

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).

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

January 29, 2023

INTROIT

Psalm 1:1-5; Antiphon: Psalm 1:6

*For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

*Blessèd is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.*

In all that he does, he prospers.

*The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.*

*Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*

**Glorify 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.**

*The LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Almighty God,
You know we live in the midst of so many dangers
that in our frailty we cannot stand upright.
Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers
and carry us through all temptations;
through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

C **Amen**

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,*

C **hear our prayer.**

Next Week's Readings from God's Word:

February 5: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany (A)

Isaiah 58:3-9a; Psalm 112:1-9 (112:4); 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

Micah 6:1-8 (ESV)

^{6:1}Hear what the LORD says:

Arise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

² Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,

for the LORD has an indictment against his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³ “O my people, what have I done to you?

How have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴ 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.

⁵ O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab devised,
and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him,

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

⁶ “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?

⁷ 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?”

⁸ He has told you, O man, 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?

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (ESV)

¹⁸ For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

¹⁹ For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰ 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? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ 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; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us

wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Matthew 5:1-12 (ESV)

Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

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

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

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

¹¹ “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Micah 6:1–8

1 Corinthians 1:18–31

Matthew 5:1–12

God Manifests His Glory in the Humility and Weakness of Christ Crucified

The Lord tells His people, *“I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery”* (Micah 6:4). By the sacrifice of His beloved Son He has redeemed us from our slavery of sin and death; He has forgiven our transgressions by the shedding of His blood. His great mercy and salvation lead us *“to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly”* with our God (Micah 6:8). We boast only in the Incarnate and Crucified Lord Jesus. He is *“the power of God and the wisdom of God”* (1 Cor. 1:24). He is our life and salvation, *“our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption”* (1 Cor. 1:30). Now He opens His mouth and teaches us His wisdom. By His Cross and Passion the kingdom of heaven is ours, we receive mercy and are satisfied, we see God, and we are called sons of God in Christ. *“Blessed are you,”* therefore, *“when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely”* on account of Christ (Matt. 5:11).