

### **Introduction to the day**

The fifth Sunday after Epiphany continues to highlight unlikely instruments and circumstances appointed to reveal God's glory. "Who will go for us?" God asks. A person of unclean lips, a former persecutor of the church of God, and three fishermen who couldn't catch a thing. More surprising still, perhaps, is that we are also called.

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 215)**

Let us pray.

Most holy God, the earth is filled with your glory, and before you angels and saints stand in awe. Enlarge our vision to see your power at work in the world, and by your grace make us heralds of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]**

A reading from Isaiah.

*Through a vision in the temple, the eighth-century prophet Isaiah is called by God to announce judgment against Israel. Aware of his sinfulness and shortcomings, Isaiah is initially hesitant. But when God calls, Isaiah responds, "Here am I; send me!"*

### **PSALM: Psalm 138**

I will bow down toward your holy temple. (Ps. 138:2)

### **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

*Paul delivers in a nutshell the story of the gospel that was given to him. In the lineage of the Christian faith, we have received the good news of God's love from generations of believers before us, and we continue to tell this story to the world.*

### **GOSPEL: Luke 5:1-11**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

*Jesus' teaching of God's word has begun to draw great crowds. For Simon, James, and John, Jesus' teaching inspires hospitality, then obedience, and then risk. After Jesus' creative power is revealed, fear and amazement leads these three fishermen to leave everything behind to become apostles.*

### **GOSPEL MESSAGE - FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY - A Too-Small God?**

Does the Lord's presence make you uncomfortable? This question may seem odd: after all, don't we call our worship spaces "sanctuaries"? Our readings today, however, feature people who, in their contact with God, are moved to express their unworthiness. A vision of divine glory overwhelms Isaiah with the holiness of "the Lord of hosts," before whom he is "a man of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). After condescendingly agreeing to follow Jesus' fishing directions, Simon discovers just how little he knows and cries out, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8). Paul tells how he had rejected what God did in raising Jesus from the dead. All three faced revelations of God's greatness that dwarfed their expectations. These surprises evoked responses quite foreign to our culture of self-affirmation: a consciousness of their own unworthiness before such a glorious God.

While we probably don't want people diving under their pews during worship, a God before whom we feel fully composed and confident is not the "holy, holy, holy . . . LORD of hosts" (Isaiah 6:3) seen by Isaiah. Do we settle for a tame God, one who happens to approve of everything we do and disapprove of whatever we don't like?

As these stories continue, they show us that a full vision of God's holiness need not leave us shaking in terror. God's true glory is mercy. A heavenly being cleanses Isaiah's lips, and he is sent to Israel as God's messenger. Undeserving Paul becomes an apostle. Jesus tells Simon, "Do not be afraid," and he receives a vital role in the Savior's mission (Luke 5:10).

The gospel reveals that God's holiness does not destroy sinners but, rather, consumes *sin* through forgiveness. Before we could ever deserve it, the waters of baptism wash us with grace. God's greatness becomes small for us in the Christ child, in the simple words of absolution, and in a taste of bread and wine. Forgiven and healed, we—blessed despite our unworthiness—are now sent to share the good news.

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God of surprising abundance, you call your people to enter deeply into the world. Equip us to respond to your call, gather up what we have, and offer it to all. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, provide protection from the elements and other hazards to all whose work brings them outside: for fishers, ranchers, line workers, and construction crews. Guide us to live carefully alongside the wonders of the land and waters. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Open the hearts of all leaders, especially those who serve in the armed forces, that they respond to their commission with wisdom and patience. Ensure that all who serve are kept safe in body, mind, and spirit. We pray for an end to all war and armed conflict. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Fill with your compassionate presence all who are suffering from addiction, mental illness, injury, or illness of any kind *especially* Linda Boland, Sandra Gagnon, Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Claude Jeannotte, Cassie Jessup, Bill Lorbetskie, Glenda Panke, Barry Rogers, Marilyn Schneider, Danny Schultz, Doug Sell, Debbie Thom, Keith Weckwerth, Elaine Yourth, Harold Yourth, Stephanie Yourth, and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. Draw helpers to their side so that they find relief from their burdens. In this moment of silence we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts those who need your healing touch. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Call our faith communities to do marvelous things. Bless the labor and efforts of this congregation, that we may be a sign of your presence in the world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for those who have courageously gone before us in the faith. May we too show a deep trust in you throughout our lives. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Page | 3

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.