

Sunday, February 3, 2019
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

PRELUDE

"I Love to Tell the Story"

Robert Elmor

*GATHERING SONG

"Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak"

ELW 676

Lord, speak to us, that we may speak
in living echoes of your tone;
as you have sought, so let us seek
your straying children, lost and lone.

Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead
the wand'ring and the wav'ring feet;
oh, feed us, Lord, that we may feed
your hung'ring ones with manna sweet.

Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach
the precious truths which you impart;
and wing our words, that they may reach
the hidden depths of many a heart.

Oh, fill us with your fullness, Lord,
until our very hearts o'erflow
in kindling thought and glowing word,
your love to tell, your praise to show.

*GREETING

☞ *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

☞ And also with you.

*GLORY TO GOD

pg. 205

Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.
Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:
we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.

For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

☐ *Almighty and ever-living God,*

☑ **increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

ANTHEM

“The Gift of Love”
Chancel Choir

Hal Hopson

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 1:4-10

God calls Jeremiah to be a prophet and consecrates him in the womb. Jeremiah’s task is to preach God’s word in the midst of the difficult political realities of his time, before the Babylonian exile. He is to make God known not only to Judah, but also to the nations.

⁴Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

⁶Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” ⁷But the LORD said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
says the LORD.”

⁹Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me,
“Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to pull down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

Reflection

This text is the call of Jeremiah. What does the Lord tell Jeremiah about his calling? (verses 4-5) What is Jeremiah’s response? (verse 6) We might paraphrase what Jeremiah said as, “Wait! I’m not ready! Send someone else! Or maybe I’ll be ready when I’m older and can speak with a glib tongue.” The Lord has an answer for Jeremiah’s excuses. What is it? (verse 7) What is the Lord’s promise to Jeremiah? (verse 8) What does the Lord give to Jeremiah? (verse 9) What is his assignment? (verse 10) This reminds me of what Jesus told the disciples in Mark 13:11. You don’t have to worry about what you will say, because the Holy Spirit will give you the words. Jeremiah indeed had words that would pluck up, pull down, destroy, and overthrow, and he got into trouble with the authorities when he spoke them, and he didn’t like what he had to

say. How are we to hear the words the Lord spoke to Jeremiah? Are there any ways in which you are called to be a prophet? Who do you know who is a prophet today? What is the message they are speaking?

Psalm 71:1-6

¹In you, O LORD, have I | taken refuge;
let me never be | put to shame.

²**In your righteousness, deliver me and | set me free;
incline your ear to | me and save me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to | keep me safe;
you are my crag | and my stronghold.

⁴**Deliver me, my God, from the hand | of the wicked,
from the clutches of the evildoer and | the oppressor.**

⁵For you are my hope, | O Lord GOD,
my confidence since | I was young.

⁶**I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have |
been my strength;
my praise shall be al- | ways of you.**

Reflection

This psalm might have been written by Jeremiah or someone like him. What is the main concern of the psalmist? (verses 1-4) What gives the psalmist confidence? (verses 5-6) How does the psalmist respond to God's strength? Can you think of a time in your life when you have needed to know that God is with you? How did you pray at that time? How does God's strength continue to sustain you?

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Christians in Corinth prided themselves on their spiritual gifts. Paul reminds them that God gives us many gifts through the Holy Spirit, but the purpose behind all of them is love, the kind of love that God showed us in Jesus Christ.

¹If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Reflection

This chapter is one of the most famous in the Bible. It is often used in weddings as a reading, very appropriately, for it outlines the ways spouses are to treat each other in love. I don't think, though, that this was Paul's intent in this part of his letter to the Corinthians. He suggests that in the church we are to treat one another with mutual self-giving concern and care. As you read this chapter, which of Paul's admonitions in it strikes you most forcefully? How might these words help us to think about how we all belong together in the church?

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

pg. 205

**Alleluia! Lord and Savior:
open now your saving word.
Let it burn like fire within us;
speak until our hearts are stirred.
Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the
good news that you bring.**

***GOSPEL**

Luke 4:21-30

People in Jesus' hometown are initially pleased when he says that God will free the oppressed. Their pleasure turns to rage when he reminds them that God's prophetic mission typically pushes beyond human boundaries so that mercy and healing are extended to those regarded as outsiders.

²¹Then [Jesus] began to say to [all in the synagogue in Nazareth,] "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" ²⁴And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

Reflection

The gospel reading last week was the beginning of this passage, in which Jesus reads the Scripture from Isaiah that he either chose, or that was assigned for the day. Reread the scripture (see Luke 4:18-19). What does he say about the promise in this Scripture? (verse 21) As I read the story, I think the people in the synagogue were proud of him—such a great preacher!—but didn't take what he said seriously. It seems like they responded as we do when we hear Dr. Martin Luther King's speech/sermon about his dream—what a beautiful speech! I hope it happens that way someday. The people responded in much the same way Jeremiah responded to the Lord's call: Sounds good. But not me—I'm not ready for this. Jesus was

reading their minds—not what they said (“hometown proud!”) but what they were thinking. (“Nice sermon! Now go somewhere else if you want to see it happen.”) Jesus, I think, is responding to their reluctance to see things change, and he looks back at the time of Elijah, who found refuge not in his own country but far away. This reminds me of Paul’s word to the people of Corinth in 2 Corinthians 6:1-2. It’s easy to admire the words, as we do MLK’s, but put off anything that needs to be done until later, because we’re not ready now. Jesus is calling on those who hear him, from his hometown, to act NOW, because no matter what we think, God is ready now! (verses 23-27) What was their reaction? (verses 28-29) May prayer for all of us, especially me, is that we will be ready when God calls us, and we will hear clearly what God is saying to us!

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

“Love Never Ends”

Rev. Roger Lenander

SONG OF THE DAY

“How Deep the Father’s Love For Us”

**How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory**

**Behold the Man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished**

**I will not boast in anything
No gifts no pow’r no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom**

***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!**

***PRAYER SONG**

"Come and Fill Our Hearts"

ELW 528

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
Alleluia!**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

United as one body in Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Inspire us by your Spirit as we respond to your call. When we are reluctant, strengthen us; when we are doubtful, encourage us. Above all, let your love shine through us. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For the earth. For mountains and prairies, cities and farms, rain forests and deserts. Awaken us to the mystery and diversity of your creation. Nurture all living things and protect your creation from harm. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For the nations. Kindle within us a spirit of respect for one another. Protect those fleeing their homes to escape danger or oppression. Bring peace to communities torn apart by warfare and violence. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For those in need. Protect those who suffer abuse and encourage those who lack hope. Guide all who provide medical care. Comfort those who grieve and bring healing to the sick *especially Dorothy, Irene, Jeff, Trina, Linda, Elaine, Lisa and her baby Lara*, and for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (pause for 10 seconds). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For this assembly. Bless our children and our elders. Gather us into a community guided by your love. Inspire in us a spirit of hospitality and kindness. Teach us to bear one another's burdens with compassion. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for those who have gone before us in faith, and who now see you face-to-face. Inspire us by their example and bring us into your everlasting presence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive our prayers and fill us with the radiance of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen!**

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

☞ *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

☞ **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

"Here I Am, Lord"

ELW 574

"I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
my hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?"

Refrain

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

"I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

"I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

OFFERTORY RESPONSE *(final refrain)*

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P *God of all creation,*

G **all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

***DIALOGUE**

P *The Lord be with you.*

G **And also with you.**

P *Lift up your hearts.*

G **We lift them to the Lord.**

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

G **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**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,**

heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *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.*

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P *Gathered together in one baptism, 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 to the table. Feast on God's abundant life for you.*

***BLESSING**

P *The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and
keep you in his grace.*

C **Amen!**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P *We thank you, O God,*

C **that you have fed us at your banqueting table with bread and wine beyond compare, the very life of Christ for us. Send your Spirit with us now, that we may set the captive free, use your gifts to build one another up, and in everything reflect your glory revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

***BENEDICTION**

P *The God of glory dwell in you richly,
name you beloved,
and shine brightly on your path;
and the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.*

C **Amen!**

***SENDING SONG**

“Let It Be Said of Us”

Let it be said of us
That the Lord was our passion
That with gladness we bore
Ev'ry cross we were given
That we fought the good fight
That we finished the course
Knowing within us
The pow'r of the risen Lord

Refrain

Let the cross be our glory
And the Lord be our song
By mercy made holy
By the Spirit made strong
Let the cross be our glory
And the Lord be our song
'Til the likeness of Jesus
Be through us made known
Let the cross be our glory
And the Lord be our song

Let it be said of us
We were marked by forgiveness
We were known by our love
And delighted in meekness
We were ruled by His peace
Heeding unity's call

Joined as one body
That Christ would be seen by all *Refrain*

***DISMISSAL**

℘ *Go in peace. Christ is your light.*

☩ **Thanks be to God!**