

Service of Daily Prayer

Sanctity of Life Sunday

Athens Lutheran Church Athens, TN - January 24, 2021

As We Gather

When someone calls you on your phone, do you always answer? In our present day with caller identification, many are apt to let the call go to voicemail to wait and see what the message is and who it's from and at times wait to respond depending on the level of importance. How about when God calls? Especially, if that call is one to repentance? Do you answer? We hear in today's Readings of the response of some. Jonah was a reluctant follower. He went to Nineveh begrudgingly, but through him God would issue a call for the Ninevites to repentance. Jesus would call Simon, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him, and promised that through them, God would issue a call of repentance to many. In Baptism, God has called us to follow Him in a life of faith and repentance, and He promises that through us, others will also be called to that same repentance and new life.

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Versicles

In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.
My mouth is filled with Your praise,
and with Your glory all the day.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.
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.

Old Testament Reading

1 Samuel 16:4–13

⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?"
⁵And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is before him.” ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ¹⁰And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen these.” ¹¹Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.” ¹²And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him, for this is he.” ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

Epistle

1 Corinthians 12:12–26

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²²On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one

member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:31–34, 44

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 13th chapter.

³¹He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³²It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.”

³⁴All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable.

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Final Reading Response

LSB 238

L In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Koine Worship Song - Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me

Lord's Prayer

P Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities and stretch forth the hand of Your majesty to heal and defend us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

In the morning

Almighty God, merciful Father, who created and completed all things, on this day when the work of our calling begins anew, we implore You to create its beginning, direct its continuance, and bless its end, that our doings may be preserved from sin, our life sanctified, and our work this day be well pleasing to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Benedicamus

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Then go joyfully to your work.

Stewardship Sentence

Mark 1:14-15 – “... *Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe*

in the gospel.’ ” To repent means to turn away from sins and our former way of thinking and turn toward belief in God and His Gospel of grace and mercy. The whole Christian life is one of repentance and faith. Where is God calling you to repent today? How is He calling you to deeper faith?

Lectionary Summary for Next Week - January 31, 2021

Deuteronomy 18:15–20; 1 Corinthians 8:1–13; Mark 1:21–28

Our Lord Jesus Christ, True God in the Flesh, Cleanses Our Consciences from Sin

As He promised, the Lord our God has raised up “*a prophet*” like Moses, namely Jesus, our brother in the flesh. “*To him you shall listen,*” because the Word of the Lord is “*in his mouth*” (**Deut. 18:15–18**). Indeed, He is more than a prophet and more than a scribe of the Scriptures; He is the incarnate Word, and He speaks “*a new teaching with authority*” (**Mark 1:22, 27**). He enters “*the synagogue*” of His Church and provides true Sabbath rest, using His authority to silence and cast out “*even the unclean spirits*” (**Mark 1:21–27**). By His Word of the cross, He removes the accusations of the Law and of the devil, and He cleanses our consciences before God the Father, “*from whom are all things and for whom we exist.*” Hence, we are now set free from bondage and commended to God by the one Lord, Jesus Christ, “*through whom are all things and through whom we exist*” (**1 Cor. 8:6**). Therefore, use your freedom to care for your brothers and sisters, neither causing them to stumble nor wounding their consciences (**1 Cor. 8:9–12**), but cleansing and strengthening them with the Gospel.

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