

Welcome to Christ Episcopal Church

in Cape Girardeau, Missouri

## Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

February 12th 2023

# The Gathering of God's People

Prelude.....Matt Palisch, Organist

Processional.....#497 How Bright Appears The Morning Star  
*Beginning on BCP p. 355*

*The people standing, the Presider says:*

*Presider:* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People:* **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

## Collect of the Day

*Presider:* God is with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*Presider:* Let us pray:

O God, the strength of all who put their trust in you:  
Mercifully accept our prayers; and because in our  
weakness we can do nothing good without you, give  
us the help of your grace, that in keeping your com-  
mandments we may please you both in will and deed;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and  
ever. **Amen.**

Song of Praise.....#S280 Gloria

## The Lessons

### First Reading

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Moses said, "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

## The Psalm

Psalm 119:1-8

*Beati immaculati*

- 1 Happy are they whose way is blameless, \*  
who walk in the law of the Lord!
- 2 Happy are they who observe his decrees \*  
and seek him with all their hearts!
- 3 Who never do any wrong, \*  
but always walk in his ways.
- 4 You laid down your commandments, \*  
that we should fully keep them.
- 5 Oh, that my ways were made so direct \*  
that I might keep your statutes!
- 6 Then I should not be put to shame, \*  
when I regard all your commandments.
- 7 I will thank you with an unfeigned heart, \*  
when I have learned your righteous judgments.
- 8 I will keep your statutes; \*  
do not utterly forsake me.

## The Second Reading

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

*The People stand for the hymn.*

The Sequence Hymn.....#112 In The Bleak Midwinter

## The Gospel

Matthew 5:21-37



*Presider:* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

*People:* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

"Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one."

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People:* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

### **Sermon**

Rev. Annette Joseph

### **The Nicene Creed**

*BCP p.358*

*Presider and People together, all standing*

All:

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

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
By the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
He suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
In accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
And his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

### The Prayers of the People

*Reader:* Loving God, your presence fills our world, yet we are often blind to the signs and wonders all around us. In this season of Epiphany, open our eyes to your presence, open our minds to wonder, open our hearts to love, O God, Creator of all,

*People:* hear our prayer.

*Reader:* We give you thanks for the gift of life, and for (\_\_\_). O God, creator of all,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Reader:** You are with us in all the changes we experience, in birth and new birth in baptism, in marriage, in solitude, in family life, in health and sickness, in dying. We pray for ourselves and one another as we walk with you in life and death. O God, creator of all,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Reader:** You know our needs before we ask, we pray for those we know who are sick or in need of guidance and strength (\_\_\_). O God, creator of all,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Reader:** Bring comfort to, (\_\_\_) and all who suffer in the sadness of our world. O God, creator of all,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Reader:** In Christ, heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven. Hold in your hand, (prayer list) and all those who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom.

**People:** Lord Jesus Christ, may they be with you today in Paradise.

### The Confession of Sin

*BCP p. 360*

**Presider:** Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**All:** Most merciful God,  
We confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
Have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
To the glory of your Name. Amen.

**Presider:** Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

### The Peace

**Presider:** The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People:** And also with you.

*We greet each other in the name of the risen Christ. Stay standing for hymn.*

**Offertory Hymn**.....#649 O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts

**The Great Thanksgiving**

*BCP p. 367*

*People remain standing*

*Presider:* The Lord be with you.

***People:* And also with you.**

*Presider:* Lift up your hearts.

***People:* We lift them to the Lord.**

*Presider:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***People:* It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*The Presider proceeds:*

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sign this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Sanctus: S129 Gloria Sanctus**

*The people stand or kneel. The Presider continues*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness

of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**All:**

**We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with [\_\_\_\_\_. and] all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The Presider then continues:*

And now, as our Savior-Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**The Lord's Prayer**

*BCP p. 364*

*Presider:* The Lord be with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*Presider:* Let us pray.

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.



For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

**Breaking of the Bread**

*BCP p. 364*

*Presider:* Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

*People:* Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

**Fraction:** Agnus Dei Supplemental Hymnal (p. 11)

*Presider:* The Gifts of God for the People of God.

**Communion Hymn**.....#312 Strengthen For Service Lord

*Presider:* Bob, Gloria, Kent, and Marilyn we send you out to share this Holy Communion with those who can't be with us. May those who receive it from you be strengthened and encouraged in that community we have together in our Lord Jesus Christ.

*People:* May you carry the prayers of all of us as you take this sacrament of Christ's presence.

**Blessing**

*BCP p. 366*

*Presider:* Let us pray.

*All:* Almighty and everliving God,  
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food  
of the most precious Body and Blood  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,  
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.  
And now, Father, send us out  
to do the work you have given us to do,  
to love and serve you  
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.  
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

**Announcements**

*Stand for the hymn and dismissal.*

**Recessional Hymn**.....#647 I know not where the road will lead

**Dismissal**

*Presider:* Our worship is ended, our service in the world begins. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

**Postlude**.....Matt Palisch, Organist

## This Service's Servers

<i>Presider</i>	Rev. Annette Joseph
<i>Eucharistic Minister</i>	Gloria Miller
<i>Preacher</i>	Rev. Annette Joseph
<i>Verger</i>	Chris Masters
<i>Reader</i>	Richard Joseph
<i>Greeter</i>	Monica Waldon
<i>Altar Guild</i>	Deb Brewer
<i>St. Isidore's Guild</i>	Bob Lowe
<i>Vestry Counter</i>	Bob Lowe
<i>Organist</i>	Matt Palisch

Fraction

# Notes on the Service

## Sixth Sunday in Epiphany

Deut 30:15-20 • Ps 119:1-8 • I Cor 3:1-9 • Mtt. 5:21-37

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Today's collect observes that the only way human beings are capable of doing good is with the help of God. With that grace, we can obey the commandments. Living in the commandments' light is the subject of today's Old Testament readings, psalm, and the Gospel excerpt.

Alternate Old Testament lessons are provided for today, one from the Hebrew Bible and one from the Apocrypha. Both are about keeping the Torah. Both use alternatives such as life/death, fire/water, to dramatize the choice between good and evil. Both, unlike today's collect, assume that people are capable of choosing the good and adhering to the good.

The 7th or 6th century B.C. school of Hebrew reformers and publicists called the Deuteronomists believed that Israel's security and prosperity depended especially upon Israel's avoiding the idolatry of those Gentiles whose land the Israelites had seized and occupied. A Deuteronomist pictures Moses exhorting the Israelites when they are about to enter that land not to adopt the Gentiles' religions, but to cleave to the God of their fathers and thereby to assure their well-being.

Sirach, also known as Ecclesiasticus, was written in the 2nd century B.C. when Judah was occupied by Gentiles, and also when many Jews were living in Gentile cities such as Alexandria, Egypt. Sirach addresses individual pious Jews, not the nation as a whole, as Deuteronomy had addressed the nation. Sirach says the wise, sure path to well-being is Torah-keeping.

Like Sirach, the long didactic Psalm 119 thinks of pious individual Jews who "walk in the Law of the Lord." A prayer for divine help in keeping the Law begins in v 5, and continues through this and the next eight-verse section. Notice each verse contains law, word, command, precept or some synonym.

Paul reproaches the Corinthian church members for their infantile factionalism. Mature believers manifest the unity which Christ intends and Christ confers.

The New Moses illuminates the Torah from the inside. Jesus condemns not just murder but murderous thoughts, not just adultery but adulterous fantasies. Reconciliation must precede offerings. Dismemberment is preferable to sinning. In Matthew's telling, the sole ground for divorce is adultery, whereas Mark lists no such exception. Oath-taking is unnecessary for the tellers of strict truth, as Quakers endeavor to be.

**Rev. Stephen Weissman**  
Asheville, North Carolina