

2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
January 14, 2024



We are the Body of Christ

Christ Lutheran Church – St. Catharines, ON

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Thursday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon
Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor: Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) sr.pastor@christlutheransc.ca
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A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKT19c_OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: Almighty and eternal God, Governor of all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people, and grant us Your peace in our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.


DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Mark 2: 18-22 Wed.: Matt. 19: 3-9 Friday: John 1: 15-18
Tuesday: Mark 3: 1-6 Thurs: Matt. 5: 17-26 Saturday: Acts 7:35-40; 51-53

Musicians: Mayumi Munoz
Reader: Paul Mason
Greeters: Judy Slingerland

EVENTS THIS WEEK:

Today: 9:00 – 9:50 a.m. – Sunday School, Confirmand/Youth Chat and Coffee Hour
10:00 a.m. – Worship with Communion
Monday: 10:00-11:00 a.m. – Luther Manor Bible Study
Tuesday: 9:30-11:00 a.m. – Precious Moments
7:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Mary Martha “Staying Safe” Presentation – All Welcome!!



JANUARY 2024

SUN	SUN	SUN	SUN
7 Epiphany & Jesus' Baptism Baptismal Remembrance Service	14 2 nd Epiphany LSB setting 1 Communion	21 3 rd Epiphany Scripture Service – Praise Band	28 4 th Epiphany. LSB DS setting 4 Communion

YOU ARE INVITED!!
Every Sunday!!
Hope to see you downstairs
for Coffee, Tea & Treats!!
9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.
(during Sunday School & CHAT)
Anyone willing to help serve or
bring treats, please contact:
Judy Mason 905-641-7546



SUNDAY SCHOOL: today we learn about Jesus' baptism in the River Jordan, the heavens open, the Spirit descends and the Father speaks: "You are My beloved Son". Jesus goes from the waters of baptism to the wilderness, where He faces temptations from the devil. Jesus resists each one as He speaks the truth of God's Word against the lies of Satan. How can we use God's Word as we defend our faith?

Bible verse for today is: *"I have called you by name you are Mine."* Isaiah 43:1

CONFIRMAND & YOUTH CHAT: Today and on the second & fourth Sundays of the month. Join youth leader Dan Figueroa. We will meet in the youth room during S. School from 9 - 9:50 a.m.



Please join the Mary Martha/LWML-C on Tuesday, January 16th – 7- 8 p.m. – "Staying Safe Presentation"
 Please join us for a presentation by Constable Michael Matwijow and his partner Constable Daryl Landry of the Niagara Regional Police, Community Oriented Response and Engagement unity (CORE). They will be speaking about what they do and the services they provide as well as providing us with information regarding current crime trends in our area and the preventative measures that we can take to reduce the chances of us being victimized. Everyone is welcome to attend!!

SOUL resumes **January 25, 10 -11:30 AM.**

VOTERS MEETING: Save the Date! Our next congregational voters meeting will be **Sunday, February 4, 2024**, immediately following Worship Service. Main item for discussion/approval will be the 2024 budget.

The Fellowship Committee will serve a **light lunch** after the service prior to the Voter's Meeting. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for you to sign if you will be attending. Thank you!!

CALLING ALL YOUTH!!!!!! Calling all youth, confirmants & friends: **February 11th** we are planning a fun afternoon of competition, problem-solving and an all-round unique experience at **"ACTIVATE."**

Take a look at this video to see what it's all about!

<https://youtu.be/LV4hfG5eGXU?si=Q6vjF8rRESdZmC1w>

Cost is just \$25/ person thanks to the **Parish Ed Committee.**

Simply register by the end of this month by using the link here: <https://bxzq0rfovsd.typeform.com/to/Hf6hRNYU>

Hope you can join us!



FAMILY NIGHT UNO & SUPPER

Singing & Devotions
Saturday, February 24, 4:00 p.m.

The Parish Ed Committee will provide a meal of TACOS and Drinks
Please bring a dessert OR munchies to share!!

Whether you are a family of 1 or 10 we hope you will join us!

PLEASE SIGN UP IN NARTHEX

12th Regular Convention of Lutheran Women's Missionary League-Canada: July 11-14, 2024, at the Four Points by Sheraton in London, ON.

The convention theme is based on Psalm 149:1 'Sing to the Lord a new song'

Keynote Speaker will be Deb Burma who is a Christian author and LWML seminar leader. Special Interest Speakers will also tell of their cross-cultural ministry with the use of singing and music.

The mites gathered throughout the past three years provided such great blessings to people around the world, from local support for a Bethlehem Walk in BC to International support of deaconesses in Nicaragua and Cambodia. Rev. Mark Smith will bring news of the work that is happening through those missions. Mission Grants for the next triennium will be voted on.

If you would be interested in attending, either in person or online, speak to Lorraine Kaija.

Registration forms will be available in the coming months. You can also check out the LWML web site lutheranwomen.ca

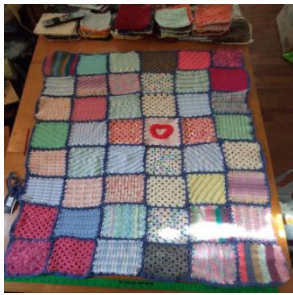
Last Sunday Attendance: Attn: Jan 7, 2024 — 10 a.m. – 85

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or - (--)</u>
Current		2,445.35	2,598.61	
LCC Missions		224.00	224.00	
Property Improvement:		74.00	74.00	

THANK YOU CHRIST LUTHERAN CONGREGANTS: The participation in the recent photo directory sittings was wonderful. To have a church family album we need you and will be a great view of our present church community. We look forward receiving this in April.

2024 DONATION ENVELOPES: Your 2024 donation envelopes are in your mailbox for pick-up! If you do not have a mailbox, please check the table in the Narthex. If you don't have a mailbox, and you would like one, please contact our secretary Pat at secretary@christlutheransc.ca

TECHNOLOGY ENTHUSIASTS – The Worship Committee is seeking individuals who would be interested in learning how to operate the recording equipment used for our worship services. Training will be provided. Should you have any questions or require more information please speak to either Tom Kuhl, Theresa Mason or Pastor Todd.



Granny Squares still needed: This is an ongoing project we will gratefully accept more completed 6 inch knitted or crocheted Granny Squares in any pattern or colour. We would also appreciate any yarn that you may have, leftover yarn or full balls of yarn. In the narthex there is a white cube with yarn and hooks that you are welcome to take (or donate). There is another basket for completed squares. It has been about 6 months that we have been able to show Christ's love in our Caring Squares blankets. (23 blankets to date!) Thank you for donating yarn or completed squares as we continue with this project! Praise God! If you have any questions, call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

USED STAMPS: Start saving and collecting your used stamps now! They will be gathered at the LWML-C Convention and donated to a charity who will in turn use them to purchase spiritual resources like Bibles.

Dear Brothers and Sisters at Christ,

January 14, 2024

It has been quite an adventure for Kareem, Hamida, Ameer, and Asser since arriving on November 23rd. They have enjoyed meeting you here at Christ at worship times and also the other social events over the Advent and Christmas Season.

Ameer started grade 1 at Harriet Tubman Elementary School 2 weeks before the Christmas break, and loves school, and is so happy to be back in class. Asser has been to Precious Moments here at Christ and also to EARLY-ON. Now that the Christmas break is over hopefully he will be able to attend more. Kareem and Hamida are on the list at St.

John for English as a Second Language schooling. They said this week Hamida may be able to start in the next week or two. Kareem will be later as the wait list for his class is longer. Asser celebrated his 4th birthday on January 9th. He had a cake on January 3rd and one on January 8th. Ameer's 6th birthday was on November 15th so he missed celebrating it here in Canada, so he also got a cake to celebrate it with Asser.



Thank you to everyone who helped furnish the home for the Al Humaidi family. The boys are using and enjoying the quilts Gloria made. They have also been enjoying the gifts of toys given to them.

Many things have been accomplished. They were registered for OHIP and have their new cards. Bank accounts have been opened for Kareem and Hamida, as well as Social Insurance Numbers for both of them. An Ontario ID card has been obtained for Kareem, and we will apply for one for Hamida as well. They both had their language tests early in December which made them eligible for the ESL training. The boys have dental appointments with Niagara Dental health this coming week. The family has been registered with Niagara Folk Arts for settlement help. Kareem has already met with them and has two more appointments this coming week. They will assist Kareem with putting together a resume for job applications. Kareem is anxious to get a job so if anyone has any leads please let one of the committee members know. He needs to take one step at a time and have some additional English training. and comprehension. Immigration Canada decided that Kareem's photo for his Permanent Resident card was not good enough, so this week he had to have his photo retaken and submitted to the processing centre. Niagara Folk Arts told us this has been happening quite often with new immigrants, so hopefully we won't have to do it for Hamida and the boys. Kareem is continually expressing his thankfulness for everything you have done for him and his family. Please continue to pray for them as they continue to make their new home here in St. Catharines with us.



God's Blessings,

Your Al Humaidi Settlement Committee.

HOLY COMMUNION
LSB DIVINE SERVICE SETTING ONE

The 2nd Sunday After The Epiphany
January 14, 2024 + 10 AM Worship

OPENING HYMN:

"Come, Follow Me"

Tune: Machs Mit Mir, Gott

**"Come, follow me," said Christ, the Lord, "All in my way abiding;
Your selfishness throw overboard, Oh, hear my call and guiding.
Oh, bear your crosses, and confide in My ex-ample as your guide.**

**"I Am the Light; I Light the Way, a godly life dis-play-ing;
I help you walk as in the day; I keep your feet from stray-ing.
I Am the Way, and well I show how you should journey here below.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**But if we confess our sins, God, Who is faithful and just, will forgive our
sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

[Brief silence for reflection]

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father:

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We
have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, by what we have done
and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole
heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We justly deserve Your
present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have
mercy on us, forgive us, renew us and lead us, so that we may delight in Your
will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your Holy Name. Amen.**

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake, forgives
you all of your sin. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I
therefore forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of
the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SPOKEN KYRIE

O Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy & give us Your peace. Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE:



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His peo - ple on earth.



C Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa - ther:



We wor-ship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer.



For You a-lone are the Ho-ly One, You a-lone are the Lord,



You a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Holy God, our strength and our redeemer, by Your Spirit dwell within us all of our days, that through Your grace we may worship You and faithfully serve You, follow You and joyfully receive You; through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE WORD

The Old Testament: *1 Samuel 3: 1-20*

The boy Samuel served the Lord under Eli. In those days the Lord did not speak directly to people very often. There were very few visions. Eli's eyes were so weak he was almost blind. One night he was lying in bed. ³ Samuel was also in bed in the Lord's Holy Tent. The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy Tent. God's lamp was still burning. Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "I am here!" He ran to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me." But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." So Samuel went back to bed. The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel again went to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me." Again Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." Samuel did not yet know the Lord. The Lord had not spoken directly to him yet. The Lord called Samuel for the third time. Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, "I am here. You called me." Then Eli realized the Lord was calling the boy. So he told Samuel, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in bed. The Lord came and stood there. He called as he had before. He said, "Samuel, Samuel!" Samuel said, "Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening." The Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am going to do something in Israel. It will shock those who hear about it. At that time I will do to Eli and his family everything I promised. I will not stop until I have finished. I told Eli I would punish his family forever. I will do it because Eli knew his sons were evil. They spoke against me, but he did not control them. So here is what I promised Eli's family: 'Your guilt will never be removed by sacrifice or offering.'" Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the Tent of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. But Eli said to him, "Samuel, my son!" Samuel answered, "I am here." Eli asked, "What did the Lord say to you? Don't hide it from me. May God punish you terribly if you hide from me anything he said to you." So Samuel told Eli everything. He did not hide anything from him. Then Eli said, "He is the Lord. Let him do what he thinks is best." The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up. He did not let any of Samuel's messages fail to come true. Then all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew Samuel was a prophet of the Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

[St. Paul writes]: 'All things are lawful for me', but not all things are beneficial. 'All things are lawful for me', but I will not be dominated by anything. 'Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food',^[a] and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, 'The two shall be one flesh.' But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Avoid sexual immorality! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the sexual adulterer sins against the body itself. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have

from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA VERSE

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel: *St. John 1:43-51*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. John, the 1st chapter:

Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord:

Praise to You, O Christ.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was

made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life + of the world to come. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL HYMN: *"Lord, Speak To Us That We May Speak"* [www. Hymnary.org](http://www.Hymnary.org)

1 Lord, speak to us, that we may speak in
 2 Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead the
 3 Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach the
 4 Oh, fill us with your full - ness, Lord, un -

liv - ing ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
 wan-d'ring and the wa - v'ring feet; oh, feed us, Lord, that
 pre - cious truths which you im - part; and wing our words, that
 til our ver - y hearts o'er - flow in kin - dling thought and

let us seek your stray - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.
 we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.
 they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y a heart.
 glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.

MESSAGE

THE OFFERINGS *are gathered*

OFFERING SONG: *"Let The Vineyards Be Fruitful"*



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, And fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were
sown, That we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the
hopes and the dreams of all; U - nite them with the prayers we
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with Your pres - ence, and
give us A fore - taste of the feast to come.

PRAYERS

Lord God, Creator of all things, by the leading of a star you revealed your Son to the nations of the world; lead us also to a clearer vision of your presence. We thank you for your apostles who carried your word to distant lands; bless also your church today, that she may shine with your Son's light in this world.

Lord, in Your compassion; **hear our humble prayer.**

Revive and refresh Your church here and around the globe by your Holy Spirit so that we can confess your name before others, pray fervently for our neighbour, and demonstrate your love through good works. We pray for all whom we know that are seeking guidance in their lives; for all who struggle with doubts about their faith; we commend to you all who do not yet believe, but are searching, that even while they still walk in darkness that you would make light shine upon their path.

Lord, in Your compassion; **hear our humble prayer.**

Bless this land, all who live in it, all who visit it, and all who lead our nations affairs, in particular our Prime Minister, our Premier, our leaders in business and society. Give them a love of truth and justice. Help all citizens to serve their neighbour through their vocation. Help those who are unemployed or whose work is difficult, dangerous or stressful. Grant to the wealthy the further blessing of generosity. Strengthen all families and the bond of marriage. Give all children and young people a renewed bond with parents and guide all parents in raising their children.

Lord, in Your compassion; **hear our humble prayer.**

You have shown how much you care for us by feeding us with Your Word and Sacraments of grace. Uphold all who are in need of healing and hope, especially we remember [names added here...] Keep us all from anxious fears and worldly cares, that no cloud may hide from us the light of your love in Jesus Christ.

Lord, in Your compassion; **hear our humble prayer.**

Lord God, since you have called us and received us as your disciples, keep us true to our calling. Build us up in trust in you, and in love towards each other, until we finally see you face to face. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT

The Lord be with you:

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is indeed good, right and joyful, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Saviour 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 abundant 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

(LSB Page 161)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

THE LORD'S PRAYER *Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name...*

WORDS OF OUR LORD:

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; This is My + Body which is given for you, this do, in remembrance of Me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying "Drink of it all of you, this cup is the New Testament in My + Blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

LAMB OF GOD

LSB tune # 163

Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

HOLY COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

For those who have need, please feel free to stand at the rail if kneeling is difficult. The common cup and trays of individual glasses are available. Gluten free wafers are also available. Light purple glasses of Communion wine mixed with water are in the centre ring of the silver trays.

COMMUNION HYMNS

"All Glory Be To Christ"

[Auld Lange Syne tune]

**Should nothing of our efforts stand, no legacy survive--
Unless the Lord does raise the house, in vain its builders strive**

**To you who boast tomorrow's gain, tell me what is your life
A mist that vanishes at dawn, all glory be to Christ!**

**All glory be to Christ our king! All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign we'll ever sing, All glory be to Christ!**

**His will be done, His kingdom come, On earth as is above
Who is Himself our daily bread. Praise Him the Lord of love**

**Let living water satisfy, the thirsty without price
We'll take a cup of kindness yet; All glory be to Christ!**

**All glory be to Christ our king! All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign will ever sing, All glory be to Christ!**

**When on the day the great I Am, The faithful and the true
The Lamb who was for sinners slain, Is making all things new.**

**Behold our God shall live with us. And be our steadfast light
And we shall ere his people be -- All glory be to Christ!**

**All glory be to Christ our king! All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign will ever sing, All glory be to Christ!**

Joy Has Dawned © November 2012 Words by Dustin Kensrue, arrangement by Kings Kaleidoscope / © Dead Bird Theology (ASCAP), It's All About Jesus Music (ASCAP) <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/sing-all-glory-be-to-christ-to-the-tune-of-auld-lang-syne/>

"O, One With God"

Tune: "The Church's One Foundation"

**O, One with God the Father, in majesty and might,
The Brightness of His glory, Eternal Light of Light,
to gloomy haunts of darkness, Your rays are streaming now;
The shadows flee before You, the world's true Light has come.**

**Yet, Lord, we see but dimly, O Heav'nly Light, arise,
come rest in this Your Sup-per, Which veils You from our eyes.
We long to track the footprints that You, Yourself have trod;
We long to see the pathway, that leads to You our God.**

**O Jesus, shine around us, with radiance of Your grace;
For You our Gracious Saviour, have fed us in this place.
We need no star to guide us, as on our way we press,
If You will light our pathway, O Sun of Righteousness.**

Words: William How, 1823-1897, alt. Public domain.

"Come To The Table, Sinner And Saint" [Have Thine Own Way tune]

**Come to the table, sinner and saint,
strong-hearted, mighty, weary and faint,
empty, repentant, seeking a place.
Christ welcomes you with joy and with grace.**

**Come, unafraid, for here you will find
Love shows you mercy; always is kind.
Love treats as one all those who believe.
Come to the table, Christ now receive.**

**All things are ready, come and draw near.
Share in the supper -- given out here:
bread that is broken, drink the red wine,
Love's holy token--human, divine.**

**Eat, and remember, as we partake,
Jesus the Christ who died for our sake,
sharing this meal for Christ is the way,
rising to lead us to a new day.**

**Go from our Lord's meal, joyful in heart,
filled with thanksgiving as you depart,
graced by the Spirit, blessed by our Friend,
strengthened with Christ to serve to life's end.**

"Sent Forth By God's Blessing"

**Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.**

**The supper is ended. Oh, now be extended
the fruits of this service in all who believe.**

**The seed of His teaching, receptive souls reaching,
shall blossom in action for God and for all.**

**His grace shall incite us, His love shall unite us
to work for God's kingdom and answer His call.**

**With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living,
the tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face—
our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
embracing His children, of each tribe and race.**

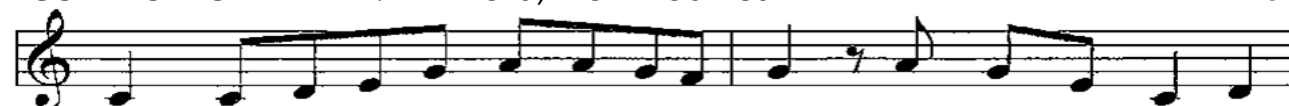
**With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us;
unite us as one in this life that we share.**

**Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving
give honor to Christ and his name that we bear.**

Words: Omer Westendorf, 1964 <https://charlesghose.com/2020/05/06/sent-forth-by-gods-blessing/>

POST COMMUNION HYMN: *"Lord, Now You Let"*

LSB # 165



Lord, now You let Your ser-vant go in peace; Your word has been ful -



filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va-tion which You have pre -



pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re -



veal You to the na-tions and the glo-ry of Your peo-ple Is - ra - el.



as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

O Father, as You fed Your children with the True Manna, the Living Bread from Heaven, give unto us, we humbly pray You, that the Body and Blood of Your Son may be our support throughout our earthly pilgrimage, until we reach that land where there is neither hunger nor thirst, Your magnificent Heavenly Banquet; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

BENEDICTION:

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favour and + give you peace.

Amen

CLOSING HYMN:

"I Love To Tell"

Arabella Hankey, 1866; PD

**I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love;
I love to tell the story, because I know it's true,
It satisfies my longings as nothing else would do:
I love to tell the story, 'Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story, of Jesus and His love.**

**I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest;
And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long:
I love to tell the story, 'Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story, of Jesus and His love.**

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REV. TODD HOEFFS

Epiphany 2

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

“Don’t Just Go To Church, BE The Church”

January 14, 2024

Teaching Elementary School art classes was so much fun! Kindergarteners had the best imaginations and uses of colour! But there was something about grade 1 classes. I recall introducing clay for creating small handheld pinch pots.

Nearly every grade 1 boy in every classroom felt compelled to create – toilets!

[With a little something in it!]

My colleague teacher [with tons of experience] told me to say –

"You must make something you would not be afraid to show your grandma!!!"

That did it. I kinda got the feeling though –They just had to get it out of their system and could move on. Title grade 1 clay toilets was lawful, maybe not permissible! LOL This brings us to Apostle Paul’s wisdom to the very new Corinthian church. Corinth is an important and wealthy city on the narrow strip of land separating Northern and Southern Greece. St. Paul will spend 18 months there on his 2nd Missionary Journey. This letter is response to a report from Chloe’s people about problems in the Corinthian church. Chloe is interesting enough in and of herself. She has authority in her household of faith. And is treated by Apostle Paul on almost the same level; which did to exist in the ancient world. The Corinthian church struggle with 2 main issues: Whether or not they keep to a strictly Jewish diet or embrace a Greek/Roman style? The other issue pertains to our reading for the day – sexual sins pertaining to lust of the heart. Corinth in Paul’s day [50 AD?] saw a population of 200,000. Philosopher Cicero called it the “Eye of Greece”. A seat of government with 2 major busy ports. Corinth hosted Isthmian Games, a Pan Hellenic festival, second in status to the Olympian Festival. Contests were usually dedicated to Zeus, Apollo and Poseidon. Emphasising song, dance, archery and chariot skills. Culture thrived. Elaborate wardrobes, jewellery, art, theatre and romance. A hopping place for Paul to preach. Nearby the church in Corinth the Tempe of Aphrodite could easily be seen. The goddess of love, intimacy, and fertility.

Nearly 1,000 male and female priests “ministered” to the temple gatherers.

It is in this context Paul writes about what is lawful or permissible. He’s choosing a very basic legal term. Whatever is enforced by the law of Rome and/or the Law of God. We have to be careful here: Much of Corinthian life can be available to any city around the world. He’s NOT saying THE WORLD IS EVIL, avoid it at all costs.

He’s also NOT saying HEY, WHATEVER FLOATS YOUR BOAT, go ahead.

We Lutherans have often used a phrase – we can do everything -- Moderately [LOL].

Thinking about this helps be critically sound as the Body of Christ in the world. MANY things are legal. And we are in the world as examples of how we follow the law here and How we are enjoined to a Kingdom not of this world.

Jesus says it best – nothing that goes into the Body [or comes at the Body]

Is sinful and wrong, But what come OUT of the body, that is full of sinfulness.

Example: gambling is lawful. I really enjoy going to Las Vegas. [Lights, sound, culture, shopping, dining...] There is no end to throwing your money away at the snap of a \$20 bill.

Not to mention the “other” unmentionable entertainment places. It’s lawful for me to go

there—I don’t care for gambling-- And I make sure there are plenty of performers or shows to

see to occupy my time. That's lawful. But if I was easily attracted to gambling [and no one can really afford to gamble] And to lustful shows, or spending too lavishly, Then it would be best to stay away. This is really the issue. Most of our English Bibles translate the other part of Paul's advice as permissible. But that isn't true to the Greek origin. SYMPHERO is the word – where we get our term Symphony.

It means "bringing together." Symphonies bring together wonderful instruments to perform one song. How brilliant of Paul to use a word from the Corinthian theatre! Not every lawful thing creates unity of bringing people together.

Labour party Harold Wilson once told the Queen – He'd rather smoke a cigar but chooses to smoke a pipe. Cigars signal the upper class, business barons and monopolists. Pipes represent the working class, real down to earth people.

One can make changes and still be true to oneself he said. Black clergy shirts signal austere, even unapproachable. Colourful clergy shirts signal every day, common, creative, open, and makes people wonder what denomination you represent! Martin Luther taught that none of us are truly free. We cannot choose God or work hard to obtain saving faith in the Gospel. We cannot decide to follow Jesus because we are born with the inability to recognize the truth about God. We come into the world as God finds us, knows us even before we make our 1st cry. We are in bondage to sin, the threat of eternal death and a sitting target for Satan. When faith is born anew, by the Word in Baptismal water, We are then captive to God through Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit. For it is only by faith can any of us say with Paul, Is this lawful or beneficial? Food is made to supply nourishment to our bodies; Our bodies also are made to enjoy such foods.

Both our stomachs and our food will be gone one day. Another reason why our personal appetites cannot be our only concern. We can & should be concerned with others' needs, bread of life and daily bread. Hence, the warning against the sexual sin. Because it is more than just a momentary outward feeling. Most English Bibles use the term fornication or sexual immorality. Paul uses the Greek term PORNEI, where we get the term pornography. Pornei is cheap payment for sex with someone who's been with numerous people. Pornei was not speaking of any LGBTQ gay or trans issues here. It's prostitution; payment for a gift God has given us to use freely with the one we love. Leviticus in the OT forbid this; Greek and Roman culture did not. It was LAWFUL. It's the heart. The lust, the desires without concern for one's faith life. Having numerous intimate partners means you're giving yourself away to people in a way that is supposed to be with one person. It abuses you emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. In God's view, such a person is connected to each partner the same. This breaks down the entire human family. This does not reflect a Godly life as the Body of Christ in the world. Since Christ lives in us by faith, we no longer follow strict laws of circumcision, or sacrificing bulls and lambs, or avoiding pork chops or shrimp and lobster. Those had been for ancient hygiene and religious sacredness. If someone chooses not to eat such things, fine. If they do, that's fine too. In Christ, all the ceremonies, sacrifices, priesthood, temple, festivals in the Old Testament have now found their fulfillment in Jesus. They had a purpose; that purpose is complete. Jesus makes all things new. Now we are bound to Christ.

Jesus gives the new and best commandment, to love God & love one another.

Because of the completely sacrificial and generous love God has lavished on us in His Son, We, in turn, by faith, love Him and learn to love each other. How do children come to love their parents? Is it because their mother and father demand their love with ever increasing threats of punishment if the children do not give it? No, you just love them, protect them, nourish and guide them. And they respond in love, too. And that love, that generosity, that interest in helping, Is the sole motivating Spirit-led growth of the church. The Body of Jesus

around the globe. We rely on Gospel-inspired judgement. We want to go easy on ourselves, and be hard on all those out there – We want to hide our sin and expose all the others. Because I'm in here, I'm good?! Uh, no. The opposite. The Body of Christ, followers, believers, worshippers, Are the insiders. We are temples of the Holy Spirit. We are called not to hide sin, or make excuses for sinful behaviour; We are gentler with the outside world, kinder to new seekers to the faith, So that they have an easy welcome and allowed time to grow into the faith. No one comes in here perfect. But we all leave forgiven & restored. It's less about going to church but BEING the church. We are here because we get to have the food needed for living out there as Jesus' Body. No different than eating breakfast, lunch or dinner. Baptism seals our identity. The Holy Spirit animates our feet forward in faith. The cross of Jesus marks our bodies as His temple. We are bought with a price. The price of Blood. Cleansing blood. New life-giving Blood. Blood which removes sin and soothes our sin-sore souls. Your body is not just your own. You belong to Jesus. His face is seen in your face. Amen.

Epiphany

Z L I Y Z N R T W W Y M Z C I R Q
Q S V V B E T H L E H E M A T D M
V T V Z F G M A G I C F A M P N J
N A G I F T S F B H T H R E E F T
H R Y G A S P A R N D C X L J T N
H J E P I P H A N Y R N S S V K B
O F R B A L T H A S A R Y G K I J
M E T W E L F T H L I G H T I N C
A A M A N G E R Q E H N A N K G L
G S T G M U R U G H B H M I I K W
E T O F F E R I N G U Y J G N Y W
Y W C P G K K G O L D E E H G X I
E O X R A M Y R R H V I S T H M S
F R A N K I N C E N S E U S E M E
K N K O D C H I L D D I S F R A M
Z Z E J Z O M E L C H I O R O R E
K I T R E A S U R E B Q Z O D Y N

Balthasar
Feast
Homage
Magi
Night
Twelfth

Bethlehem
Frankincense
Jesus
Manger
Offering
Wisemen

Camels
Gaspar
King
Mary
Star

Child
Gifts
KingHerod
Melchior
Three

Epiphany
Gold
Light
Myrrh
Treasure