

**Worship Plan for Sunday, January 29, 2023**  
**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 4**  
**ELW Holy Communion Setting Nine**

United in Faith Lutheran Church, Chicago  
Rev. Carla Thompson Powell, pastor

Musician: Richard Trost  
Assisting Minister: Dian Hoyem

**Introduction to the day**

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

**PRELUDE**

**GATHERING**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

**C: Amen.**

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin. Holy One, source of our renewal,

**C: 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.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**



# GATHERING SONG *God, We Gather as Your People: For All the Children* (ACS 1038)

## God, We Gather As Your People



1 God, we gath - er as your peo - ple to raise our song a -  
2 Oh, we sing for all the chil - dren, that one day they be  
3 Oh, we pray for all the young lives cut short by fear and  
4 God, we're work - ing for the fu - ture when chil - dren far and



bove, and we dare to claim the prom - ise of your love.  
free; and we sing for gen - er - a - tions yet to be,  
shame, so a - fraid of who they are and whom they love.  
wide can . . . live their lives with dig - ni - ty and pride.



Though the day may not yet be here, we  
that they nev - er have a rea - son to  
May the mes - sage now be ban - ished that your  
As they grow in strength and stat - ure, may they



trust it soon will be, when your chil - dren will be free.  
doubt that they are blest. May they, in your love, find rest.  
love is for the few; may their faith in you re - new.  
join us hand in hand, as a - gainst all hate we stand.



*Refrain*

Oh, may our hearts and minds be o - pened, fling the church doors o - pen



wide. May there be room e - nough for ev - 'ry - one in - side.



For in God there is a wel - come, in God we all be -



long. May that wel - come be our song.

Text: David Lohman, b. 1961

Music: WELCOME BE OUR SONG, David Lohman

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## GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

## KYRIE (ELW p. 193) & GLORY TO GOD (ELW p. 195)

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. **C: Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## WORD

### FIRST READING: Micah 6:1-8

<sup>1</sup>Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup>Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth;  
for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel.

<sup>3</sup>“O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

<sup>4</sup>For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery;  
and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

<sup>5</sup>O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,

and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

<sup>6</sup>“With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

<sup>7</sup>Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

<sup>8</sup>He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

A: Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 15 (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may abide upon your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup>**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right, who speak the truth from their heart;**

<sup>3</sup>they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends; they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup>**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD. They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

<sup>5</sup>They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

## **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31**

<sup>18</sup>The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”  
<sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup>Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup>He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.” A: Word of God, word of life. C: **Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 198)**

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12**

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew. C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

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

## SERMON – Pastor Carla Thompson Powell

### HYMN OF THE DAY *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* (ELW 733)

#### APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.\***

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

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\*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need. Cultivate humility in your church. In gatherings of every size, teach us to boast only in the cross. Shape your church to be people of kindness, generosity, and justice. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: The foundations of the earth bear witness to your faithfulness; the mountains and hills echo with your holiness. When we mistreat your creation, show us the error of our ways. Inspire us with reverent awe to honor all you have made. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: You make foolish the wisdom of the world. Raise up honorable leaders who seek justice, love mercy, and pursue peace. Frustrate plans that are corrupt, wicked, and self-seeking. Prosper the work of peacemakers. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: Bless all whom the world rejects. Accompany those who are regarded as foolish, weak, low, and despised; reveal your power and presence at work where it is least expected. Give your life, strength, and wisdom to all in need. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: As with your people Israel, remind this congregation of your saving acts. Remind us how your faithfulness brought us through difficulties and sustained us despite our weaknesses. Establish the cross as the center of our life together. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: Praise to you for your blessed saints in every time and place (*especially*). Trusting you accompanied them in poverty, persecution, and in every trial, we trust you abide with your people always. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: *For whom else do we pray...*

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

#### MEAL OFFERING

## OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray. **C: 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.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

### DIALOGUE - SUNG

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 200)**

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all.

By your powerful word you created all things.

Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son.

He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his preaching and healing, his dying and rising,  
and his promise to come again, we await that day when all the universe  
will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food,  
we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church, both now and forever. **C: Amen**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: Come and taste the joy of God!

## **LAMB OF GOD (ELW p. 201)**

## **COMMUNION**

*ALL ARE WELCOME AT GOD'S TABLE OF GRACE.*

(Please discard your plastic communion cup into the basket or empty tray.)

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Let us pray.

**C: 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.**

## **SENDING**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **FAREWELL & GODSPEED**

*A reading from Isaiah:* Thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. (*Isaiah 43:1-3*)

A: When you came to United in Faith, we rejoiced to welcome you into the mission we share as the people of God. In this community you have come to know and to share in God's loving purpose for you and for all creation. God has blessed you in this community, and God has blessed us through you. Let us pray.

Eternal God, we thank you for Pastor Carla and her family  
and for the time we have shared with them.

As they have been a blessing to us,  
so now send them forth to be a blessing to others;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C: Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

P: The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod ✝ bless,  
strengthen, and uphold you, today and always. **C: Amen**

**SENDING SONG** *The Lord Now Sends Us Forth: Enviado soy de Dios* (ELW 538)

## **DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

## **POSTLUDE**