead and with me. The Saving God grant that you may find security, each in the house of your own husband. Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, "We will return with you to your people." Then Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Are there yet sons in my belly that may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way,

for I am too old to be with a man. Let me say I have hope and even was with a man tonight and give birth to sons. Would you then wait and hope until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Saving God has turned against me.” Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God**

PSALM: Psalm 44:1-4,8,17,23-26 (Read Responsively)

¹ God, with our ears have we heard, our mothers and fathers have told us, the deeds you did in their days, in the days of old:

² You with your own hand displaced nations, and you planted them; you afflicted peoples, and you set them free.

³ For not by their own sword did they inherit the land, nor did their own arm save them; for it was your right hand, and your arm, and the light of your countenance, for you delighted in them.

⁴ You are my Sovereign and my God; you command deliverance repeatedly for the line of Rebekah.

⁸ In God we glory all the day, and give thanks to your Name for all time. *Selah*

¹⁷ All this has come upon us, yet we have not forgotten you, or been false to your covenant.

²³ Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, my ruler? Awaken yourself! Do not cast us off forever!

²⁴ Why do you hide your face, forgetting our affliction and our oppression?

²⁵ For our necks lay upon the dust; our bellies cling to the ground.

²⁶ Raise yourself as our help; redeem us for the sake of your faithful love.

SECOND READING: Ruth 1:15-22

Naomi said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; go back after your sister-in-law.” But Ruth said, “Do not press me to forsake you or to turn back from following you. Where you go, I will go, where you abide, I will abide; your people shall be my people, and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die, there will I be buried. May the Holy One of Old do thus and more to me, if even death parts me from you.”

When Naomi saw that Ruth had strengthened herself to go with her, she ceased speaking to her. So the two of them traveled until coming to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was buzzing over them; and the women said, “Is this Naomi?” Naomi said to the women, “Call me not Naomi, call me Mara for Shaddai has greatly embittered me. I went away full, but the Holy One of Sinai brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Holy One has spoken against me, and Shaddai has brought evil upon me.”

So Naomi turned with Ruth the Moabite woman, her daughter-in-law, with her; she was the one who came back from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God**

Please stand for the gospel

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:43-48

Glory to you, O Lord

“You all have heard that it was said, ‘*You shall love your neighbor* and hate your enemy.’ Yet I say to you all: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of the One in heaven who begot you; for the sun – which belongs to God – rises on the evil and on the good, and God rains on the righteous and on the unrighteous woman or man. For if you all love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your sisters and brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Sovereign is perfect.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: “O GOD, MAY WE HOLD ON TO LOVE”

(sung to the tune of "Though I May Speak")

O God, may we hold on to love —and in the times when love is lost, send down your mercy like a flood and show us love is worth the cost.

When righteous anger fills our plate and harms us—body, mind and soul—may we forgive and so create a feast that makes the wounded whole.

May we let go of might-have-beens and leave regrets, and choose to live. We give you all our pain and sins — for you will heal, and you forgive!

May we push back at all the fear that, like a storm, is raging round. May we work hard for justice here till walls of hate come tumbling down.

God, give us grace to set aside the things that hurt and tear apart, till we find love has opened wide a path to life, a whole new start.

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Inspire your church that it may be a sign of life throughout the world. From the exploration of faith with children and new believers to missionaries and bishops, shape lives of faithfulness, so that all find abundant life in your ways.

Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Nourish your creation. Accompany all who plant and water. Bless the work of farmers; provide for subsistence farmers facing drought and climate change. Guide the work of agricultural scientists toward sustainable ways to feed the world. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Give growth where there seems to be no hope for life. In nations and regions where reconciliation seems impossible (especially), empower peacemakers with your Spirit. Where death holds sway through violence, disease, and hunger, equip relief workers to bring hope. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Nurture all in need (especially). Bring healing to all who experience trauma caused by systems of injustice and destructive relationships. Give courage to

those struggling to repent and those seeking reconciliation. Sustain all who work for restoration (local restorative efforts may be named). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Encourage this congregation. Call us to a common purpose and keep us from quarrelling. Turn our hearts toward you and guide our leaders, so that our choices may be lifegiving for all. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Thanks be to you for the lives of all who have died in Christ. Teach us to follow them in your ways and gather us with them into the promise of eternal life with you. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated for the passing of the offering plate

OFFERING - *Please stand as the ushers bring the offering to the altar.*

OFFERING PRAYER

Liberating God,

you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power, and shape us as people of your justice and freedom. You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior, Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION to COMMUNION

Come and taste the joy of God!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy One,

we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table. Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you. Amen.

BLESSING

The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod †
bless, strengthen, and uphold you, today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN: “Your Love is Everlasting” Dakota Road

Since time began, through centuries God's love is everlasting
To distant unknown galaxies God's love is everlasting
Splendor springs forth 'cross the land God's love is everlasting
Abundance, sharing hand in hand God's love is everlasting

Chorus:

Your love (your love) is lasting Your love is everlasting
Your love (your love) is lasting Your love is everlasting

A mother's womb, a brand new life God's love is everlasting
An empty tomb, the risen Christ God's love is everlasting
Weeping may last for the night God's love is everlasting
But joy breaks forth with morning light God's love is everlasting (Chorus)

Signs of hope, a voice of peace God's love is everlasting
The prophet's cry for war to cease God's love is everlasting
For the down and out, for the high and proud God's love is everlasting
Come all you people shout out loud God's love is everlasting (Chorus)

Words and Music by Hans Peterson and Larry Olson

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

*Visitors! It has been great having you join us for worship!
Please come again.*

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK

Music: Digital Hymnal

Ushers: Mark & Mary Vukelich

Greeters: Carolyn Morris

Hospitality:

Thank you for your service!

Response to God's Word Last Week

Attendance: Sunday, February 5, 2023: - In Person: 9:00am: xx Online: xx