

The Season of Epiphany

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 1-Year Lectionary*

Revised January 23, 2017

The Epiphany of our Lord

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 1-Year Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Lesson

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD is dawning upon you.
²Look, the darkness covers the earth,
and deep darkness covers the peoples,
but the LORD will dawn upon you,
and his glory will be seen over you.
³Nations will walk to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
⁴Look up. Look all around and see!
All of them are gathered. They come to you.
Your sons will come from far away,
and your daughters will be carried on the hip.
⁵Then you will look and be radiant.
Your heart will race with excitement and burst with joy.
For the great riches of the sea will be delivered to you.
The wealth of the nations will come to you.
⁶Caravans of camels will cover your land,
young camels from Midian and Ephah.
All of them from Sheba will come.
They will carry gold and incense,
and they will announce the good news of the LORD's praises.

Second Lesson

Ephesians 3:2-12

²Surely you have heard of the administration of God's grace given to me for you, ³namely, that the mystery was made known to me by revelation (as I have already written briefly). ⁴When you read this, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ. ⁵This mystery was not made known to people in past generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets. ⁶This mystery is that in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and people who also share in the promise through the gospel.

⁷I became a servant of this gospel, in keeping with the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power. ⁸To me—even though I am the very least of all the saints—was given this grace: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ⁹and to enlighten everyone about the administration of this mystery. In past ages this mystery remained hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰He did this so that, through the church, the multifaceted wisdom of God in the heavenly

places might now be made known to the rulers and authorities. ¹¹This was done according to the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹²In him we can freely approach God with confidence through faith in him.

Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, when Herod was king, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, ²“Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³When King Herod heard this, he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴He gathered together all the people’s chief priests and experts in the law. He asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, because this was written through the prophet:

⁶You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are certainly not least among the rulers of Judah: because out of you will come a ruler, who will shepherd my people, Israel.”

⁷Then Herod secretly summoned the Wise Men and found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report to me, so that I may also go and worship him.”

⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. Then the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them, until it stood still over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced with overwhelming joy. ¹¹After they went into the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother, they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²Since they had been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

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The First Sunday after the Epiphany—The Baptism of our Lord

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 1-Year Lectionary
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First Lesson

Isaiah 42:1-14

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight.
I am placing my Spirit upon him.
He will bring forth the verdict for the nations.
²He will not cry out.
He will not raise his voice.
He will not make his voice heard in the street.
³A bent reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not snuff out.
He will faithfully bring forth the verdict.
⁴He will not grow dim, and he will not be crushed
until he establishes the verdict on the earth.
The coastlands will wait for his teaching.
⁵This is what the true God says, the LORD,
who creates the heavens and stretches them out,
who spreads out the earth
and everything that comes out of it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and life to those who walk on it.
⁶“I am the LORD.
I am calling you in righteousness.
I will grasp your hand,
and I will guard you.
I will appoint you to be a covenant for the people,
to be a light for the nations,
⁷to open blind eyes,
to bring the prisoners out of the dungeon
and to bring those who live in darkness out of prison.
⁸“I am the LORD; that is my name.
I will not give my glory to another,
nor my praise to idols.
⁹Look, the former things have happened,
and I am declaring new things.

I am making them known to you before they spring forth.”

¹⁰Sing to the LORD a new song.

Sing his praise from the end of the earth,
you people going down to the sea
and everything that fills it,
you islands and those who inhabit them.

¹¹Let the wilderness and its towns lift up their voice,
along with the villages where Kedar lives.

Let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy.
From the top of mountains, let them shout.

¹²Let them give glory to the LORD,
and let them declare his praise among the islands.

¹³The LORD will go out like a hero.
Like a warrior, he will stir up zeal.
He will shout. Yes, he will raise a war cry.
He will be heroic against his enemies.

¹⁴I have been silent for a long time.
I have kept still. I have restrained myself.
Like a woman giving birth, I will scream.
I will gasp and pant.

Second Lesson

Acts 10:34-38

³⁴Then Peter began to speak: “Now I really am beginning to understand that God does not show favoritism, ³⁵but in every nation, anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶He sent his word to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

³⁷“You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached. ³⁸God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the Devil, because God was with him.

Gospel

Matthew 3:13-17

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to be baptized by John at the Jordan. ¹⁴But John tried to stop him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?”

¹⁵But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, because it is proper for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John let him. ¹⁶After Jesus was baptized, he immediately went up out of the water. Suddenly, the heavens were opened for him! He saw the Spirit of God, descending like a dove and landing on him, ¹⁷and a voice out of the heavens said, “This is my Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with him.”

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The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

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First Lesson

Isaiah 61:1-3

The Spirit of the Lord the LORD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach the good news to the afflicted.
He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom to the captives,
and release for those who are bound,
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance for our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give to them a beautiful crown instead of ashes,
the oil of joy instead of mourning,
a cloak of praise instead of a faint spirit,
so that they will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD to display his beauty.

Second Lesson

Romans 12:1-5

Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy and pleasing to God—which is your appropriate worship. ²Also, do not continue to conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you test and approve what is the will of God—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

³So by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought, but think in a way that results in sound judgment, as God distributed a measure of faith to each of you. ⁴For we have many members in one body, and not all the members have the same function. ⁵In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

Gospel

Luke 2:41-52

⁴¹Every year his parents traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. ⁴²When he was twelve years old, they went up according to the custom of the Festival. ⁴³When the days had ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it. ⁴⁴Since they thought he was in their group, they went a day's journey. Then they began to look for him among

their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.

⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us this way? See, your father and I have been anxiously looking for you.”

⁴⁹He said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be taking care of my Father’s business?” ⁵⁰They did not understand what he was telling them.

⁵¹He went down with them and came to Nazareth. He was always obedient to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. ⁵²Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.

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The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

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First Lesson

Exodus 15:22-27

²²Then Moses led Israel on from the Red Sea, and they went out to the Wilderness of Shur. They traveled for three days in the wilderness but found no water. ²³When they came to Marah, they were not able to drink the waters of Marah, because they were bitter. That is why they named the place Marah. ²⁴The people grumbled against Moses, and they said, “What will we drink?” ²⁵Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him some wood. Moses threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink.

There the LORD made a decree and ruling for them, and there he tested them. ²⁶So he said, “If only you would listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in his eyes, and pay attention to his commandments, and keep all his regulations, I would not place on you any of the diseases that I placed on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”

²⁷Then they came to Elim where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there by the waters.

Second Lesson

Romans 12:6-16a

⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace God has given us. If the gift is prophecy, do it in complete agreement with the faith. ⁷If it is serving, then serve. If it is teaching, then teach. ⁸If it is encouraging, then encourage. If it is contributing, be generous. If it is leadership, be diligent. If it is showing mercy, do it cheerfully.

⁹Do not just pretend to love others. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another with brotherly love. Think of others as deserving more honor than yourselves. ¹¹Do not be lagging behind in zeal, but be fervent in spirit, as you continue to serve the Lord. ¹²Be joyful in hope. Endure trials patiently. Persist in prayer. ¹³Share with the saints who are in need. Be quick to welcome strangers as guests.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who are rejoicing; weep with those who are weeping. ¹⁶Have the same respect for one another.

Gospel

John 2:1-11

Three days later, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there. ²Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.

³When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no wine.”

⁴Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does that have to do with you and me? My time has not come yet.”

⁵His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

⁶Six stone water jars, which the Jews used for ceremonial cleansing, were standing there, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. ⁸Then he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.” And they did.

⁹When the master of the banquet tasted the water that had now become wine, he did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew). The master of the banquet called the bridegroom ¹⁰and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when the guests have had plenty to drink, then the cheaper wine. You saved the good wine until now!”

¹¹This, the beginning of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

²³Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people.

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The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

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First Lesson

2 Kings 5:1-15a

Naaman, the commander of the king of Aram's army, was a great man in the opinion of his lord. He was honored because the LORD had provided victory for Aram through him. Although he was a powerful warrior, he had leprosy.

²Raiding parties went out from Aram and they brought back a young girl. She served Naaman's wife. ³She said to her mistress, "If only my master stood before the prophet who is in Samaria, because he would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴So he went and told his lord, "The servant girl from the land of Israel said this and this."

⁵Then the king of Aram said, "Go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman went and he took ten talents of silver and six thousand gold pieces and ten sets of clothing. ⁶Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel which said, "Look, with this letter, I am sending you Naaman, my servant, so that you can cure him of his leprosy."

⁷When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God that I can kill and make alive? Why is he sending a man to me to heal him from his leprosy? Look how he is looking for pretext to fight against me!"

⁸But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king: "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."

⁹So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰But Elisha sent a messenger to him to say, "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan. Then your flesh will be restored and you will be clean."

¹¹But Naaman was angry and he left, saying, "Look, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God and wave his hand over the place and I will be cured of the leprosy!' ¹²Aren't the Abana and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" And he turned and went away furious.

¹³But his servants approached and spoke to him. They said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not do it? How much more when he says to you, 'Wash and be clean'?"

¹⁴So he went down and dipped in the Jordan seven times, just as the man of God had said. Then his flesh was restored like the flesh of a small child and he was clean. ¹⁵Then he and his whole escort went back to the man of God. He stood in front of Elisha and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel."

Second Lesson

Romans 12:16b-21

^{16b}Do not be arrogant, but associate with the humble. Do not think too highly of yourselves.

¹⁷Do not pay anyone back evil for evil. Focus on those things that everyone considers noble. ¹⁸If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, maintain peace with everyone. ¹⁹Do not take revenge, dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰But:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him a drink.

For by doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Gospel

Matthew 8:1-13

When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. ²Just then, a leper came to him and bowed down to him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

³Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean." Immediately he was healed of his leprosy. ⁴Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one. Instead, go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

⁵When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him and pleaded with him, ⁶"Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed and suffering terribly."

⁷Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

⁸The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy for you to come under my roof. But only say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹For I am also a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

¹⁰When Jesus heard this, he marveled. He said to those who were following him, "Amen^a I tell you: I have not found such great faith in anyone in Israel. ¹¹I tell you that many will come from the east and the west and will recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²But the children of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

¹³Jesus said to the centurion, "Go. Let it be done for you as you have believed." And his servant was healed at that very hour.

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^a Usually, people say Amen at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is I solemnly tell you the truth. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

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First Lesson

Exodus 14:13-22

¹³Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm, and see the salvation from the LORD, which he will perform for you today. For the Egyptians you see today, you will never see again.

¹⁴The LORD will fight for you. You must wait quietly.”

¹⁵The LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to set out. ¹⁶As for you, lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide the sea so that the Israelites can go through the middle of the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷I myself will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go into the sea after them, and I will gain glory through Pharaoh and his entire army, through his chariots and his charioteers. ¹⁸The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory through Pharaoh, his chariots, and his charioteers.”

¹⁹Then the Angel of God, who was going in front of the Israelite forces, moved and went behind them. The pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and stood behind them. ²⁰It went between the Egyptian forces and the Israelite forces. The cloud was dark on one side, but it lit up the night on the other. Neither group approached the other all night long.

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all night long the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned the sea into dry land. The waters were divided. ²²The Israelites went into the middle of the sea on dry ground. The waters were like a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Second Lesson

Romans 13:8-10

⁸Do not owe anyone anything except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments—do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet (and if there is any other commandment)—are summed up in this statement: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰Love does no harm to a neighbor, so love is the fulfillment of the law.

Gospel

Matthew 8:23-27

²³When he got into a boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴Suddenly a terrible storm came up on the sea, so that their boat was covered by the waves. But Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵They went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to die!”

²⁶He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?” Then he got up, rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a complete calm.

²⁷The men were amazed, saying, “What kind of a man is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!”

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The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

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First Lesson

Exodus 34:5-10

⁵The LORD came down in the cloud. He took his stand there with Moses and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶The LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed: “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and overflowing with mercy and truth, ⁷maintaining mercy for thousands, forgiving guilt and rebellion and sin. He will by no means clear the guilty. He calls their children and their children’s children to account for the guilt of the fathers, even to the third and the fourth generation.”

⁸Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshipped. ⁹He said, “If I have now found favor in your sight, Lord, please let the Lord go along with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our guilt and our sin, and accept us as your possession.”

¹⁰The LORD said,

See, I am making a covenant. In the presence of all your people I will do marvelous things such as have never been created anywhere on earth or in any nation. So all the people who are around you will see the work of the LORD. For it is an awe-inspiring thing that I will do for you.

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 9:24-10:5

²⁴Do you not know that when runners compete in the stadium, they all run, but only one receives the prize? Run like that—to win. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable victor’s wreath, but we do it for an imperishable one. ²⁶That is why there is nothing aimless about the way I run. There is no pummeling of the air in the way I box. ²⁷Instead I hit my body hard and make it my slave so that, after preaching to others, I myself will not be rejected.

^{10:1}For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea, ²and they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them—and that rock was Christ! ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them. He had them die in the wilderness.

Gospel

Matthew 20:1-16

“Indeed the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing to pay the workers a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³He also went out about the third hour and saw others standing unemployed in the marketplace. ⁴To these he said, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is right.’

So they went. ⁵Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did the same thing. ⁶When he went out about the eleventh hour, he found others standing unemployed. He said to them, ‘Why have you stood here all day unemployed?’

⁷“They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’

“He told them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When it was evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last group and ending with the first.’

⁹“When those who were hired around the eleventh hour came, they each received a denarius. ¹⁰When those who were hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But they each received a denarius too. ¹¹After they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner: ¹²‘Those who were last worked one hour, and you made them equal to us who have endured the burden of the day and the scorching heat!’

¹³“But he answered one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not make an agreement with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last one hired the same as I also gave to you. ¹⁵Can’t I do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶In the same way, the last will be first, and the first, last.”

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The Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

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First Lesson

Isaiah 55:10-13

¹⁰Just as the rain and the snow come down from the sky
and do not return there unless they water the earth,
make it give birth, and cause it to sprout,
and it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹so it will be with my Word that goes forth from my mouth.

It will not return to me empty.

Rather, it will accomplish whatever I please,
and it will succeed in the purpose for which I sent it.

¹²Because in joy you will go forth,
and in peace you will be carried along.

The mountains and the hills will burst forth before you with shouts of joy,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

¹³Instead of the thorn, a fir tree will grow up.
Instead of the brier, a myrtle tree will grow up.
And it will make a name for the LORD,
an everlasting sign that will not be cut off.

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 11:19-12:9

¹⁹You gladly put up with fools, since you are just so wise! ²⁰In fact, you put up with it if anyone makes you his slave, robs you, takes advantage of you, looks down on you, or strikes you in the face! ²¹I am ashamed to say that we were too weak for that!

However bold anyone might be (I am speaking in a foolish way), I am going to be bold too. ²²Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's seed? So am I. ²³Are they ministers of Christ? (I am speaking in a crazy way.) I am even more. I've done more hard work, been in prisons more often, been whipped far more, and I've been close to death many times. ²⁴Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. One time I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day on the open sea. ²⁶I have often been on journeys, in danger from rivers, in danger from robbers, in danger from my own people, in danger from Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the wilderness, in danger on the sea, in danger among false brothers. ²⁷I have worked hard and struggled. I've spent many sleepless nights. I've been hungry and thirsty. I've gone without food many times. I've been cold and lacked clothing.

²⁸Besides those external matters, there is the daily pressure on me of my concern for all the churches. ²⁹Who is weak without my being weak? Who falls into sin without my being distressed?

³⁰If it is necessary that I boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. ³¹The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is eternally blessed, knows that I am not lying. ³²In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas kept the city of Damascus on alert to arrest me, ³³but I was lowered in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped from his hands.

^{12:1}I must go on boasting, although there is nothing to be gained. So I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ²I know a man in Christ who, fourteen years ago, was carried up to the third heaven (whether in the body, I do not know, or out of the body, I do not know—God knows). ³And I know that such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know—God knows) ⁴was carried up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words that a man cannot possibly speak. ⁵On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except about my weaknesses. ⁶Indeed, if I wanted to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from doing this, so that no one will think more highly of me than what he sees in me or hears from me.

⁷Therefore, to keep me from becoming arrogant due to the extraordinary nature of these revelations, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me, so that I would not become arrogant. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that he would take it away from me. ⁹And he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, because my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will be glad to boast all the more in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may shelter me.

Gospel

Luke 8:4-15

⁴As a large crowd was gathering and people from one town after another were making their way to him, he spoke using a parable. ⁵“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some fell along the path. It was trampled, and the birds of the sky devoured it. ⁶Other seed fell on rocky ground. As soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns. The thorns grew up with it and choked it. ⁸Other seed fell into good soil. It grew and produced fruit—one hundred times as much as was sown.” As he said these things, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!”

⁹His disciples asked him, “What does this parable mean?”

¹⁰He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest I speak in parables so that ‘even though they see, they may not see, and even though they hear, they may not understand.’ ¹¹This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹²Those along the path are the ones who hear it, but then the Devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts to keep them from believing and being saved. ¹³Those on the rocky ground are the ones who, when they hear, receive the word with joy, but they have no root. So they believe for a while, but then fall away in a time of testing. ¹⁴The seeds that fell into the thorns are the ones who hear the word, but as they go on their way they are choked by the worries, riches, and pleasures of life, so they do not mature. ¹⁵And the seeds in the good ground are the ones who hear the word with an honest and good heart, hold on to it tightly, and produce fruit as they patiently endure.

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The Eighth Sunday after the Epiphany

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 1-Year Lectionary
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First Lesson

Isaiah 42:5-9

⁵This is what the true God says, the LORD,
who creates the heavens and stretches them out,
who spreads out the earth
and everything that comes out of it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and life to those who walk on it.

⁶“I am the LORD.

I am calling you in righteousness.

I will grasp your hand,
and I will guard you.

I will appoint you to be a covenant for the people,
to be a light for the nations,

⁷to open blind eyes,
to bring the prisoners out of the dungeon
and to bring those who live in darkness out of prison.

⁸“I am the LORD; that is my name.

I will not give my glory to another,
nor my praise to idols.

⁹Look, the former things have happened,
and I am declaring new things.

I am making them known to you before they spring forth.”

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and know all the mysteries and have all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give away everything I own, and if I give up my body that I may be burned but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient. Love is kind. Love does not envy. It does not brag. It is not arrogant. ⁵It does not behave indecently. It is not selfish. It is not irritable. It does not keep a record of wrongs. ⁶It does not rejoice over unrighteousness but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never comes to an end. But if there are prophetic gifts, they will be done away with; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be done away with. ⁹For we know only in part, and we

prophesy only in part, ¹⁰but when that which is complete has come, that which is partial will be done away with. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹²Now we see indirectly using a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I was fully known.

¹³So now these three remain: faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

Gospel

Luke 18:31-43

³¹He took the Twelve aside and said to them, “Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. ³²Indeed, he will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, mistreat him, spit on him, ³³flog him, and kill him. On the third day, he will rise again.”

³⁴They did not understand any of these things. What he said was hidden from them, and they did not understand what was said.

³⁵As he approached Jericho, a blind man sat by the road, begging. ³⁶When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. ³⁷They told him that Jesus the Nazarene was passing by. ³⁸He called out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ³⁹Those who were at the front of the crowd rebuked him, telling him to be quiet. But he kept calling out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁰Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, he asked him, ⁴¹“What do you want me to do for you?”

He said, “Lord, I want to see again.”

⁴²Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight. Your faith has saved you.”

⁴³Immediately he received his sight and began following Jesus, glorifying God. All the people, when they saw this, gave praise to God.

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The Last Sunday after the Epiphany: The Transfiguration of Our Lord

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First Lesson

Deuteronomy 18:15-18

¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brother Israelites. Listen to him.

¹⁶That is exactly what you asked from the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly. You said, “Do not let me hear the voice of the LORD my God anymore, and do not let me see this great fire again, or I will die.”

¹⁷Then the LORD said to me, “They have done well by saying what they said. ¹⁸I will raise up a prophet for them from among their brothers, like you, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he will speak to them everything that I command him.

Second Lesson

2 Peter 1:16-21

¹⁶To be sure, we were not following cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the powerful appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷For he received honor and glory from God the Father, when the voice came to him from within the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” ¹⁸We heard this voice, which came out of heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹We also have the completely reliable prophetic word. You do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Morning Star rises in your hearts, ²⁰since we know this above all else: No prophecy of Scripture comes about from someone’s own interpretation. ²¹In fact, no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Gospel

Matthew 17:1-9

Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John the brother of James; and he led them up onto a high mountain by themselves. ²There he was transfigured in front of them. His face was shining like the sun. His clothing became as white as the light. ³Just then, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus.

⁴Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you want, I will make three shelters here: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them. Just then, a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him.”

⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell face down and were terrified. ⁷Jesus approached and as he touched them, he said, “Get up, and do not be afraid.” ⁸When they opened their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus alone. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Do not tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

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