

# Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

February 23, 2025

10:15 am

## Prelude

## Announcements

## 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.

## Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.  
**Amen.**

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Merciful God, **you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.**

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.**

## Gathering Hymn: ELW #835

**"All Creatures, Worship God Most High!"** Verses 1, 2, 5, & 6

**1. All creatures, worship God most high! Sound ev'ry voice in earth and sky: Alleluia! Alleluia! Sing, brother sun, in splendor bright; sing, sister moon and stars of night.**

**Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**2. Sing, brother wind; with clouds and rain you grow the gifts of fruit and grain: Alleluia! Alleluia! Dear sister water, useful, clear, make music for your Lord to hear: Refrain:**

**5. And you, most gentle sister death, waiting to hush our final breath: Alleluia! Alleluia! Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom, fair is the night that leads us home. Alleluia. Refrain:**

**6. O sisters, brothers, take your part, and worship God with humble heart:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! L creatures, bless the father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three in  
One: Alleluia. Refrain:**

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### **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.**

## *Readings and Psalm*

### **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.*

<sup>3</sup>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.

<sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>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.'" <sup>15</sup>And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

### **Psalm: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40**

<sup>1</sup>Do not be provoked by evildoers;  
do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

<sup>2</sup>**For they shall soon wither like the grass,  
and like the green grass fade away.**

<sup>3</sup>Put your trust in the LORD and do good;  
dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

<sup>4</sup>**Take delight in the LORD,  
who shall give you your heart's desire.**

<sup>5</sup>Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD,

and see what God will do.

**<sup>6</sup>The LORD will make your vindication as clear as the light and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.**

<sup>7</sup>Be still before the LORD and wait patiently.

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

**<sup>8</sup>Refrain from anger, leave rage alone; do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.**

<sup>9</sup>For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD shall possess the land.

**<sup>10</sup>In a little while the wicked shall be no more; even if you search out their place, they will not be there.**

<sup>11</sup>But the lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace.

**<sup>39</sup>But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O LORD; you are their stronghold in time of trouble.**

<sup>40</sup>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.*

<sup>35</sup>But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" <sup>36</sup>Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup>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. <sup>38</sup>But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

<sup>42</sup>So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup>It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup>It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup>Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup>But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup>The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup>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. <sup>49</sup>Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

<sup>50</sup>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.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia.* Love your enemies, and you will be children of the Most High; forgive, and you will be forgiven. *Alleluia.*

The Gospel according to Luke, starting with the sixth Chapter. **Glory to you O Lord.**

### **Gospel: 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.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>27</sup>“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you.

<sup>32</sup>“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> 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. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

<sup>37</sup>“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup> 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 our Lord, **Praise to you O Christ.**

### **Sermon**

#### **Hymn of the Day: ELW #603 "God, When Human Bonds are Broken"**

- 1. God, when human bonds are broken and we lack the love or skill to restore the hope of healing, give us grace and make us still.**
- 2. Through that stillness, with your Spirit come into our world of stress, for the sake of Christ forgiving all the failures we confess.**
- 3. You in us are bruised and broken: hear us as we seek release from the pain of earlier living; set us free and grant us peace.**
- 4. Send us, God of new beginnings, humbly hopeful into life. Use us as a means of blessing: make us stronger, give us faith.**
- 5. Give us faith to be more faithful, give us hope to be more true, give us love to go on learning: God, encourage and renew!**

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### **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 the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
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.**

**Peace**

**Offering**

**Offering Hymn: ELW #677 "This Little Light of Mine"**

- 1. This little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine; this little light of mine, I'm goin'a ;let it shine; this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

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**Offering Prayer**

**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.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

Surprising God, you call us to love our enemies and to show kindness in the face of cruelty. Let our actions be a shining witness of your overwhelming grace for all. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

As animals hibernate and fields lay dormant, let them be a reminder that life and faith are not static but always changing and growing. May we, with all creation, trust that the ending of one thing promises life in a new way. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for leaders and policymakers who work to reduce violence in our nations, cities, and towns. Give your wisdom and discernment amid heated arguments and differing viewpoints. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the victims of abuse and violence. Provide safe shelter and new beginnings to those experiencing domestic violence and dangerous situations. Enfold with love all who seek your healing care (*especially*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Empower our faith communities to be signs of your gracious love. Bless the local ministries of parish nursing and caregiving, that they will be a voice for those in need in our communities (*other ministries may be named*). God of grace, **hear our prayer**. *Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We give thanks for the enduring witness of those who have died before us (*especially Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna*). May their lives in you provide a witness of your everlasting grace. God of grace, **hear our prayer**.

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen**.

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

### **Preface**

### **Thanksgiving at the Table**

#### **Lord's Prayer**

**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.

#### **Distribution Hymn: ELW #482 "I Come With Joy"**

- 1. I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved and free, the life of Jesus to recall in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.**
- 2. I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed, the new community of love in Christ's communion bread, in Christ's communion bread.**
- 3. As Christ breaks bread, and gids us share, each proud division ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends, and strangers now are friends.**

4. **The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen, but ever near, is in such friendship better known, alive among us here, alive among us here.**
5. **Together met, together bound by all that God has done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.**

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## **Post Communion Blessing**

### **Prayer after Communion**

**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.**

### **Blessing**

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

## **Sending Hymn: ELW #608 "Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling"**

1. **Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me. See, on the portals he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me.**

Refrain: **"Come home, come home! You who are weary, come home."**

**Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"**

2. **Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading, pleading for you and for me? Why should we linger and heed not his mercies, mercies for you and for me?** Refrain

3. **Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised, promised for you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon, pardon for you and for me.** Refrain

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## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Live in hope.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Postlude**

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✚ **Thank You** Paul Meierding for leading worship today.

✚ **"A Fiesta of Joy"** is the second special event WELCOME has sponsored to the benefit of immigration families served by a partnership of five Mankato based Lutheran churches, including Calvary. WELCOME is asking us to help with this event by creating some baskets for a silent auction. The fundraiser is taking place at Christ the King on April 3rd. Save the date for the event & please consider

donating a basket, items for a basket or a donation towards a basket. See the various flyers posted around the church or ask Erica Kittelson for details.

✚ We are still looking for one more volunteer to join the **Call Committee**. Please see Bob or Eric if interested.

✚ **Prayers:** Please continue to keep our members and loved ones in your prayers, including Arlen, Lan-Shiang, Ken, Deb, Ruth, Barry, Monica, Chloe, Jeff, Jenny, Dennis, Caroline, Paul, Jeannie, Gregg Nelson the Schwantes family, and the Strand family.

Calvary Lutheran Church  
19216 Rapidan Avenue  
Mankato, Minnesota 56001

Pastor  
Ministers: All Members

Church Phone: 507-278-3317  
E-mail: [office@calvaryrapidan.org](mailto:office@calvaryrapidan.org)  
Website: [calvaryrapidan.org](http://calvaryrapidan.org)  
Facebook: Calvary Lutheran Rapidan

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