

WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

THE BIBLE – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

GOD – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

MAN – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

SIN – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

REDEMPTION – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

FAITH – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

THE CHURCH – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

SACRAMENTS – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper communicants receive in, with and under the bread and wine also Christ’s body and blood. Believing communicants receive this for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

RESURRECTION – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 5, 2023

INTROIT

Psalm 119:9-16; Antiphon: Psalm 119:12

Blessed are you, O LORD;

teach me your statutes!

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

With my whole heart I seek you;

let me not wander from your commandments!

I have stored up your word in my heart,

that I might not sin against you.

Blessed are you, O LORD;

teach me your statutes!

With my lips I declare

all the rules of your mouth.

In the way of your testimonies I delight

as much as in all riches.

I will meditate on your precepts

and fix my eyes on your ways.

I will delight in your statutes;

I will not forget your word.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Blessed are you, O LORD;

teach me your statutes!

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace, we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

C **Amen**

GRADUAL

Psalm 117:1-2a; Psalm 96:8

Praise the LORD, all nations!

Extol him, all peoples!

For great is his steadfast love toward us,

and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

bring an offering, and come into his courts!

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition: **P** Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**

Isaiah 58:3-9a (ESV)

³ ‘Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?’

Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers.

⁴ Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist.

Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high.

⁵ Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶ “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

⁸ Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily;

your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

^{9a} Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

1 Corinthians 2:1-16 (ESV)

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I was with

you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

⁶ Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,

nor the heart of man imagined,

what God has prepared for those who love him”—

¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The

spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

Matthew 5:13-20 (ESV)

¹³ [Jesus said:] “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good

works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Isaiah 58:3–9a

1 Corinthians 2:1–12 (13–16)

Matthew 5:13–20

The Righteousness of Christ

Jesus warns that “*unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven*” (Matt. 5:20), but He also calls His imperfect people “*the salt of the earth*” and “*the light of the world*” (Matt. 5:13, 14). That’s because the Lord Jesus came not to abolish the Law or the Prophets, “*but to fulfill them*” (Matt. 5:17) in perfect faith and love. Since He does and teaches all of God’s commandments, He is “*called great in the kingdom of heaven*” (Matt. 5:19). God manifests His “*demonstration of the Spirit and of power*” in “*Jesus Christ and Him crucified*” (1 Cor. 2:2-4) and through the preaching of the Gospel gives His “*secret and hidden wisdom*” (1 Cor. 2:7). Christ gives this perfect righteousness to His people and it leads them to true fasting, which is “*to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free*” (Is. 58:6) and “*to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house*” (Is. 58:7).

Next Week’s Readings from God’s Word:

February 12: Sixth Sunday after Epiphany (A)

Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 119:1-8 (119:1); 1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37