

Church of the Divine Love
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
JANUARY 14, 2024 10:15 AM
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)**

Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17

Second Lesson: **1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **John 1:43-51**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer B page 367

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 367

Hymn during Consecration printed on insert

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn #

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday January 14, 2024

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139: 1-5, 12-17; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” With those words Samuel has opened his ears and heart to what God has to say. He’s listening for a truth about himself, a truth for his life, a truth that might chart a way forward. And aren’t we all? Aren’t we are always listening for that kind of truth for ourselves, our families, our parish, our country?

If 2023 showed us anything it revealed how necessary that kind of deep and intentional listening is, and how difficult it is to sort through all the voices we hear, both within and outside ourselves, and discern a truthful way forward. I don’t expect that kind of listening to be any less necessary or difficult in 2024.

Who are you listening to these days? Who are you not listening to? What are you listening for? What do you want to hear and what do you not want to hear?

As I reflect on those questions, I recognize in myself two ways of listening. We could think of them as two levels, one is superficial and the other is deep. One is represented by the ears and the other by the heart. One is closed, the other open. One tends toward safety, the other toward vulnerability. One is static, the other dynamic. See if any of this sounds familiar in your life. Sometimes, as my mom used to tell me, when I listen it goes in one ear and out the other. My listening is selective. I'd like to think I outgrew that selective hearing but I probably just grew into it. There are times when I hear only what I want to hear, what I agree with, what affirms my life, what comports with my beliefs. I suspect that may be true for you as well. It's a "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" kind of moment. We don't need or want to hear anything new because we already know. We already have our mind made up. We change the channel, unfollow, unfriend, or delete the post. We know what we know, believe what we believe, and we don't need someone messing with that.

In this kind of listening truth is a proposition, an absolute, a concept to which I either give or withhold my assent. If I agree then it's the truth, if I don't agree it's not the truth. This kind of listening keeps me safe and comfortable. It excludes from my life anything that would ask me to change, to be different, to move to new place. It keeps my focus on the so-called truth teller and his or her character or lack thereof, and that focus usually looks like my assumptions, judgments, and labels. My experience is that superficial kind of listening keeps my world narrow and small. It gives me the illusion that I have the truth, that I know the truth, not only for myself but for you too. But then there are those other times when I listen more deeply and intensely. I listen with my heart. I'm not holding onto my life so tightly. I feel connected to something larger and beyond myself. I'm open to the risky business of life. I have faith in life and not just a belief in something or someone. I trust the not knowing, the unexpected, the uncomfortable. I'm willing to admit that I do not have all the truth, that I can't have all the truth.

When I listen deeply in my heart I have the courage, even when I am afraid, to get out from under shade of my fig tree and go see. I go see what I do not yet know. I go to a place I've never been. I think about something I've never thought. I imagine a possibility I've never considered. In this kind of listening truth is not a concept but a call. It is not a proposition but a pull. It is not something to be proved or disproved but something to be done, to which I bear witness by my life. The focus and responsibility are on me as a truth hearer. I can't blame others; I have to step up and take responsibility for my life.

We often talk about inviting Jesus into our hearts, or making Jesus part of our lives. But what if we turn that around, and realize that Jesus is welcoming us into his life? Jesus invites us to come and see where he lives. He offers us the opportunity to become part of what he is doing. His invitation is open, but it's up to us to follow, up to us to "come and see." We must decide if we can make that kind of deep commitment, if we can devote ourselves to that kind of close relationship. It means letting go of our own assumptions and expectations, and surrendering our whole being to God's desire and plan for us. What are you seeking with all your being? What is your soul's deep longing? Are you ready to be part of Jesus' life, so you can find what you seek? And once you've found Christ, then what? It's not enough to just see Jesus. He calls us to follow. You see, following Jesus wherever he goes, living with him, is the only way

you are ever going to find what you are seeking. Entering into a life-long commitment to be part of Christ's life is the only way you will ever fulfill that deep longing inside you. It's a longing that you might not even be able to name. But it's there.

Jesus asks, "What are you looking for?" Are you looking for grace and forgiveness? Are you looking for abundant life? Are you looking for an abiding and deep connection with the God who created you just so he could love you? Jesus isn't sitting around waiting for us to invite him into our lives. Instead, Jesus invites us into his life. With his "come and see" Jesus includes us in his Lamb of God work. Some people talk about how Jesus fills a God-sized hole in their lives. It's not really about that. It's about filling the you-sized place you can claim in God's family by accepting Christ's invitation into his grace. We all have Nazareth's in our lives. They are the objects of our judgments, assumptions, labeling, and exclusion. They are the people, places, and situations from which we neither expect nor see the possibility of anything good coming, certainly nothing useful or beneficial to us. Nazareth is about how we see and relate to others, whether in foreign policy or in our own homes.

Nathanael's question is not unique to him. It gets asked every day. Current versions of his question might go something like this. Can anything good come out of El Salvador, Haiti, or African countries? Can anything good come out of Washington? Can anything good come out of Islam? Can anything good come out of the immigrant, the foreigner, the stranger? Can anything good come out of the Black Lives Matter? Can anything good come out of the people and relationships that have hurt me? Can anything good come out of the broken, difficult, or painful places in our lives? Can anything good come out of the parts of ourselves that we dislike and reject? I suspect we could all name at least one individual or group of people about whom we ask that question. For us Nazareth is a blind spot and a hardening of our heart. For God, however, Nazareth is a place of epiphany, a place where God shows God's self and invites us to see, to believe, and to love in new ways.

Regardless, for every one of our Nazareth's there is always an invitation to "come and see." It's the invitation to get up and move to a new place, to leave behind our assumptions and judgments, to give up our certitudes, to risk not knowing, to see with the eyes of our heart, and to let ourselves be surprised by God. It's the invitation to let ourselves be changed; to see, believe, and love in new ways. It's a space in which we are given the freedom to choose to believe or not to believe – in God, in another, and in ourselves. Nathanael did and it changed his life forever. That's the promise for us too. What about you and me? Can anything good come out of our Nazareth? Come and see. **Amen!**

Pledge envelopes for 2024 and yearly statements for 2030 are
at the back of the church. Please pick yours up on the way out.

2 EPIPHANY 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING FOLLOWS

VESTRY NOMINATIONS

Warden – Erika Febres – First 2 year term

Vestry – Andrew Prosser – First 3 year term

Vestry – Davis Treasure – First 3 year term

MONDAY 8:30 PM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP
8:30 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

3 EPIPHANY 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Dana Kenn	Roe Prosser
Coffee	Annual Meeting	Prossers

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Donna Edwards	Jess
Bob Curley	Beverly Noel	Art
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Judy
Christopher	Warren	Kristen
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Mo	Phil Ryder	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Robert Hosey	Lourdes S.	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
Mary & Family	Ciara	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent
Jean Estinvil Quatorze	Jean Wildy	Nicolas
Matthew & Anne Marie Treasure	Michael & Family	

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

Prayer for the New Year

God our Father, thank you for being the God who walks besides those who love Him in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. I rejoice in the continued presence of the Holy Spirit with me, so that I am never alone. Lord, I lift up a sincere request for happiness during this year of difficulty. Help me find joy, that I may be strengthened spiritually, and happiness that I may continue to engage with those around me with Christian love. Sometimes it can be hard to see Your hand moving when everything around me seems dark. Help me find happiness so that I can see Your work, even if I do not understand it fully right now. I know that You use all things for Your glory, and for my good. I ask that You keep my focus on You during this New Year. In the name of Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,

Lay my life before you,

How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn

but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that

all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

