

The Season of Epiphany

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary*

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The Epiphany of our Lord

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

Old Testament

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD is dawning upon you.
²Look, 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 have been gathered. They are coming to you.
Your sons will come from far away,
and people will carry your daughters on their side.
⁵Then you will look and be radiant.
Your heart will race with excitement and burst with joy.
For great riches from 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 those from Sheba will come.
They will carry gold and incense,
and they will announce the good news of the praise of the LORD.

Epistle

Romans 3:23–31

²³Because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God publicly displayed as the atonement seat through faith in his blood. God did this to demonstrate his justice, since, in his divine restraint, he had left the sins that were committed earlier unpunished. ²⁶He did this to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so that he would be both just and the one who justifies the person who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷What happens to boasting then? It has been eliminated. By what principle—by the principle of works? No, but by the principle of faith. ²⁸For we conclude that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law. ²⁹Or is he only the God of the Jews? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, also of the Gentiles, ³⁰since there is one God who will justify the circumcised person by faith

and the uncircumcised person through the very same faith. ³¹So are we doing away with the law by this faith? Absolutely not! Instead, we are upholding the law.

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.

The First Sunday after the Epiphany

Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:1-3

The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the afflicted.
He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for 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 them a crown of beauty 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.

Epistle

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.

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

Old Testament

Deuteronomy 18:15–19

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. ¹⁹Anyone who will not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.”

Epistle

Romans 12:6-16

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. Do not be arrogant, but associate with the humble. Do not think too highly of yourselves.

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.

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
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Old Testament

Jeremiah 33:6-9

⁶But watch! I will bring it health and healing. I will heal them and reveal an abundance of peace and truth to them. ⁷I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and I will build them up as they were in the beginning. ⁸I will cleanse them from all the guilt they incurred by sinning against me. I will pardon all the guilt they incurred by sinning against me and by their rebellion against me. ⁹This will provide a name of joy, praise, and glory for me, in the presence of all the nations of the earth. They will hear about all the good that I do for this city, and they will tremble in awe because of the good, and because of the peace I provide for it.

Epistle

Romans 12:16-21

¹⁶Have the same respect for one another. 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.

^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 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
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Old Testament

Isaiah 43:1-3

But now this is what the LORD says,
the LORD who created you, O Jacob,
the LORD who formed you, O Israel.

Do not be afraid, because I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name. You are mine.

²When you cross through the waters, I will be with you.

When you cross the rivers, they will not sweep you away.

When you walk through fire, you will not be burned,
and the flame will not set you on fire.

³Because I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior,

I gave Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

Epistle

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!”

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
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Old Testament

Jeremiah 17:5-10

⁵This is what the LORD says.

Cursed is anyone who trusts in mankind,
who seeks his strength from human flesh,
and who turns his heart away from the LORD.

⁶He will be like a juniper bush in the wasteland.

He will not see good things when they come.

He lives in a dry place in the wilderness,
in a salty land where no one lives.

⁷But blessed is anyone who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.

⁸He will be like a tree planted by water.

It sends out its roots to the stream.

It does not fear the heat when it comes.

Its leaves will remain green.

It is not concerned about a time of drought.

It does not stop producing fruit.

⁹The heart is more deceitful than anything.

It is beyond cure.

Who can understand it?

¹⁰I, the LORD, am the one who searches the heart
and examines the mind,

to reward a man according to what he has done,
according to what his deeds deserve.

Epistle

Colossians 3:12-17

¹²Therefore, as God's elect, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³Bear with one another and forgive each other if anyone has a complaint against anyone else. Forgive, just as Christ forgave you. ¹⁴And, in addition to all these things, put on love, which ties things together in perfect unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, to which you were also called, in one body. And be thankful.

¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And everything you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Gospel

Matthew 13:24–30

²⁴He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But while people were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶When the plants sprouted and produced heads of grain, the weeds also appeared. ²⁷The servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did the weeds come from?’ ²⁸He said to them, ‘An enemy did this.’ The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and gather up the weeds?’ ²⁹‘No,’ he answered, ‘because when you gather up the weeds, you might pull up the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, “First, gather up the weeds, bind them in bundles, and burn them. Then, gather the wheat into my barn.”’”

The Presentation of Our Lord

Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
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Old Testament

Malachi 3:1-4

Look! I am sending my messenger! He will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord, whom you are seeking, will come to his temple! The Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight, will surely come, says the LORD of Armies.

²But who can endure the day when he comes? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like launderers' bleach! ³He will be seated like a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and like silver. They will belong to the LORD and bring him an offering in righteousness.

⁴Judah and Jerusalem's offerings will be pleasing to the LORD as they were in the days of old, in years long ago.

Epistle

Hebrews 2:14–18

¹⁴Therefore, since the children share flesh and blood, he also shared the same flesh and blood, so that through death he could destroy the one who had the power of death (that is, the Devil) ¹⁵and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. ¹⁶For surely he was not concerned with helping angels but with helping Abraham's offspring. ¹⁷For this reason, he had to become like his brothers in every way, in order that he would be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God, so that he could pay for the sins of the people. ¹⁸Indeed, because he suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Gospel

Luke 2:22–40

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. ²³(As it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male will be called holy to the Lord.") ²⁴And they came to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, waiting for the comfort of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary according to the law, ²⁸Simeon took him into his arms and praised God. He said,

²⁹Lord, you now dismiss your servant in peace, according to your word,

³⁰because my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared before the face of all people,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.

³³Joseph and the child's mother were amazed at the things that were spoken about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Listen carefully, this child is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel and for a sign that is spoken against, ³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶Anna, a prophetess, was there. She was a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then she was a widow of eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple complex, since she was worshipping with fasting and prayers night and day. ³⁸Standing nearby at that very hour, she gave thanks to the Lord. She kept speaking about the child to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had accomplished everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town, Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him.

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:10-11

¹⁰I will rejoice greatly in the LORD.

My soul will celebrate because of my God,
for he has clothed me in garments of salvation.

With a robe of righteousness he covered me,
like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress like a priest,
and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.

¹¹For as the earth produces its growth,
and as a garden causes what has been sown to sprout up,
so God the LORD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up
in the presence of all the nations.

Epistle

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.”

Septuagesima Sunday

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
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Old Testament

Jeremiah 1:4-10

⁴The word of the LORD came to me.

⁵Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you,
and before you were born, I set you apart.

I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations.

⁶But I said, “Ah, LORD God! I really do not know how to speak! I am only a child!”

⁷The LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone to whom I send you and say whatever I command you. ⁸Do not be afraid of them, because I am with you, and I will rescue you, declares the LORD.”

⁹Then the LORD stretched out his hand and touched my mouth. The LORD said to me:

There! I have now placed my words in your mouth.

¹⁰Look, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms
to uproot and to tear down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.

Epistle

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."

Sexagesima Sunday

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
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Old Testament

Isaiah 55:10-13

¹⁰Just as the rain and the snow come down from the sky
and do not return there
unless they first water the earth, make it give birth, and cause it to sprout,
so that it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

¹¹in the same way my word that goes out from my mouth
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.

¹²Yes, you will go out with joy,
and in peace you will be carried along.

The mountains and the hills will break out in shouts of joy before you,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

¹³Instead of thorns, a fir tree will grow up.

Instead of briars, a myrtle tree will grow up.

This will make a name for the LORD.

It will serve as an everlasting sign that will not be cut off.

Epistle

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.

Quinquagesima Sunday

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

Old Testament

Isaiah 35:3-7

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make the shaky knees steady.

⁴Tell those who have a fearful heart:

Be strong.

Do not be afraid.

Look! Your God will come with vengeance.

With God's own retribution, he will come and save you.

⁵Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,
and the ears of the deaf will be unplugged.

⁶The crippled will leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy.

Waters will flow in the wilderness,
and streams in the wasteland.

⁷The burning sand will become a pool,
and in the thirsty ground there will be springs of water.

There will be grass, reeds, and rushes where the haunts of jackals once lay.

Epistle

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.

The Baptism of Jesus

*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary Historic Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

Old Testament

Isaiah 42:1-9

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight.
I am placing my Spirit on him.
He will announce a just 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 a just verdict.
⁴He will not burn out, and he will not be broken
until he establishes justice on the earth.
The coastlands will wait for his law.
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 it produces,
who gives breath to the people on it
and life to those who walk on it.
⁶I am the LORD.
I have called you in righteousness.
I will hold on to 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 the eyes of the blind,
to bring the prisoners out from the dungeon,
and to bring those who sit in darkness out of prison.
⁸I 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 taken place,
and I am declaring new things.
I am making them known to you before they spring forth.

Epistle

1 Peter 3:18–22

¹⁸...Christ also suffered once for sins in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in flesh but was made alive in spirit, ¹⁹in which he also went and made an announcement to the spirits in prison. ²⁰These spirits disobeyed long ago, when God's patience was waiting in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In this ark a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. ²¹And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the body but the guarantee of a good conscience before God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. ²²He went to heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to 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."