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Worship
January 24, 2021

(To watch the videotaped version of the worship service, click the link below)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/Uct8qX94ICK-omDHSc71en4w>

GATHERING

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

OPENING HYMN – “Sing a New Song”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, people of God, and worship the Christ.

***Once we were separated from him, aliens and strangers who did not belong,
without hope and without God in the world.***

Once we loved darkness rather than light. Once we could not sing the Lord’s song.

But now we are joined with Christ, brought near through his blood, for He is our peace.

Now we who lived in darkness have come into the light have been given a new song.

Let us come and worship the Living Light of Christ!

A BRIEF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins, trusting in the abundant grace of Christ.

A moment of silence

***You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin: our
own sins and the broken systems that bind us.***

We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love.

***We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to
consider the generations to come.***

Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone.

***Yet we are forgiven by our God through the Risen Christ, and we are called to be the
beloved community living out Christ’s justice and the Spirit’s reconciling peace. Amen***

HYMN OF PRAISE – “Glory to God”

GREETING

The Lord be with you

Be filled with the spirit of God today.

We worship to open our hearts for God’s blessings.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading

Jonah 3:1-5;10

The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, 'Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, 'Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Second Reading

Psalm 62:5-12

***For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
On God rests my deliverance and my honour;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.***

***Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.
Selah***

***Those of low estate are but a breath,
those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.
Put no confidence in extortion,
and set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.***

***Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,
and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.
For you repay to all
according to their work.***

PSALM RESPONSE – “Rest in God Alone”

Rest in God alone, rest in God alone, rest in God alone, my soul.

GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fish for people.’ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

SERMON

3rd Sunday After the Epiphany, Jan. 24th, 2021. “Dropping Their Nets.” Bethany

Not long after John was arrested Jesus started going around preaching the Good News saying, “The Time has come. The Kingdom of God is near; turn around and believe the Good News.”

Simon and Andrew had awakened early that morning. That was their habit. Ever since they had started their now prosperous fishing business, they were always the first boat out. On this desk Andrew had the motto, “The early worm gets the fish!” They were casting their nets that morning as usual. These were new nets and the latest model boat as well. “Only the best!” Simon always said. “Why bother wasting time and money trying to make old tools do new jobs. Get the best and give it your best!”

This was just another working day for S and A Fisheries, Inc. Then Jesus came along. They had heard of Jesus, a healer, and a holy man—from Nazareth of all places! He had a new way of preaching—with an authority that you just didn’t hear from those other preachers from Jerusalem. He seemed like a real man of God—maybe even the Messiah.

When Jesus saw Simon and Andrew, he called to them from the shore: “Simon, Andrew, come follow me! And I will make you fish for people!” it is not every day that a prophet calls you. So, they came ashore and they left behind their new boat, their new nets, their successful fishing business and followed Jesus.

Meanwhile, the Zebedee boys, James and John were still close to shore. Their father was one who didn’t believe in throwing anything away. “A penny saved is a penny earned,” he would always say. He ought to know because their family has been in the fishing business for generations. Zebedee and Sons was an institution on the Sea of Galilee. On their boats you could still see where Zebedee, Sr. had added and Sons on the side of the boats. And so there they sat mending the old nests and keeping the family business going.

James and John like Simon and Andrew had heard about Jesus. They had even heard him preach and seen him heal a few folks, and cast out demons. They were impressed. Their father was glad to see them take an interest in Jesus. Old man Zebedee believed in that old time religion, and Jesus reminded him of Elijah or one of the other prophets. Jesus was a teacher that said what he meant and then backed it up with action. He was not like the Pharisees. Sometimes you weren't even sure if they knew what they were saying. So, when Jesus came along and called James and John to follow him, they went along, just as had Simon and Andrew. After all Dad had the hired hands, they reasoned, to help. And off they went with Jesus.

While we get caught up in the following of Jesus and think how great that was, have any of us ever given any thought to what these men left behind?

For Simon and Andrew, they left behind their life's work. Their successful fishing business, along with the boats and the nets. Hardly sounds very bright then or now. And James and John—well they leave their father with bunch of hired hands—and while the hired hands might be very good, they still weren't family. And on top of leaving their father, they were leaving a business that went back on the Lake for generations! So, to follow Jesus these first four disciples left everything that they had known and had left their families to follow Jesus.

And what about us? What are we willing to leave behind when Jesus bids us, "Come, follow me!" Are we willing to leave behind indifference to those who are suffering in anyway? Are we willing to leave behind our self-righteousness? Are we willing to leave our anger and hatred against those who are different than we, or have differing views than ours? Are we willing to leave position, power, and wealth behind in order to follow Jesus? Are we? Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY - "Come Follow Me"

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God is Spirit, and we worship Him and must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

We believe that God is Light, and that if we walk in the light, we then have fellowship not only with one another, but with our Lord as well.

We believe that God is Love, and that everyone who loves is born of God and know God.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life and that whoever believes on Him, will abide forever.

(from the Book of Common Worship by Wilbur P Thirkield)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As we are guided by the Spirit, let us offer our prayers for the church, for the nation, for all in need, and for our world.

A brief silence

Pastor: Gracious God, in this time of worry, fear, division, uncertainty, we pray that you will bring insight, compassion, understanding, and strength of character to our leaders of communities, churches, states, and nation that calm and direction will be restored to our people. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Reader: Gracious God, we pray that we shall use wisely all the gifts of our world: the water that provides life to us all; the land that provides our food; for you call us to be good stewards of all that you have made, and we ask that you let it be so. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, we pray for the safety of all who protect us: police officers and firefighters, military personnel, peacekeepers, and for the leaders of governments. We pray that all act with justice and understanding to all whom they encounter. And Lord, we pray for the time when peace will come, and violence will be no more. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for our world, nation, and community in the midst of this Covid-19 pandemic. We know that health care workers are having to make difficult decisions of life and death. Give them wisdom in those decisions. Give strength that they may give care to those suffering with Covid and other diseases, and we ask that you would protect them from illness and despair. We also pray for all who are ill here at Bethany and we ask for hand of wholeness and healing; comfort and strength for all who are ill of body, mind, or spirit. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor: Listen to each of us Lord, as we come to you in this moment of silent prayer. It is into Your hands, great and compassionate God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Listen to each of us, Lord, as we come to you in a moment of silent prayer

Into your hands, great and compassionate God, we commend all for whom and about which we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OFFERING (Please mail your weekly offering to the church - 4300 N 82nd St. Scottsdale, AZ 85251)

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of all blessings, giver of all good gifts; day by day you shower us with what we need to live and prosper. With glad and generous hearts and in a response to thanksgiving, we return a portion of our wealth. May what we give be a symbol of our gratitude and a blessing of your love for those who may be helped through our offering. Amen.

THE 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.

BENEDICTION

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ fill you with every good blessing. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN – “God Has Chosen Me”

DISMISSAL

Go in Peace...to live and serve in the way of the cross. Thanks be to God.