

# **Sunday, February 7, 2021**

## **Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, Year B**

### **Introduction**

In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (*diakonia*). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

### **Order of Worship**

Our order for worship today is a lay-led non-communion service.

Worship Leader is Frank Stone.

Our preacher for this Sunday is the Rev. Bryan Penman, Pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Conshohocken, PA, and Dean of the Lower Montgomery Conference of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA (digital format). He's the person appointed from the synod to work with our Call Committee and Council for the call process.

We will have a children's message this week. (unusual for a 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday)

### **Prayer of the Day**

Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Readings and Psalm**

#### **[Isaiah 40:21-31](#)**

*The creator of all cares for the powerless*

#### **[Mark 1:29-39](#)**

*The healing of Peter's mother-in-law*

### **Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31**

*The Judeans in exile have a good reason to be hopeful: the one who will bring them to freedom is the God who created the world, the God who subdues the rulers of the earth and gives strength to those who are weary.*

- <sup>21</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
- <sup>22</sup>It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
- <sup>23</sup>who brings princes to naught,

and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

<sup>24</sup>Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
when he blows upon them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

<sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me,  
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

<sup>26</sup>Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
Who created these?  
He who brings out their host and numbers them,  
calling them all by name;  
because he is great in strength,  
mighty in power,  
not one is missing.

<sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,  
“My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

<sup>28</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.

<sup>29</sup>He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.

<sup>30</sup>Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;

<sup>31</sup>but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

### **Gospel: Mark 1:29-39**

*Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.*

<sup>29</sup>As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever,

and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

<sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.” <sup>38</sup>He answered, “Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.” <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

## **Peace**

As usual

## **Prayers of Intercession**

When you hear, “let us pray” you respond, “**Have mercy, O God.**”

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and for all people in need.

*A brief silence is held as we gather our prayers.*

For the church: for ministries of healing and wholeness, *pause* for chaplains in hospital, hospice, military settings and prisons, and for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ,  
let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For creation: for insects in the grass, clouds on the mountaintops, for cattle and the rainwater they drink, for the humility to take our place among all creatures of the earth,  
let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations: for all who lead in government, business, and education; that they may serve with courage and wisdom, free from fear and hopelessness,  
let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For all wearied by life’s burdens: for those who are poor, for those lacking supportive relationships, for those crushed by debt, for those struggling with chronic pain or other sickness, for those exhausted from overwork or stress, and for all who cry out to you

*pause*

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For Grace congregation as it serves others beyond ourselves: for faithfulness because others need it,  
let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For the gifts we bring to lay before you, O God,  
our offerings, our time, and all the other ways we give of ourselves.  
Receive them as you receive us:  
like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.  
Nourish us anew in your tender care,  
and empower us in faithful service  
to tend to others with this same love,  
that your mission may grow, and your Word may be fulfilled, let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed, who were called by name and now rest from their labors, that their lives serve as witnesses to the goodness of God,  
let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

### **Blessing**

God the creator strengthen us;  
Jesus the beloved fill us;  
and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✝ keep us in peace.

**Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

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Prayers adapted by Interim Pastor Janet S. Peterman

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