

The Season of Epiphany

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*

Revised November 14, 2020

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The Epiphany of Our Lord

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version®

Old Testament / First Reading

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 / Second Reading

Ephesians 3:1-12

For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—
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.

Holy 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—The Baptism of our Lord

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 1:1–5

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was undeveloped and empty. Darkness covered the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

³God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good. He separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” There was evening and there was morning—the first day.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 6:1–11

What shall we say then? Shall we keep on sinning so that grace may increase? ²Absolutely not! We died to sin. How can we go on living in it any longer? ³Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him by this baptism into his death, so that just as he was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too would also walk in a new life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united with him in the likeness of his resurrection.

⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him, to make our sinful body powerless, so that we would not continue to serve sin. ⁷For the person who has died has been declared free from sin. ⁸And since we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead, he will never die again. Death no longer has control over him. ¹⁰For the death he died, he died to sin once and for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹In the same way also consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:4-11

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. ⁶John was clothed in camel’s hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He preached, “One more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals! ⁸I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰Just as Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with you.”

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

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

The boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days. Prophetic vision was not common.

²Now it happened that Eli's eyes had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see. Once when Eli was lying down in his place ³and God's lamp had not yet gone out, Samuel was lying down in the LORD's temple, where God's ark was. ⁴The LORD called Samuel, and Samuel said, "I am here."
⁵He ran to Eli, and said, "I am here, since you called me."

Eli said, "I did not call. Lie down again." So he went and lay down.

⁶Then the LORD called once more, "Samuel!"

So Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "I am here, since you called me."

He answered, "I did not call, my son. Lie down again."

⁷Now Samuel had not yet experienced the LORD's presence, that is, the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸The LORD called Samuel for the third time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, "I am here, since you called me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the young man. ⁹So Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'"

So Samuel went and once again lay down in his place. ¹⁰The LORD came and stood there and called as he had the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

¹¹The LORD said to Samuel, "Look, I am going to do something in Israel that will make both ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. ¹²On that day I am going to carry out against Eli everything that I have spoken against his house, from beginning to end. ¹³I have told him that I am going to judge his house forever because of their guilty behavior, which he knew about. This will happen because his sons brought a curse on themselves, and he did not restrain them. ¹⁴I have sworn to the house of Eli that the guilt of Eli's house shall never be atoned for with sacrifice or offering."

¹⁵So Samuel lay there until morning. Then he opened the doors to the LORD's house. Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. ¹⁶But Eli called to Samuel, "Samuel, my son!"

He said, "I am here."

¹⁷Eli said, "What is the message that he has spoken to you? Please do not hide it from me. May God punish you severely and double it, if you hide from me one word of all of the things that he spoke to you."

¹⁸So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him.

Eli said, "He is the LORD. Let him do whatever is good in his eyes."

¹⁹Samuel continued to grow, and the LORD was with him. The LORD let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰So all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

¹²“All things are permitted for me”—but not all things are beneficial. “All things are permitted for me”—but I will not allow anything to control me. ¹³“Foods are for the belly, and the belly is for foods, but God will do away with both of them.” However, the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. ¹⁴God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then remove the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Certainly not! ¹⁶Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute is one body with her? For it says, “The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

¹⁸Flee from sexual immorality! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

Holy Gospel

John 1:43-51

⁴³The next day, Jesus wanted to leave for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”

⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter.

⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?”

“Come and see!” Philip told him.

⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said about him, “Truly, here is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”

⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, “How do you know me?”

Jesus answered, “Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

⁵⁰Jesus replied, “You believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that!” ⁵¹Then he added, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: ²“Get up, go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.”

³So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh just as the word of the LORD had commanded. Now Nineveh was a great city to God. It required a three-day walk. ⁴Jonah walked through the city for a day, and he called out, “Forty more days and Nineveh is going to be overthrown!”

⁵The men of Nineveh believed God. They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least.

¹⁰When God saw their actions, that they had turned from their evil way, God relented from the disaster which he said he would bring on them, and he did not carry it out.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 (32-35)

²⁹I also say this, brothers: The time is short. From now on, let those who have wives live as if they have none; ³⁰those who weep, as if not weeping; those who rejoice, as if not rejoicing; those who buy, as if not possessing; ³¹and those who use the world, as if not getting any use out of it. For the way of life that belongs to this world is passing away.

³²I would like you to be free from concern. The unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord and thinks about how to please the Lord. ³³But the married man is concerned about the things of the world and thinks about how to please his wife, ³⁴and so he is divided. The unmarried woman and the virgin are concerned about the things of the Lord, so as to be holy both in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the things of the world and thinks about how to please her husband. ³⁵I am saying this for your own benefit, not to impose a restriction, but to encourage honorable, undistracted devotion to the Lord.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:14-20

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. ¹⁵“The time is fulfilled,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near! Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

¹⁶As Jesus was going along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, since they were fishermen. ¹⁷Jesus said to them, “Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” ¹⁸Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹Going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat mending the nets.

²⁰Immediately Jesus called them. They left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

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Old Testament / First Reading

Deuteronomy 18:15–20

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. ²⁰Any prophet who presumes to speak something in my name that I have not commanded him to speak or who speaks something in the name of other gods—that prophet shall die.”

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²If anyone supposes that he knows something, he does not yet know the way he ought to know. ³But if anyone loves God, this person has been known by him.

⁴So, concerning the eating of food from idol sacrifices, we know that an idol is not anything real in the world and that there is no God but one. ⁵Indeed, even if there are so-called “gods,” whether in the heavens or on earth (as in fact there are many “gods” and many “lords”), ⁶nevertheless for us there is one God—the Father, from whom all things exist, and we exist for him—and one Lord—Jesus Christ, through whom all things exist, and we exist through him.

⁷However, that knowledge is not in everyone. Instead some, who are still affected by their former habit with the idol, eat the food as something sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

⁸Food will not bring us closer to God. We do not lack anything if we do not eat, nor are we better off if we do. ⁹And be careful that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if someone sees you, a person who has knowledge, dining in an idol’s temple, will not the conscience of this man, weak as he is, be emboldened to eat food from an idol sacrifice? ¹¹You see, the weak person is being destroyed by your knowledge—the brother for whose sake Christ died! ¹²And when you sin in this way against your brothers and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food causes my brother to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I do not cause my brother to sin.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:21-28

²¹Then they went into Capernaum.

On the next Sabbath day, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²²They were amazed at his teaching, because he was teaching them as one who has authority and not as the experts in the law. ²³Just then there was a man with an unclean spirit in their synagogue. It cried out, ²⁴“What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

²⁵Jesus rebuked the spirit, saying, “Be quiet! Come out of him!”

²⁶The unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions, and after crying out with a loud voice, it came out of him. ²⁷Everyone was so amazed that they began to discuss this with each other. They said, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands the unclean spirits, and they obey him!” ²⁸News about him spread quickly through all the region of Galilee.

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 40:21-31

²¹Do you not know? Have you not heard?
Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?
Have you not understood it from the founding of the earth?
²²He is the one who sits above the circle of the earth.
To him its inhabitants are like grasshoppers.
He stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and he spreads them out like a tent to live in.
²³He is the one who reduces dignitaries to nothing.
He makes the judges of the world useless.
²⁴They have hardly been planted.
They have hardly been sown.
Their stem has hardly taken root in the earth.
Then he blows on them, and they dry up.
A driving storm carries them away like chaff.
²⁵To whom can you compare me as if we were equals?
says the Holy One.
²⁶Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
and see who created these things.
See who brings out their army in great number
and calls them all by name.
Because of his great strength and mighty power,
not one of them is missing.
²⁷Why do you speak, O Jacob?
O Israel, why do you say,
“My way is hidden from the LORD,
and justice for me is ignored by my God”?
²⁸Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the eternal God.
He is the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired, and he will not become weary.
No one can find a limit to his understanding.
²⁹He is the one who gives strength to the weak,
and he increases the strength of those who lack power.
³⁰Young men grow tired and become weary.
Even strong men stumble and fall.

³¹But those who wait for the LORD will receive new strength.
They will lift up their wings and soar like eagles.
They will run and not become weary.
They will walk and not become tired.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 9:16-27

¹⁶You see, if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast about, because an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷If I do this as a volunteer, I receive compensation. But if not, I have been entrusted with a responsibility as a steward. ¹⁸What then is my compensation? To present the gospel of Christ free of charge when I preach it, instead of making use of the right I have when I preach the gospel.

¹⁹In fact, although I am free from all, I enslaved myself to all so that I might gain many more. ²⁰To the Jews, I became like a Jew so that I might gain Jews. To those who are under the law, I became like a person under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might gain those who are under the law. ²¹To those who are without the law, I became like a person without the law (though I am not without God's law but am within the law of Christ) so that I might gain those who are without the law. ²²To the weak, I became weak so that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all people so that I may save at least some. ²³And I do everything for the sake of the gospel so that I may share in it along with others.

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.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:29-39

²⁹They left the synagogue and went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰Simon's mother-in-law was lying in bed, sick with a fever. Without delay they told Jesus about her. ³¹He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she began to serve them. ³²That evening, when the sun had set, the people kept bringing to him all who were sick and demon-possessed. ³³The whole town gathered at the door. ³⁴He healed many people who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. But he did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew who he was.

³⁵Jesus got up early in the morning, while it was still dark, and went out. He withdrew to a solitary place and was praying there. ³⁶Simon and his companions searched for him, ³⁷and, when they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is looking for you!"

³⁸He told them, "Let's go somewhere else, to the neighboring villages, so that I can preach there too. In fact, that is why I have come." ³⁹Then he went throughout the whole region of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

2 Kings 5:1-14

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

²Raiding parties had once gone out from Aram and brought back a young girl. She served Na'aman's wife. ³She said to her mistress, "I wish my master stood before the prophet who is in Samaria, because he would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴So Na'aman went and told his master what the servant girl from the land of Israel had said.

⁵Then the king of Aram said, "Go there. I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Na'aman went, and he took ten talents of silver and six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶Then he took the letter to the king of Israel. The letter said, "Now, when you receive this letter, you will know that I am sending my officer Na'aman to you so that you can cure him of his leprosy."

⁷When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothing and said, "Am I God that I can kill and make alive? Why is he sending a man to me for me to heal him from his leprosy? See how he is looking for a 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 Na'aman went with his horses and chariots and stopped in front of the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰But Elisha sent a messenger out to him to say, "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan. Then your flesh will be restored and you will be clean."

¹¹But Na'aman was angry and he left, saying, "Look, I said to myself, 'He will certainly 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?" So he turned and went away in a burning rage.

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.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:(19-30) 10:31-11:1

¹⁹So what am I saying? That food from idol sacrifices is anything, or that an idol is anything?

²⁰No, but I do say this: What the Gentiles sacrifice, "they sacrifice to demons, and not to God," and

I do not want you to become partners of demons. ²¹You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of demons. ²²Or are we trying to provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he is?

²³“Everything is permitted”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permitted”—but not everything builds up. ²⁴Let no one seek his own good, but that of others. ²⁵Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without asking questions for the sake of conscience. ²⁶For “the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” ²⁷If one of the unbelievers invites you over and you want to go, eat whatever you are served without asking questions for the sake of conscience. ²⁸But if someone says to you, “This is from a sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. ²⁹I mean the other person’s conscience, not your own. For why is my freedom judged by someone else’s conscience? ³⁰If I eat the food with thankfulness, why am I criticized for something for which I give thanks?

³¹So whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do everything to the glory of God. ³²Do not give offense to Jews, or Greeks, or God’s church, ³³just as I also try to please all people in all things, by not seeking what is best for me but for the many, so that they may be saved. ^{11:1}Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:40-45

⁴⁰A leper came to Jesus. He knelt down and begged him, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.”

⁴¹Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. “I am willing,” he told him. “Be clean.” ⁴²Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was healed. ⁴³Then Jesus gave him a stern warning and immediately sent him away. ⁴⁴He told him, “See that you do not say anything to anyone. Instead go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the sacrifices for your cleansing that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

⁴⁵But after the man left, he began to proclaim it widely. He spread the word so much that Jesus was no longer able to enter a town openly but stayed outside in deserted places. Yet people kept coming to him from all directions.

The Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 43:18-25

¹⁸Do not remember the former things.

Do not keep thinking about ancient things.

¹⁹Watch, I am about to do a new thing.

Now it will spring up. Don't you know about it?

Indeed I will make a road in the wilderness.

In the wasteland I will make rivers.

²⁰The wild animals, the jackals and ostriches, will honor me,

because I am providing water in the wilderness,

rivers in a parched wasteland,

to provide water for my chosen people to drink.

²¹This people that I formed for myself will declare my praise.

²²But you have not called on me, O Jacob.

Instead, you have become weary of me, O Israel.

²³You have not brought me sheep as your whole burnt offerings.

You did not glorify me with your sacrifices.

I did not make you serve me with a grain offering.

I did not make you weary with demands for incense.

²⁴You did not purchase fragrant cane for me with silver

or satisfy me with the fat from your sacrifices.

Instead you have made me serve because of your sins.

You have made me weary because of your guilt.

²⁵I, yes I, am he.

I blot out your rebellious deeds for my own sake,

and I will not remember your sins.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Corinthians 1:18-22

¹⁸As surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." ¹⁹For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us (by me, Silas, and Timothy), was not "Yes" and "No," but in him the "Yes" stands firm. ²⁰In fact, as many promises as God has made, they have always been "Yes" in him. For that reason we also say "Amen" through him to the glory of God.

²¹God is the one who makes both us and you to be strong in Christ. He anointed us. ²²He sealed us as his own and gave us the Spirit as the down payment in our hearts.

Holy Gospel

Mark 2:1-12

When Jesus again entered Capernaum some days later, people heard that he was home. ²So many people were gathered together that there was no more room, not even by the door, and he was speaking the word to them. ³Some people came to him bringing a paralyzed man, carried by four men. ⁴Since they could not bring the man to Jesus because of the crowd, they dug through the roof above where he was. When they had made an opening, they lowered the stretcher on which the paralyzed man was lying. ⁵When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

⁶But there were some experts in the law sitting there and thinking in their hearts, ⁷“Why does this fellow speak like this? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God alone?”

⁸Jesus immediately knew in his spirit that they were thinking this way within themselves. He asked them, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? ⁹Which is easier: to tell the paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your stretcher, and walk’? ¹⁰But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralyzed man, ¹¹“I tell you, get up, take your stretcher, and go home.”

¹²At once the man got up, picked up the stretcher, and went out in front of everyone. So they were all amazed and glorified God. They said, “We have never seen anything like this!”

The Eighth Sunday after the Epiphany

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version®

Old Testament / First Reading

Hosea 2:14-20

¹⁴But watch! I am going to court her.

I will bring her into the wilderness.

I will speak tenderly to her.

¹⁵There I will give her vineyards back to her.

The Valley of Achor will be a door of hope.

She will respond there as in the days of her youth,
as in the day she came up from the land of Egypt.

¹⁶In that day, declares the LORD, this is what will take place:

You will call me “my husband.”

You will no longer call me “my master.”

¹⁷For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth.

She will no longer call them by their names.

¹⁸In that day I will make a covenant for the Israelites with the wild animals,
with the birds of the sky and the things that creep on the ground.

I will break the bow and the sword.

I will abolish war from the land.

I will allow the people to lie down safely.

¹⁹I will pledge you to myself in marriage forever.

I will pledge you to myself in marriage—

with righteousness, justice, mercy, and compassion.

²⁰In faithfulness I will pledge you to myself in marriage,
and you will know the LORD.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Corinthians 2:12–3:6

¹²When I came to Troas to proclaim the gospel of Christ and a door was opened for me by the Lord, ¹³I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia.

¹⁴But thanks be to God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ and reveals the fragrance of his knowledge through us in every place. ¹⁵Yes, we are the fragrance of Christ for God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶To some we are the odor of death that is a prelude to death, to the others the fragrance of life that is a prelude to life. And who is qualified for these things? ¹⁷To be sure, we are not like many who peddle the word of God for profit. Instead, in Christ we speak with sincerity in the sight of God, as men from God.

³¹Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? ²You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. ³It is clear that you are a letter from Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets, but on tablets that are hearts of flesh.

⁴Such is the confidence we have through Christ before God. ⁵Not that we are competent by ourselves to claim that anything comes from us; rather, our competence is from God. ⁶He also made us competent as ministers of a new testament (not of letter, but of spirit). For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

Holy Gospel

Mark 2:(13-17) 18-22

¹³Jesus went out again along the sea. The whole crowd went to him, and he taught them. ¹⁴As he was passing by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth. “Follow me,” Jesus told him. And Levi got up and followed him.

¹⁵Then when Jesus was reclining at a table in Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples because many of them also were following him. ¹⁶When the experts in the law and the Pharisees saw that he was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, “Why is he eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

¹⁸John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. They came and asked Jesus, “Why is it that John’s disciples and the Pharisees’ disciples fast, but your disciples do not fast?”

¹⁹Jesus said to them, “The friends of the bridegroom cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then on that day they will fast. ²¹No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the patch shrinks, the new tears away from the old, and a worse tear is made. ²²No one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will pour out, and the skins will be ruined. Instead, new wine is poured into new wineskins.”

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

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

Old Testament / First Reading

2 Kings 2:1-12

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah was traveling with Elisha from Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Bethel.”

But Elisha said, “As surely as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel.

³The sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD is taking your master away from you?”

Then he said, “Yes, I know. Be quiet.”

⁴Then Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here because the LORD has sent me to Jericho.”

But he said, “As surely as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you.” So they went to Jericho.

⁵Then the sons of the prophets who were in Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD is taking your master away from you?”

He said, “Yes, I know. Be quiet.”

⁶Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here because the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.”

But he said, “As surely as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on.

⁷Then fifty men from the sons of the prophets came and stood and watched them from a distance, while the two of them were standing at the Jordan. ⁸Elijah took his cloak, folded it together, and struck the water. The water divided to the right and to the left. Then the two of them crossed on dry land.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask me for whatever I can do for you before I am taken from you.”

Then Elisha said, “Let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.”

¹⁰He said, “You have asked for a difficult thing. If you see me being taken from you, it will surely be yours. But if not, then it will not.”

¹¹While they were walking and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire, and horses of fire came and separated them. So Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. ¹²Elisha was watching and crying out, “My father! My father! Israel’s chariot and its charioteers!” Then he did not see him anymore. He grabbed his clothing, and he ripped it into two pieces.

or

Exodus 34:29-35

²⁹When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not realize that the skin of his face was shining because he had been speaking with the LORD. ³⁰When Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, they were amazed that the skin of his face was shining, so they were afraid to come close to him. ³¹Moses called to them, so Aaron and all the rulers of the community returned to him, and Moses spoke to them. ³²Afterward all the people of Israel came close to him, and he gave them all of the commands that the LORD had spoken to him on Mount Sinai. ³³When Moses was finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off until he came out again. Then he would come out and tell the people of Israel what he had been commanded. ³⁵Whenever the people of Israel saw Moses' face, they would see that the skin of Moses' face was shining. Then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with the LORD again.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Corinthians 3:12-13 (14-18); 4:1-6

¹²Therefore, since we have this kind of hope, we act with great boldness. ¹³We are not like Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the Israelites could not continue to look at the end of the radiance, as it was fading away.

¹⁴In spite of this, their minds were hardened. Yes, up to the present day, the same veil remains when the Old Testament is read. It has not been removed because it is taken away only in Christ. ¹⁵Instead, to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸But all of us who reflect the Lord's glory with an unveiled face are being transformed into his own image, from one degree of glory to another. This too is from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

^{4:1}Therefore, since we have this ministry as a result of the mercy shown us, we are not discouraged. ²On the contrary, we have renounced shameful, underhanded methods. We do not operate in a deceitful way, and we do not distort the word of God. Instead, by proclaiming the truth clearly, we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

³But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled among those who are perishing. ⁴In the case of those people, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from clearly seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is God's image.

⁵Indeed, we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For the God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," is the same one who made light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

Holy Gospel

Mark 9:2-9

²After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain where they were alone by themselves. There he was transfigured in front of them. ³His clothes became radiant, dazzling white, whiter than anyone on earth could bleach them. ⁴And Elijah appeared to them together with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

⁵Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶He did not know what to say because they were terrified.

⁷A cloud appeared and overshadowed them, and a voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him.”

⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus alone.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.