**Ascension Lutheran Church**

**Fifth Sunday after Epiphany February 7, 2021**

**Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!**

Birthdays: Libby Stone, Max Smolzer, Ray Valentine, Libby Hart, Vicky Galloway, Shawn Hendrick, Jerry Sneed, Greg Blalock, Robert Buchanan, Scott Stone

*In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus’ healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon’s mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.*

**PRELUDE**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

whose voice is upon the waters,

whose mercy is poured out upon all people,

whose goodness cascades over all creation.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence for reflection.*

**Gracious God, have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

**HYMN** **#504**  **“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”**

**Verses 1-2**

**Diagram, schematic

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**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**READING: Isaiah 40:21-31**

21Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
  Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
  Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?  
 22It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
  and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
 who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
  and spreads them like a tent to live in;  
 23who brings princes to naught,and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.  
  
 24Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
  scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
 when he blows upon them, and they wither,  
  and the tempest carries them off like stubble.  
  
 25To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One.  
 26Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these?  
 He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name;  
 because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.  
  
 27Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel,  
 “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God”?  
 28Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
 The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
 He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.  
 29He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.  
 30Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;  
 31but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,  
  they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
 they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL: Mark 1:29-39**

The holy gospel according to Mark, the first chapter.  
**Glory to you O Lord.**

29As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. 31He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.  
  32That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. 33And the whole city was gathered around the door. 34And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.  
  35In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. 36And Simon and his companions hunted for him. 37When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.” 38He answered, “Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.” 39And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

The gospel of our Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.**

**SERMON** The Rev. Christina Auch

**HYMN #597**  **“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” Verses 1-2**

Diagram

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Text: Edward Mote, 1797-1874, alt.; MusicL MELITA, John B. Dykes, 1823 – 1876

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ.

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**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 into hell.**

**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.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

*Silence for reflection.*

For the church: for ministries of healing and wholeness, for hospital, hospice, and military chaplains, for those serving in prison ministry, for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For creation: for insects in the grass, clouds on the mountaintops, for cattle and the rainwater they drink, for the humility to take our place among all creatures of the earth, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations: for all who lead in cities and towns, states and countries; for community organizers, school officials, and CEOs; for international health organizations, that in times of trial, fear, or hopelessness, they find freedom in service to those most in need, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For all wearied by life’s burdens: for those who are poor, for those lacking supportive relationships, for those crushed by debt, for those struggling with chronic pain or other sickness, for those exhausted from overwork or stress, and for all who cry out to you, especially those we name aloud or silently in our hearts…

**Grant** Adcock (Bob and Vicki Jones’ grandson), **Fran** Auch (Jamie Auch’s uncle), **Kathy** Backof (Donna Lilly’s friend), **Martha** Beam (Eleanor Hendrick’s friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Adam** Bridges & **Brittany** Smith (Libby Stone’s cousin and his fiancé), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant’s grandson), **Kathy** Callahan (Ludie Wilkie’s friend), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie’s friend), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges’ friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges’ Aunt), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams’ friends), **Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long’s friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman’s friend), **Charles** Duval (Ludy Wilkie’s friend), **Barbara Duval** (Ludy Wilkie’s friends), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie’s friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger’s friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White’s friend), **Carol Ann** Forgas (Bill Bridges’ friend), **Gypsy** Gilliam (Jennie and Dave Lambert’s friend), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman’s friend), **Carl** Greenwald (DeBell’s friends), **Richard** Hollifield (Ludy Wilkie’s friend), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne’s friend), **Debbie** Irvin (Bill Bridges’ friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams’ friend), **Kay** Johnson (Eleanor Hendrick’s cousin), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie’s friend), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen’s son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William’s niece), **Bryan** Legrand (Ludy Wilkie’s friend), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly’s son), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman’s friend), **Pam** Lucas (Ludy Wilkie’s friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop’s mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks’ sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Maribeth** Norris Mies (Carol Berger’s cousin), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly’s niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen’s daughter-in-law), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger’s brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer (Carol Berger’s sister), **Gerard** Peruzzi (Carol Berger’s brother), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger’s mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges’ friends), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn’s friend), **Shannon** Sellers (Libby Stone’s cousin), **Jean and Jim** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend), **Pam** Unger (Willi and Ray Lacy’s friend), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck’s friend’s mother), **David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop’s husband), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard’s friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan’s brother), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams’ grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley (Sandra Waldrop’s aunt)

**Members:** **Dean** Davis, **Lin** Washburn, **Dot** Paul, **Bob** Bryant, **William** Coyne, **Jim** Wilson, **Bobbie** Johnson, **Gerald** Washburn, **Ray** Valentine, **Lucinda** Wallen, **Lisa** Upton and **Sandy** Harman.

**In Undergraduate College: Emma** Auch, **Brooke** Buchanan, **Samantha** Hoffman, **Jacob** Stone, **Catherine** Mae Lilly

**Ministry Partners**: Hospice Cleveland County staff, leaders and those they serve.

Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries; for ministries of companionship and support, for people in this place who open us to new understandings, let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed, who were called by name and now rest from their labors, that their lives serve as witnesses to the goodness of God, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ’s peace on video or say: “Peace be with you” from wherever you are or type it in the chat or comments.*

**OFFERING**

*Make a one time or recurring gift using* ***the website*** *or* ***the GivePlus app*** *on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or* ***text 844-906-2283*** *and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.*

*Or mail your regular tithe or offering to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.*

**OFFERTORY “Doxology”**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

praise him, all creatures here below;

praise him above, ye heav'nly host;

praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray…

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**SENDING OF HOME COMMUNION**

When our congregation gathered for Holy Communion with all the saints from every time and place, we heard again the story of God’s mighty acts and the love shown us in Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. The holy meal of the Lord’s supper was shared. Now we share this Word of life, and this bread and cup of blessing, that we may share in these same gifts and be strengthened by the Christian community, even though we gather separately for a time.

Gathered at the Lord’s table, our congregation remembered with thanksgiving that “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.”

This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. This bread and cup, shared in our community of faith, are here given for you.

*Share the bread, saying, “The body of Christ, given for you.” And share the wine or grape juice, saying, "The blood of Christ, shed for you.”*

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**BLESSING**

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord’s face shine on us with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon us with favor and ☩ give us peace.

**Amen.**

**HYMN #685 “Take My Life, That I May Be”**

**Verses 1-2**

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**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Coronavirus Response**: Our sanctuary remains closed, but the fellowship hall is available for small groups (less than 10) with social distancing and masks required. Contact Debby in the church office for more information.

**Prayer Concerns:** Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

**Please continue your tithes and offerings.** Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.

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