



Second Sunday after Epiphany January 14, 2024

A Service of the Word

We Gather at God's Invitation

*Worshippers are invited to stand in body or spirit. **Bold text indicates unison readings.**

Welcome and Invitations to Discipleship

The Rev. Dr. Robert Wm Lowry,

Pastor

Prelude

David Austin, Director of

Music

*Call to Worship

Pilgrims, we are invited to journey through this life of faith
towards the One who calls us each by a new name.

Disciples, we walk with Jesus wherever he leads us,
pulling our fears, our doubts, our longings behind us.

Believers, we seek to trust the God who always surprises us,
whose promises take on flesh and blood in the good news called Jesus.

Come, let us worship!

*Opening Prayer

God of our fathers and mothers—
of all the generations who have come before us—
holy is Your name.

We gather in Your presence with praise and thanksgiving
for the faithful love You have shown toward Your people,
for the many blessings You have given to us.
Your promises are eternal,
and they are backed by the honour of Your name.

Thank you for Your faithful presence among us,
even when we are not fully aware of it.
Continue to reveal Yourself to us.
Open our eyes to see You here among us;
open our ears to hear Your Word.
For surely, You are with us in this place.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray.
Amen.

*Hymn of Praise #275

“God of Our Life”

SANDON

Call to Confession

Brothers and sisters, no one is perfect. Not you. Not me. Not that family down the street who seem to never have any problems or challenges. Whether we show it or not, each of us is flawed and frail and all of us fall short of the glory of God.

Thankfully the one thing that never falls short is the mercy and grace of God. It is all around us all the time and it is the one thing in this life that we can count on day in and day out.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, you reached into Abraham and Sarah's lives
and asked them to dream the impossible dream—
that you would transform what appears to have been
a barren and lifeless situation
into one overflowing with promise and hope—
and, through faith in you, they believed your promises.
**Forgive us, O God,
if we never get beyond thinking of your call on our lives
as an impossible dream or even as an unwelcome interruption.**

Faithful God,
the apostle Paul emphasizes Abraham's complete trust and faith
in your promises
and how he grew ever stronger in faith,
fully convinced of your ability to fulfil what had been promised.
**Forgive us, O God,
when we find it hard even to hear your promises
above commercial assurances of transformation—
promises tempting us to trust the newest
and trendiest product to realize our dreams.**

Silence is kept.

Gracious and loving God, as only you can, forgive our lack of trust in you;

Have mercy on us and forgive us.

Help us when we hesitate,

and strengthen us when we are weak

Breathe your Spirit afresh into our hearts and minds—our lives—

so that we have the courage to follow Jesus wherever he takes us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

...in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

*The Peace of Christ

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ which passes all understanding be with you all.

And also with you.

We Proclaim God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson

15

Genesis 16:1-

Sermon

“Family Ties”

Dr. Lowry

We Respond to God's Word

*Hymn of Response #425
LEIGH

“Lord of Light, Your Name Outshining”

ABBOT'S

*Affirmation of Faith

We believe ...

that God wishes to teach the church

what is good and to seek the right.

We believe ...

that the church must therefore

stand by people in any form of suffering and need,

which implies, among other things,

that the church must witness against

and strive against any form of injustice,

so that justice may roll down like waters,

and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

We believe ...

**that the church as the possession of God
must stand where the Lord stands,
namely against injustice and with the wronged.
We believe ...
that in following Christ
the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged
who selfishly seek their own interests
and thus control and harm others.
Therefore ...
we reject any ideology
which would legitimate forms of injustice
and any doctrine which is unwilling
to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.**

Offering

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

We Depart in God's Name

*Parting Hymn #535

"Go with Us, Lord"

TALLIS' CANON

*Charge & Benediction

*Postlude

Please Remember

Sign-ups for the open dialogues with Ministry Architects next Sunday are available online and in the Narthex after worship.

Volunteers are still needed in the church office. Please contact Liz Branch or Bill Smith if you are available to lend a hand.