

Salem Lutheran Church

115 N. Washington Ave., Albert Lea

Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 14, 2024

All the baptized have a calling in God's world. God calls not just pastors and deacons but also the youngest child, like Samuel. The story of the calling of Nathanael plays with the idea of place. Nathanael initially dismisses Jesus because he comes from Nazareth. But where we come from isn't important; it's where—or rather whom—we come to. Jesus refers to Jacob, who had a vision in a place he called "the house of God, and . . . the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). Jesus says he himself is the place where Nathanael will meet God.

**Congregation: please stand. If standing is difficult for you, please feel free to remain seated.*

Gathering

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

Prelude

Announcements

***Confession and Forgiveness**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
creator of darkness and light,
word of truth,
wind sweeping over the waters.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our rock and refuge,
we pour out our hearts before you.

We have known you but have not always loved you.

**We have wounded one another
and sinned against you.**

**We have not always recognized the Holy Spirit
dwelling in each of us.**

Remember your covenant.

Renew your creation.

**Restore us,
that we might proclaim your good news to all.
Amen.**

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.
God has spoken:
The time of grace is now.
In Jesus, the reign of God has come near.
By the authority of ✠ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
You are God's beloved.
Amen.

***HYMN**

He Comes to Us as One Unknown

#737

***Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***Canticle of Praise**

Glory Be to God

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***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, most merciful redeemer, for the countless blessings and benefits you give. May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day praising you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Word

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

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)

At a time when visions are rare and unexpected, the LORD comes to Samuel and calls him to speak the divine word. Though just a boy, Samuel responds to God obediently, as Eli the priest has taught him to respond. This marks the beginning of Samuel's prophetic ministry.

¹Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

²At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; ³the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. ⁴Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" ⁵and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. ⁶The LORD called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me."

But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." ⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." [¹¹Then the LORD said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. ¹²On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. ¹⁴Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever."

¹⁵Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." He said, "Here I am." ¹⁷Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." ¹⁸So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, "It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him."

¹⁹As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.]

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

You have searched me out and known me. (Ps. 139:1)

¹LORD, you have | searched me out;

O LORD, you | have known me.

²**You know my sitting down and my | rising up;
you discern my thoughts | from afar.**

³You trace my journeys and my | resting-places
and are acquainted with | all my ways.

⁴**Indeed, there is not a word | on my lips,
but you, O LORD, know it | altogether. R**

⁵You encompass me, behind | and before,
and lay your | hand upon me.

⁶**Such knowledge is too wonder- | ful for me;
it is so high that I cannot at- | tain to it.**

¹³For you yourself created my | inmost parts;
you knit me together in my | mother's womb.

¹⁴**I will thank you because I am mar- | velously made;**

your works are wonderful, and I know it well. R
¹⁵My body was not hidden from you,
 while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.
¹⁶**Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb; all of them were
 written in your book;
 my days were fashioned before they came to be.**
¹⁷How deep I find your thoughts, O God!
 How great is the sum of them!
¹⁸If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand;
 to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Paul helps the Corinthians understand that God has claimed the entirety of their lives through the death of Christ. Hence Christian relationships and conduct, including areas of human sexuality, are to reflect the reality that we belong to Christ and that the Holy Spirit lives within us.

¹²"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. ¹³"Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food," and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. ¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, "The two shall be one flesh." ¹⁷But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body. The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL READING: John 1:43-51**

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In John's gospel, Jesus' ministry begins with the call of disciples, who then bring others to Jesus. Philip's friend Nathanael moves from skepticism to faith when he accepts the invitation to "Come and see."

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can

anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." ⁴⁹Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

The gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Mark Boorsma

***HYMN**

O Jesus, I Have Promised

#810

***NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Encourage the ministry and mission of the church, God of truth. Let the leaders of your church be trustworthy and accountable stewards, that all its resources and outreach bring hope and healing to communities.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Delight in the goodness of your creation, God of fig trees and fertile soil. Heal areas of the world harmed by human greed. Restore those recovering from natural disaster. Protect our forests and waterways and all the creatures that live in them.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Call the leaders of every neighborhood and nation to serve faithfully, God of wisdom. Give them visions of justice and unity. Lead them to action that promotes equitable partnership and uplifts those on the margins of society.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Hold in your care any who suffer and struggle, God of compassion. You who know our inner hearts, be present with any who are oppressed, victims of racism or cultural bias, and all who long for respite or restoration. We pray especially for Woody, Larry, Shirley, Dean, Tom, Leland, Marianne, Andrea, Mary, Kathy and all others on our hearts and minds this day.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Give this congregation the anticipation and excitement of Samuel, so inspired and empowered to do your work in the world, God of unity. Make us faithful as we build communities of inclusion and mutual care.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Trusting God who raised Jesus and will also raise us in spirit and truth, we remember all who have died and are at peace among the saints (*especially the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. whose faithful advocacy for peace and justice continues to embolden the church*).

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

Thanksgiving

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

*We very much appreciate your continued giving and generosity at this time.
Offering can be placed in the offering plate at the door.*

OFFERING HYMN

The First Noel

(vss. 1,5) #300

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

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

**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,
ever and ever. Amen.**

Sending

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

***Blessing**

God who names you,
Christ who claims you,
and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,
✠ bless you and remain with you always.
Amen.

***HYMN**

Shine, Jesus, Shine

#671

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. You are God's beloved.
Thanks be to God.

Assisting in Worship

Worship Assistant: Larry Lahs Sr.
Ushers: Mark & Marcia Gayken
Coffee: Pat Gjersvik

Thank you to Bev Lombardi for the beautiful organ music this morning.

This Week at Salem

Tuesday, January 16th: 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
6:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting
Thursday, January 18th: 2:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study
Friday, January 19th: 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
Sunday, January 21st: 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2024 immediately after the worship service. It is important for all members to attend. If you have a report due for the annual report please get it to the Church Office as soon as you are able.