

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
FEBRUARY 23, 2025
10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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INTRODUCTION

Mercy. Mercy. Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is fractured and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of the life-giving Spirit. It is a reflection of God's glory revealed in Christ.

OVERVIEW

The promise and its fulfillment may not look at all alike, even though they are intimately connected. Paul speaks about seeds and plants as he tries to picture resurrection life. Joseph's brothers never thought they would see him alive again, so how shocking he must have appeared to them as an Egyptian leader! Jesus invites us to sow seeds of new life by loving enemies.

*** indicates to stand as you are able.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Judy Treadway

CALL TO WORSHIP

"Come Thou Fount, Come Thou King"

(Verse 1)

Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise;
Teach me some melodious sonnet sung by flaming tongues above,
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.

(Verse 2)

I was lost in utter darkness 'til you came and rescued me;
I was bound by all my sin when your love came and set me free;
Now my soul can sing a new song, now my heart has found a home;
Now your grace is always with me, and I'll never be alone.

(Refrain)

Come, thou Fount; come, thou King,
Come, thou precious Prince of Peace;
Hear your bride, to you we sing;
Come, thou Fount of our blessing.
Come, thou Fount; come, thou King,
Come, thou precious Prince of Peace;
Hear your bride, to you we sing;
Come, thou Fount of our blessing.

(Verse 3)

O, to grace, how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be;
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee;
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

(Refrain)

Come, thou Fount; come, thou King,
Come, thou precious Prince of Peace;
Hear your bride, to you we sing;
Come, thou Fount of our blessing.
Come, thou Fount; come, thou King,
Come, thou precious Prince of Peace;
Hear your bride, to you we sing;
Come, thou Fount of our blessing.

** OPENING LITANY

Where do we find you, Holy One, and how do we follow?

Find me at your table;

We'll share your food.

Find me in your resources;

We'll share your riches.

Find me in your power;

We'll share your mercy.

Find me in your pain;

We'll share your forgiveness.

Find me in your generosity;

We'll share all, and expect nothing in return.

In community, seek my holiness;

We follow you in love, generosity, and joy;

In the world, share my desire.

We follow you in justice, mercy, and peace for all.

GATHERING SONGS

“The River of God”

(Verse 1 - Praise Team)

Down the mountain the river flows
And it brings refreshing wherever it goes.
Through the valleys and over the fields,
The river is rushing and the river is here.

(Refrain - Praise Team)

The river of God sets our feet a-dancing,
The river of God fills our hearts with cheer.
The river of God fills our mouths with laughter,
And we rejoice for the river is here.

(Verse 2 - All)

**The river of God is teeming with life,
And all who touch it can be revived.
And those who linger on this river's shore
Will come back thirsting for more of the Lord.**

(Refrain - All)

**The river of God sets our feet a-dancing,
The river of God fills our hearts with cheer.
The river of God fills our mouths with laughter,
And we rejoice for the river is here.**

(Verse 3 - All)

**Up to the mountain we love to go
To find the presence of the Lord.
Along the banks of the river we run,
We dance with laughter giving praise to the Son.**

(Refrain - All)

**The river of God sets our feet a-dancing,
The river of God fills our hearts with cheer.
The river of God fills our mouths with laughter,
And we rejoice for the river is here,
Yes, we rejoice for the river is here.**

"Amazing Love"

C Dm⁷ Gsus G

1 My Lord, what love is this that pays so
 2 And so they watched him die, de - spised, re -
 3 And now this love of Christ shall flow like

Csus C G C Dm⁷ F/G G C

dear - ly, that I, the guilt - y one, may go free?
 ject - ed; but, oh, the blood he shed flowed for me.
 riv - ers; come, wash your guilt a - way, live a - gain.

Refrain Gm⁷ C Eb

A - maz - ing love, oh, what sac - ri - fice, the Son of God giv'n for

G Gm⁷ C

me; my debt he pays and my death he dies, that

Gm⁷ C Gm⁷ C

I might live, that I might live.

**** CONFESSION**

Turning to God and following the light of Christ, let us in faith confess the sins that burden our hearts

Holy God, we confess that we have wandered from your light. We follow paths of self-indulgence, instead of following the example of your Son. Too often, we are passive observers of the suffering of the world, expecting others to stand up and work for the change we would like to see. Lord, in your strength, renew us and compel us by your invitation that we may work to pursue your justice and mercy for all people, sharing your light in ways great and small.

**** FORGIVENESS**

God proclaims these words of assurance:

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.” In † Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God. **Amen.**

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Many years after being sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, Joseph reveals himself to them. Now the second-in-command in Egypt, Joseph reassures his brothers that God has used their evil intentions for good to preserve life during a devastating famine, and Joseph forgives them.

A reading from Genesis.

Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me

before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' " And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

The lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace. (Ps. 37:11)

Do not be provoked by evildoers;
do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

**For they shall soon wither like the grass,
and like the green grass fade away.**

Put your trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

**Take delight in the Lord,
who shall give you your heart's desire.**

Commit your way to the Lord; put your trust in the Lord,
and see what God will do.

**The Lord will make your vindication as clear as the light
and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.**

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently.

Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

**Refrain from anger, leave rage alone;
do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.**

For evildoers shall be cut off,
but those who hope in the Lord shall possess the land.

**In a little while the wicked shall be no more;
even if you search out their place, they will not be there.**

But the lowly shall possess the land;
they will delight in abundance of peace.

**But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O Lord;
you are their stronghold in time of trouble.**

You, O Lord, will help them and rescue them;

you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

In the Apostles' Creed, we speak of the "resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Using the metaphor of a planted seed and the story of Adam, Paul preaches passionately about the mystery of following Christ's perfect life into eternity.

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

**** GOSPEL READING**

Luke 6:27-38

Jesus continues to address a crowd of his disciples. He invites his followers to shower radical love, blessing, forgiveness, generosity, and trust even on enemies and outsiders. Living in harmony with God's intent brings the reward of overflowing blessing.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said: "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pastor Bob Swanson

**** 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 power of 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 THE COMMUNITY**

Assisting Minister

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

Assisting Minister

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**** DIALOGUE**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**
Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**
Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

**** THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples 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."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another.

**** 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.

**** INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The joy of the Lord is our strength.
Come, eat this meal of gladness.

For those communing at home or in the pew:

COMMUNION — *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence*

The body of Christ given for you.

The blood of Christ shed for you.

Each person may respond: Amen.

Communion Statement ~ If you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Redeemer and would like to receive Holy Communion, then come forward to receive the elements. If you would just like to come forward and receive a blessing, then you may do that also.

NOTE: We invite everyone to come forward for Holy Communion. If you have a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request when receiving Communion. Also, if you prefer not to receive wine at Communion, apple juice is available upon request. For those choosing to remain in the pews, there are communion all-in-one cups containing grape juice available in the Narthex.

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ, and reflect the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work in us and through us each and every day.

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

**** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Assisting Minister

Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray. **Amen.**

**** SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent. The presiding minister may lead this prayer of sending.

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, and imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**** BLESSING**

The Spirit of the triune God ☩ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. **Amen.**

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

Great is your faithfulness, O God;
You wrestle with the sinner’s restless heart.
You lead us by still waters into mercy,
And nothing can keep us apart.
So remember your people,
Remember your children,
Remember your promise, O God.

(Refrain - Music Ministers)

Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers/All)

Great is your love and justice, God;
You use the weak to lead the strong.
You lead us in the song of your salvation,
And all your people sing along.
**So remember your people,
Remember your children,
Remember your promise, O God.**

(Refrain - All)

**Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.**

**Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.**

(All)

**Remember your people,
Remember your children,
Remember your promise, O God.**

**Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.**

(All/Music Ministers)
Your grace is enough;
Heaven reaches out to us.
Your grace is enough for me.

Your grace is enough;
I'm covered in your love.
Your grace is enough for me.

** DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Created, saved and gifted by God,

we seek serve and share Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = WORSHIP PLUS TWO

**MAKE A COMMITMENT NOT ONLY TO WORSHIP EACH WEEK,
BUT ALSO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO SERVE IN THE CONGREGATION
AND SEEK OUT A WAY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.**

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, died 156

Sunday, February 23, 2025

Because he is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, as well as the important early church fathers Irenaeus and Ignatius, Polycarp serves as a vital link in church history. He was burned at the stake at age 86 for refusing to renounce his faith.

Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, died 1921

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Born in Norway and trained there as a deaconess, Fedde was asked to come and minister to the poor and to seamen in New York City. She established the Deaconess House in Brooklyn as well as Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis.

George Herbert, hymnwriter, died 1633

Saturday, March 1, 2025

An excellent scholar, Herbert served briefly in the English parliament, then became a parish priest. He was known for devoted care of his parishioners, as well as for writing poetry and hymns, including "Come, my way, my truth, my life." He died at age 40.