



CROWN OF LIFE | LUTHERAN
CHURCH

February 16th, 2025
6th Sunday after Epiphany

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A Service of Worship and Praise

We Gather in God's Name

Greeting

OPENING HYMN

Christian Worship 128

Not All the Blood of Beasts

Minister says: We begin our worship in praise the same way we were baptized: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation says: AMEN

We Prepare our Hearts

M: As believers in Christ, we are called to repent of our sins and forgive one another. In the book of James, we are told, "Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for one another, so that you may be healed." As one body in Christ, we unite our hearts in prayer:

C: Lord, I pray to You because I am suffering. I have cut myself off from You and others by the sin in my life. I need Your forgiveness so that I may find healing for my wounded life and for the wounds I have caused others. Today, in the name of Jesus I pray, forgive me, and by the power of Your Holy Spirit, renew my heart. AMEN.

We sing:

Change My Heart

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

|: You are the potter; I am the clay.

Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God, may I be like you. :|

M: We take comfort and find confidence in the words of Jesus, "He has sent me to announce forgiveness to the prisoners of sin and restore sight to the blind, to give mercy to those whose lives are shattered by sin, to announce the favor of the Lord." God gave His only son, Jesus, to die for our sins and rise from death to give us eternal life. We are forgiven. We live in the favor of the Lord.

C: AMEN.

We sing:

Lord I Lift Your Name on High

|: Lord, I lift your name on high. Lord, I love to sing your praises.
I'm so glad you're in my life. I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from Heaven to Earth to show the way;
from the Earth to the Cross, my debt to pay;
from the Cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky;
Lord, I lift Your name on high. :|

WE PRAY TOGETHER

M: Almighty God, you are eager to grant your goodness...

C: ...and joyful in sharing your grace.

M: You invite us into your presence...

C: ...to worship you with all our hearts.

M: Breathe your holy Spirit on us...

C: ...so that our tongues are eager to shout your praise!

M: Breathe your Holy Spirit on us...

C: ...so that our mouths are ready to proclaim the good news of Your Son.

M: Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: AMEN.

We Listen to God's Word

FIRST LESSON

Jeremiah 17:5-8

⁵ This is what the LORD says:

"Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the LORD.

⁶ That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;
they will not see prosperity when it comes.
They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,
in a salt land where no one lives.

⁷ "But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.

⁸ They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.

It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit."

We sing:

Shine Jesus Shine

Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory!
Blaze, Spirit, blaze! Set our hearts on fire.
Flow river flow! Flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

Lord, the light of Your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness shining.
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us;
Set us free by the truth You now bring us.
Shine on me. Shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory!
Blaze, Spirit, blaze! Set our hearts on fire.

Flow river flow! Flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

SECOND LESSON

II Corinthians 12:7b-10

^{7b} Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.
⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

PLEASE STAND

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 6:17-26

¹⁷ He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸ who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, ¹⁹ and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² Blessed are you when people hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you

and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

²³ "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

²⁵ Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

BE SEATED

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

Christian Worship 121

Jesus, Grant that Balm and Healing

SERMON

Take Pleasure in Your Weaknesses

II Corinthians 12:7b-10

PLEASE STAND

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one being with the Father. Through Him, all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, He came down from Heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake, He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He

suffered death and was buried. On the third day, He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who, in unity with the Father and the Son, is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. AMEN.

BE SEATED

OFFERING **African-American Heritage Hymnal 396 (v1, 3 ,4)**
I Surrender All

THE SACRAMENT

M: Our Lord Jesus has given us a holy supper in which we receive His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith. In this supper, we celebrate the gift of His redemption, we bear witness to the fellowship we share as confessors of the truth, and we proclaim His death until He returns.

C: Now have come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory, forever and ever.

We sing: *Glorify Thy Name*

Father, we love you; we worship and adore you.
Glorify thy name in all the earth.
Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,
Glorify thy name in all the earth.

Jesus, we love you; we worship and adore you.
Glorify thy name in all the earth.
Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,
Glorify thy name in all the earth.

Spirit, we love you; we worship and adore you.
Glorify thy name in all the earth.
Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,
Glorify thy name in all the earth.

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat: this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: AMEN

FOR ALL OF US: Paul instructed in I Cor. 11:28: "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup." Questions like these help us examine ourselves:

- Am I sorry for my sin?
- Do I trust that Jesus has lived and died to save me from my sin?
- Do I believe that Jesus's body and blood are truly present to assure me of forgiveness?
- Do I intend, with God's help, to live a more God pleasing life?

*WELS and ELS members may come and receive Christ's body and blood.
Proceed up the center aisle as directed by the ushers.*

FOR OUR GUESTS AND VISITORS: You may find that we regard Holy Communion with much greater seriousness than most churches today. The Bible teaches that communion is, among other things, a public statement of intimate unity and spiritual agreement with a church's teachings. Therefore, if you are unaware or unclear about what we teach and believe, you will want to compare your own beliefs with ours before communing with us. We are eager to establish this fellowship with you and look forward to your inquiry on how to enter into fellowship! Pastor Kramer is happy and ready to speak with you!

DISTRIBUTION HYMN African-American Heritage Hymnal 345

Just As I Am

THANKSGIVING:

Give thanks with a grateful heart.

Give thanks to the Holy One.

Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ His Son.

|: And now, let the weak say, "I am strong",

Let the poor say, "I am rich"

Because of what the Lord has done for us! :|

Give thanks!

C: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised You here may glorify You in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of Your Son may long for His coming again, and that all who have received in His true body and blood the pledge of Your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

AMEN.

PRAYERS AND LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING

M: Brothers and Sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

C: AMEN

CLOSING HYMN

African-American Heritage Hymnal 558

Jesus Saves

The first Bible you ever meet

Do you remember your first Bible? Do you know where your first Bible is? Mine is an old study Bible that some relatives gifted to me at my confirmation. Throughout the years, the margins have accumulated helpful notes and comments, different dates of when I visited that same text, and other scribbles that have made this Bible mine. It's practically tethered to me and has logged thousands of miles crisscrossing different cities, states, and continents.

Have you ever thought that you might be the first Bible that someone meets? Not that you are the Way, Truth, or Life of Scripture, but that you might be the first look at what a justified, grace-filled Christian life looks like in the world? Why would that matter at all?

You may have seen some of the latest articles that tell us that more Americans aren't going to church like they did even five years ago. Church shopping rates are down, but there are more people who are turning away because of what their churches in the past had done. They also feel happy and content to do what they are doing now. What's more surprising is that more people are completely unexposed to what the gospel message actually is.

It's a real concern in my community. Trinity, Fla., is a place that was conceived under the idea that you could be "born, work, and die" all in one place. As I've learned, chatted, and had coffee with some of the people that live in our community, there is a growing resentment that "the people inside the church don't act like Jesus would." To put a number on it: Trinity currently sees 71.6 percent of its community inactive in any faith community, up 10 percent in just five years. Or to put it another way: About three out of the ten people you see in your grocery aisle this coming weekend are connected to religion in some way. The other seven are unattached to the means of grace and the sacraments.

Something will fill that void. The spiritual needs today aren't different than at any point in human history. There will always be a real need for relationships, forgiveness, justice, comfort, purpose, and salvation. Humanity needs to hear it. God's given us the message to speak to it.

As a home missionary in the United States, this excites me. We have a real opportunity to show Christian love to people who have no idea what it looks like. We are Christ's ambassadors, as though he is making an appeal through us!

With more people unexposed to what the gospel message is, we may have to be more proactive about going and showing what a redeemed life looks like rather than asking someone to come and see. One helpful pastor I know said, "Where is the most unlikely place you will find an unchurched person? Inside of a church."

We often lament that this is a darkening and dimming world. That just means we need some lights to guide our way. That can happen through prayers for our worker training programs and for your pastors, but also for your brothers and sisters who are sitting in the seats of church along with you, that they may be bold in their witness of the gospel and unashamed of its message. Include yourself in that prayer too.

Because to someone you've never met or someone you know extremely well, you might be the first look of what living out the Scriptures actually is. So what are they reading?

Written by Rev. Ben Bitter, home missionary at [Peace Lutheran Church](#) in Trinity, Fla.

Serving at CoL:	Today	Next Sunday
Music	Karis, Elijah	Katherine, Elijah
Ushers	Bob, Mike	Lee, Perry
Reader	Elijah	Seth
Altar		
Streaming	Noah	Noah
Refreshments	Linda	
Cleaning		
Mowing		

CALENDAR

Wednesday	7:00 PM Online Bible Class
Thursday	10:30 AM Bible Class at Timeless Grace, Carriere, MS
Thursday	12:00 PM Confirmation Class, Picayune, MS
Sunday	10:00 AM Bible Class, Sunday School
Sunday	11:00 AM Worship
Today	Council, Ladies Guild

OFFERING	Total	Budget	%Budget Met
Last Week	\$2,607.00	\$2,631.94	99.1%
February	\$6,172.05	\$11,405.08	54.1%
Qtr-to-Date	\$16,730.07	\$34,215.25	48.9%
Year-to-Date	\$16,730.07	\$136,861.00	12.2%



*"...give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
II Corinthians 9:7*

