



## Evangelical Lutheran Church

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HYMNSOFT & LIVESTREAM: Bonnie Finn



## Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

*February 16, 2025*

## WELCOME TO GRACE!

***We're glad you're here! Whether you are joining us for the first time or for the first time in a long time, we want you to know God's love in Jesus. We invite you to worship with us every week at 10:30 AM on Sundays; Children's Sunday School is at the same time downstairs.***

- *Two sets of restrooms are located downstairs; one just before entering the fellowship hall and another set down near the Sunday School rooms (just beyond the fellowship hall and past the kitchen).*
- *There are changing tables in the women's bathroom downstairs and in the "Cry Room" near the northside entryway.*
- *Children's busy bags are available by the entrance to worship. Parents needing to quiet small children are invited to use the "Cry Room" near the entryway.*

**TODAY'S THEME:** BLESSINGS ARE CURSED; CURSES ARE BLESSED

*"This is good. That is bad."* We often think life is that simple. We believe we can assess a situation accurately determine if it is positive or negative. It's hubris. As Jesus gathered followers, he taught them that his kingdom runs exactly opposite to the principles and priorities of the world. Therefore, much that we think is good is bad, and vice-versa.

If we want to accurately see the world, we need to have this epiphany. That which the world considers a blessing can often be a curse. Things like success and wealth and health can lead us away from our God. We become so enamored with those blessings that we forget about the Blessor. Conversely, there are hidden blessings in what we would normally consider curses. When we fail, when we suffer, and when things don't go our way, it forces us to put our trust in God and for our souls to be satisfied in him. The reality is that perceived blessings can be cursed and perceived curses can be used for our blessing.

***Our worship in the coming weeks will follow this pattern...***

**TODAY** –Sixth Sunday after Epiphany— *Blessings Are Cursed; Curses Are Blessed*  
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany— *Love Your Enemies, Overcoming Evil with Good*  
Final Sunday after Epiphany— *Glory Is Hidden in Order to Be Revealed*

<b>ORDER OF WORSHIP</b>
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**LITURGY:** *The Common Service with the Sacrament of Holy Communion*

**OPENING SONG BY SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN:** *"Jesus Loves Me, This I Know"*

**HYMN: #435** *"The Will of God Is Always Best"*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1    The will of God is always best<br>and shall be done forever;<br>and they who trust in him are blest;<br>he will forsake them never.<br>He helps indeed<br>in time of need;<br>he chastens with forbearing.<br>They who depend<br>on God, their friend,<br>shall not be left despairing. | 3    Lord, this I ask, O hear my plea,<br>deny me not this favor:<br>when Satan sorely troubles me,<br>then do not let me waver.<br>O guard me well,<br>my fear dispel,<br>fulfill your faithful saying:<br>all who believe<br>by grace receive<br>an answer to their praying.                         |
| 2    God is my comfort and my trust,<br>my hope and life abiding,<br>and to his counsel, wise and just,<br>I yield, in him confiding.<br>The very hairs,<br>his Word declares,<br>upon my head he numbers.<br>By night and day<br>God is my stay;<br>he never sleeps nor slumbers.           | 4    When life's brief course on earth is run<br>and I this world am leaving,<br>grant me to say, "Your will be done,"<br>your faithful Word believing.<br>My heav'nly Friend,<br>I now commend<br>my soul into your keeping,<br>o'er sin and hell<br>and death as well<br>in you the vict'ry reaping. |

## INVOCATION

**M:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

♪ *Congregation sings: Amen.*

## CONFESSION

**M:** Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

**C:** Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord have mercy on me, a sinner.

## LORD, HAVE MERCY, *Kyrie*

♪ *Congregation sings:*

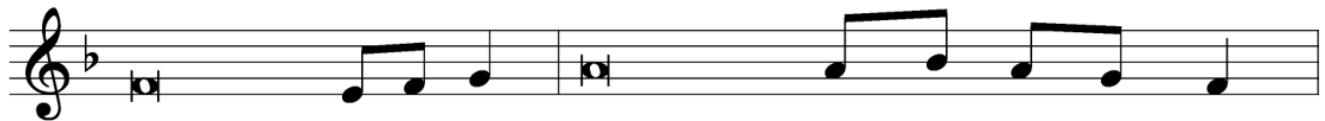
*Lord, have mercy on us.  
Christ, have mercy on us.  
Lord, have mercy on us.*

**M:** God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

♪ *Congregation sings: Amen.*

**M:** In the peace of forgiveness let us praise the Lord!

## GLORY BE TO GOD, *Gloria in Excelsis*



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ; →



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;  
 have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; receive our prayer.  
 You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.  
 For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the  
 Ho-ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**M:** The Lord be with you.

*♪ Congregation sings: And also with you.*

**M:** *Let us pray...* O God of power and might, you know that we live in the midst of many great dangers, and in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Give us strength and protection to support us in all peril, and carry us through all temptations; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*♪ Congregation sings: Amen.*

## + THE WORD +

**FIRST READING:** **Jeremiah 17:5-8** – *A blessed life is not connected to outward circumstances like health or wealth. Rather, the one who is blessed is the one who has been given the gift of faith, whose trust is in the LORD.*

<sup>5</sup>This is what the Lord says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. <sup>6</sup>That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. <sup>7</sup>“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. <sup>8</sup>They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 1 "Blessed Are They"

*Refrain*

Bless - ed are they, bless - ed are  
they who hope in the LORD.

*Tone*

G4 A4 Bb4 C5 Bb4 A4 G4

Blessed is the one who / does not walk  
in step with the / wicked  
or stand in the way that / sinners take  
or sit in the company of / mockers,  
but whose delight is in the law / of the Lord,  
and who meditates on his law / day and night.  
That person is like a tree planted by streams of / water,  
which yields its fruit in / season  
and whose leaf does not / wither—  
whatever they do / prospers. **REFRAIN**

Not so the / wicked!  
They are like chaff that the wind / blows away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the / judgment,  
nor sinners in the assembly of the / righteous. **REFRAIN**

For the Lord watches over the way of the / righteous,  
but the way of the wicked leads to de- / struction.  
**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son**  
**and to the Holy / Spirit,**  
**as it was in the be- / ginning,**  
**is now, and will be forever. / Amen. **REFRAIN****

**SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 12:7b-10** – *Paul had some infirmity he initially viewed as a weakness. He came to see it as a blessing as it forced him to rely on God’s strength.*

<sup>7b</sup>Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. <sup>8</sup>Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup>But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup>That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

### VERSE OF THE DAY

**M:** Alleluia. The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Alleluia.  
(*Psalm 121:8*)

♪ *The Congregation sings: “Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.”*

### THE HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 6:17-26

♪ *After the announcement of the Gospel, the congregation sings: Glory be to you, O Lord!*

*In one of his most famous sermons Jesus teaches that the good things we seek are found in places we would least expect.*

<sup>17</sup>He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, <sup>18</sup>who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, <sup>19</sup>and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. <sup>20</sup>Looking at his disciples, he said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. <sup>21</sup>Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. <sup>22</sup>Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup>“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. <sup>24</sup>“But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. <sup>25</sup>Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. <sup>26</sup>Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

♪ *The congregation sings: Praise be to you, O Christ!*

### THE NICENE CREED (*spoken together*)

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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. 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, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.

**HYMN OF THE DAY: #765 [SUPPLEMENT] "Day by Day"**

- 1 Day by day, your mercies, Lord, attend me,  
bringing comfort to my anxious soul.  
Day by day, the blessings, Lord, you send me  
draw me nearer to my heav'nly goal.  
Love divine, beyond all mortal measure,  
brings to naught the burdens of my quest;  
Savior, lead me to the home I treasure,  
where at last I'll find eternal rest.
- 2 Day by day, I know you will provide me  
strength to serve and wisdom to obey;  
I will seek your loving will to guide me  
o'er the paths I struggle day by day.  
I will fear no evil of the morrow,  
I will trust in your enduring grace.  
Savior, help me bear life's pain and sorrow  
till in glory I behold your face.
- 3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me  
when my burdens grow too great to bear;  
oh, what joy to know that you will hear me  
when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer.  
Day by day, no matter what betide me,  
you will hold me ever in your hand.  
Savior, with your presence here to guide me,  
I will reach at last the promised land.





M: The Lord be with you.

♪ *Congregation sings: And also with you.*

M: Lift up your hearts.

♪ *Congregation sings: We lift them up unto the Lord.*

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

♪ *Congregation sings: It is good and right so to do.*

#### PROPER PREFACE (FOR EPIPHANY)

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

#### SING: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

♪ *Congregation sings: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts:  
heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he, blessed is he, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.*

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

♪ *Congregation sings: Amen.*

#### O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

♪ *Congregation sings:  
O Christ, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; Have mercy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; Have mercy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; Grant us your peace. Amen.*

#### DISTRIBUTION HYMN: #446 "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus"

1 I am trusting you, Lord Jesus,  
trusting only you;  
trusting you for full salvation,  
free and true.

2 I am trusting you for pardon;  
at your feet I bow,  
for your grace and tender mercy  
trusting now.



3 I am trusting you for cleansing  
in the crimson flood;  
trusting you to make me holy  
by your blood.

5 I am trusting you for power;  
you can never fail.  
Words which you yourself shall give me  
must prevail.

4 I am trusting you to guide me;  
you alone shall lead,  
ev'ry day and hour supplying  
all my need.

6 I am trusting you, Lord Jesus;  
never let me fall.  
I am trusting you forever  
and for all.

### SONG OF SIMEON, *Nunc Dimittis*

♪ *Congregation sings:*

*Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace according to your word.  
For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared  
before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles  
and the glory of your people Israel.*

**M:** O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

♪ *Congregation sings: And his mercy endures forever.*

**M:** We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

♪ *Congregation sings: Amen.*

**M:** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

♪ *Congregation sings: Amen, Amen, Amen.*

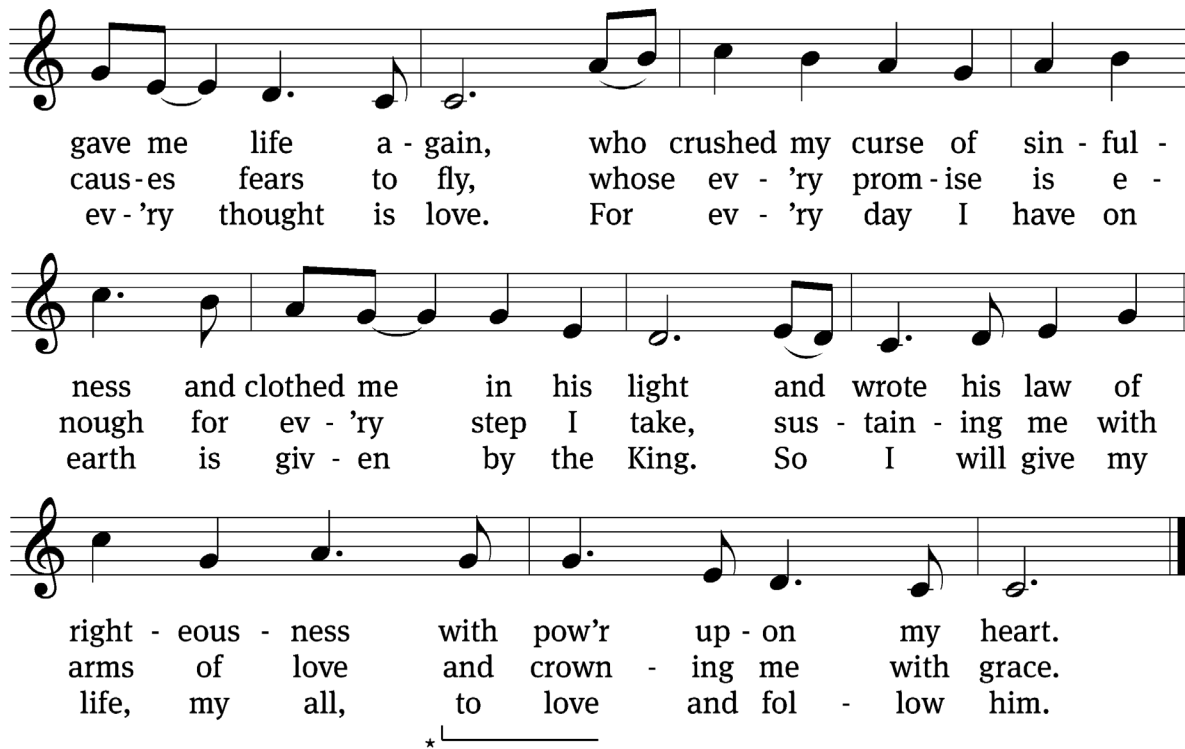
### CLOSING HYMN: "My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness"



1 My heart is filled with thank-ful-ness to him who bore my  
2 My heart is filled with thank-ful-ness to him who walks be -  
3 My heart is filled with thank-ful-ness to him who reigns a -



pain, who plumbed the depths of my dis - grace and  
side, who floods my weak - ness - es with strength and  
bove, whose wis - dom is my per - fect peace, whose



gave me life a - gain, who crushed my curse of sin - ful -  
 caus-es fears to fly, whose ev - 'ry prom - ise is e -  
 ev - 'ry thought is love. For ev - 'ry day I have on

ness and clothed me in his light and wrote his law of  
 nough for ev - 'ry step I take, sus - tain - ing me with  
 earth is giv - en by the King. So I will give my

right - eous - ness with pow'r up - on my heart.  
 arms of love and crown - ing me with grace.  
 life, my all, to love and fol - low him.

\* This phrase repeats at the end of st. 3.

## THIS WEEK AT GRACE

**THIS SUNDAY (Feb 16)** – ☞ ☞ *Incllement weather... NO Worship at St. John's, Riga;*  
 10:30 AM – WORSHIP with Holy Communion ☞☞☞☞☞ ☞☞☞☞☞

**MONDAY (Feb 17)** – 6:30 PM - Yoga Class (*narthex*)

**TUESDAY (Feb 18)** – 3:00 PM - Catechism Class (*after school*)

**THURSDAY (Feb 20)** – ☞☞☞☞ ☞☞☞☞☞☞☞☞☞ ☞☞☞☞ - Care Group Meeting;  
 6:30 PM - Adult Bible Class (*meets in the Auditorium*)

**NEXT SUNDAY (Feb 23)** – 8:45 AM - Pastor Finn conducts Worship at St. John's, Riga;  
 10:30 AM – WORSHIP (NO Sunday School)—Children will be singing in the service; *FELLOWSHIP*  
*after church in the narthex... Please stay for coffee & pastries!*

## OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD

OFFERING ENVELOPES: Sunday, Feb 9: \$ 2,904.25;  
 Tithe.ly Online Offerings: \$ 2,511.66 (2/7-2/12)  
 Thrivent Choice Dollars: \$ 20.00  
 Misc. Donations (NEW SOUND SYSTEM): \$ 1,500.00  
**TOTAL monies received this past week: \$ 6,935.91**



**TOTAL DONATIONS SET ASIDE FOR THE NEW SOUND SYSTEM: \$ 22,646.83**  
 (INCLUDES \$78.83 IN TITHE.LY ONLINE OFFERINGS & \$15,000.00 IN GRANT MONEY)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LADIES... ALTAR GUILD COULD USE YOUR HELP:** The ALTAR GUILD could use a couple more ladies to help out during the year. Duties include set up, take down and clean/care of communion ware; change parament colors on the altar/lectern/pulpit for the change of church seasons or festivals; help water plants if we have live plants in church (Christmas poinsettias or Easter lilies); change seasonal decor in chancel/sanctuary/narthex; and make sure the candles are filled with oil. If you would like to serve in this way, our Altar Guild Coordinator, Tia Sanborn, can answer all your questions. You may talk to her at church or give her a call... 734-320-3652.

**THURSDAY, FEB 20 ADULT BIBLE STUDY (6:30 PM)** We're studying Matthew 27:11-56. Theme: "Follow Me: Our King Goes Into Battle." Jesus is now in the middle of the hours of His suffering. Most of His own followers have rejected Him. The leaders of God's people have rejected Him. Now He stands before the secular powers of the world, where they will reject Him too. At a time when Jesus appears to be anything but a great king, He is establishing the greatest Kingdom of all time--the kingdom of God. Only He can carry on this battle. The swords of the disciples could not help. The only weapon that could conquer Satan was the innocent life of the Son of God. This is the second to last study of this series. We will finish Matthew 7:57-28:20 on Thursday, Feb 27. Please join us for these last two lessons before Lent begins.

**WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER AT GRACE?** Pastor Finn meets by appointment with people interested in learning more about the Bible's main teachings and becoming communicant members. For those living outside our parish area, Zoom meetings are also an option. Call, text or email Pastor Finn if you know someone you would like to refer (neighbor, non-member spouse or friend or co-worker) and Pastor can think together with you about how to go about inviting them.

### **THANK YOU! SOUND SYSTEM OFFERING UPDATE:**

Altogether we have received **\$ 7,646.83** in donations from members for a new sound system. In addition, just a couple weeks ago we received a **\$ 15,000 GRANT** from the Martin Luther Memorial Home Foundation, Inc. These grants are awarded to members of Martin Luther Memorial Home Association for the purpose of helping congregations better serve the spiritual needs of their seniors. We have received three bids from reputable companies and still looking at each of them very closely. We will be making a decision this next week. Thank you to everyone donating at church and online for this project so far.

To learn more about Martin Luther Memorial Home, Inc. goto:

<https://martinluthermemorialhome.org/about-us/>

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