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The Rev. Robert Vogl Brian Larson, Cantor  
Assisting Minister: Tammy Currey Lector: Kate Mingle  
Communion Distribution: Henry Currey, Chris Weinrich  
February 1, 2026 at 9:30am

**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany** *Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.*



## **GATHERING**

**Handbells**

Prelude  
Fanfare  
The Star Medley

Gaspar Sanz  
Tielman Susato  
Sharon Elery Rogers

**Welcome**

*Stand*

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters. **Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in + Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

## Gathering Hymn 719

## Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life



1 Where cross the crowd-ed ways of life, where sound the  
 2 In haunts of wretch-ed - ness and need, on shad - owed  
 3 From ten - der child-hood's help - less - ness, from hu - man  
 4 The cup of wa - ter giv'n for you still holds the



cries of race and clan, a - bove the noise of  
 thresh-olds dark with fears, from paths where hide the  
 grief and bur - dened toil, from fam - ished souls, from  
 fresh - ness of your grace; yet long these mul - ti -



self - ish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man.  
 lures of greed, we catch the vi - sion of your tears.  
 sor - row's stress, your heart has nev - er known re - coil.  
 tudes to view the strong com - pas - sion in your face.

5 O Master, from the mountainside  
 make haste to heal these hearts of pain;  
 among these restless throngs abide;  
 oh, tread the city's streets again;

6 Till all the world shall learn your love,  
 and follow where your feet have trod;  
 till glorious from your heav'n above  
 shall come the city of our God.

Text: Frank M. North, 1850–1935, alt.

Music: WALTON, W. Gardiner, Sacred Melodies, 1815

## Apostolic Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## Hymn of Praise sung by the choir

Arr. Jayne Southwick Cool

*The only Son from heaven, foretold by ancient seers,  
by God the Father given, in human form appears.  
No sphere his light confining, no star so brightly shining as  
Jesus, our Morning Star, Light of the world. Glory be to God on high!*

*When in God's time appointed, the Christ, the virgin-born  
comes as a king anointed, and dark night turns to morn.  
A choir of angel voices praise God as earth rejoices in  
Jesus, our Morning Star, Light of the world. Glory be to God on high!*

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*Sit*

## WORD

### First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

*With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.*

A reading from Micah. <sup>1</sup> Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. <sup>2</sup> Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the LORD has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel. <sup>3</sup> "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! <sup>4</sup> For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. <sup>5</sup> O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD." <sup>6</sup> "With what shall I come before the LORD and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? <sup>7</sup> Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,

with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"<sup>8</sup> He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm 15** choir/congregation



<sup>1</sup> LORD, who may dwell in your <sup>|</sup> tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your <sup>|</sup> holy hill?

<sup>2</sup> **Those who lead a blameless life and do <sup>|</sup> what is right,  
who speak the truth <sup>|</sup> from their heart;**

<sup>3</sup> they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil <sup>|</sup> to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit up- <sup>|</sup> on a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup> **In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who <sup>|</sup> fear the LORD.  
They have sworn upon their health and do not take <sup>|</sup> back their word.**

<sup>5</sup> They do not give their money in hope of gain,  
nor do they take bribes a- <sup>|</sup> gainst the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be <sup>|</sup> overthrown.

## **Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31**

*According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.*

A reading from First Corinthians. <sup>18</sup> The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." <sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. <sup>26</sup> Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were

of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Children’s Message

*Stand*

### Gospel Acclamation

Choir sings the Acclamation and all repeat it;  
Choir sings the Verse.



*Rejoice<sup>1</sup> and be glad,\* for your reward is<sup>1</sup> great in heaven. (Matt. 5:12)*

### Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

*Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.*

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> And he began to speak and taught them, saying: <sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup> “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup> “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup> “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. <sup>8</sup> “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. <sup>10</sup> “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of



evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*

**Sermon**

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

*Please stand when the hymn introduction begins.*

## Hymn of the Day 710

## Let Streams of Living Justice



1 Let streams of liv - ing jus - tice flow down up - on the earth;  
2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,  
3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;

give free-dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.  
for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.  
your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.

The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,  
Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;  
Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,

the mourn - ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.  
on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.  
our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home-land bright-ly gleams.

Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;  
O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;  
In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;



a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo - ple's hour.  
dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.  
your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: William Whitla, b. 1934

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

**Apostles' Creed** With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Sit or kneel*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

A: As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home. *A brief silence.*

God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

*Stand*

**Peace** The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## **MEAL**

*Sit*

### **Setting the Table + Presentation of Gifts**

**Choir**

**Blessèd, How Blessèd**

**David Cherwien**

*Blessèd, how blessèd, those who thirst for goodness,  
open and hoping for God's righteous rain:  
God sends forth rivers to water the deserts;  
God's love lasts ever; how blessèd are they.*

*Blessèd, how blessèd, those who sigh in sorrow,  
furrowed and harrowed by sadness and pain:  
God walks beside them and enters their absence;  
God's voice gives solace; how blessèd are they.*



*Blessèd, how blessèd, those who live in mercy,  
giving, receiving from God's warming grace:  
God's sunlight blesses all those who love kindness;  
love never ceases; how blessèd are they.*

*Blessèd, how blessèd, those who work for concord,  
nation and neighbor abandon the blade:  
sword turns to plowshare, and fortress, to forest;  
all in God's Oneness; how blessèd are they.*

*Here God is reigning, here God's love sustaining,  
where all the blessed see God's dawning day:  
wounded and grounded, by mercy surrounded;  
foretaste and harvest, how blessèd are they.*

Text by Susan Palo Cherwien

## Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray. God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

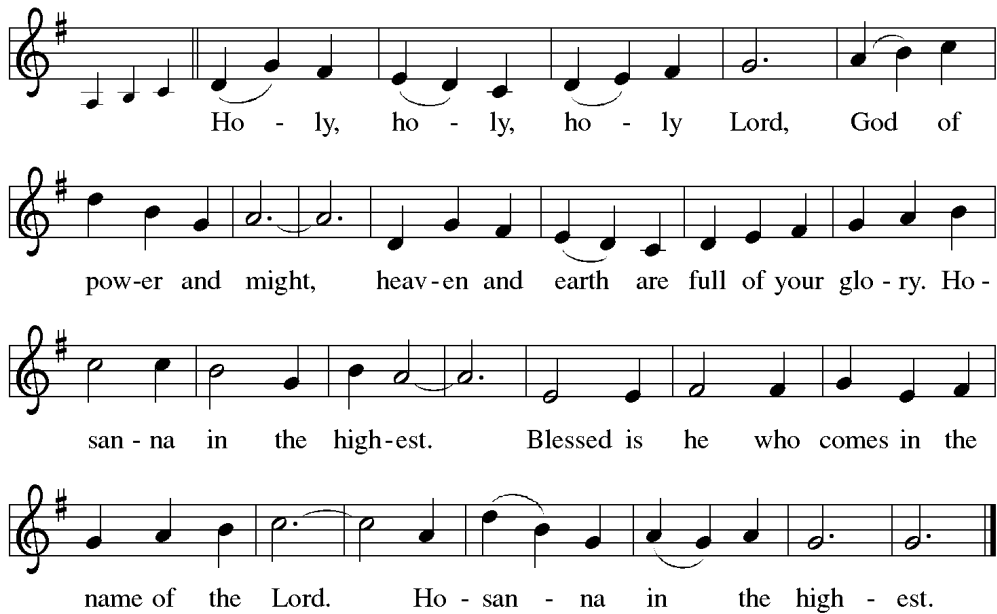
## Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



## Eucharistic Prayer

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

***Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.***

*Sit*

## Invitation to Communion

*Gluten-free wafers are available. Please ask your server.*

*Red wine and white grape juice are available in each tray.*



## Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -

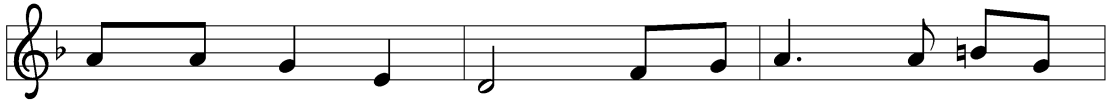
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

## Communion Hymn 334

## Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery



1 Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your  
2 We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed  
3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling



death we are re - born; though you die in all of  
on through act and word; ev - 'ry per - son lost and  
though our steps may be; one with you in joy and



his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you  
bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord, wears the  
sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the



rise with ev - 'ry morn.  
bod - y of our Lord.  
riv - er, you the sea.

4 Light of life beyond conceiving,  
mighty Spirit of our Lord;  
give new strength to our believing,  
give us faith to live your word,  
give us faith to live your word.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
Music: Marty Haugen

## Table Blessing and Communion Prayer

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

A: Let us pray. Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## **SENDING**

### **Blessing**

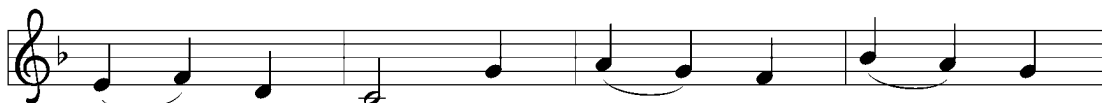
May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise + bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

### **Sending Hymn 551**

### **The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve**



1	The	Spir - it	sends	us	forth	to	serve;	we	go	in
2	We	go	to	com -	fort	those	who	mourn	and	set
3	We	go	to	be	the	hands	of	Christ,	to	scat -
4	Then	let	us	go	to	serve	in	peace,	the	gos -
										pel



Je -	sus' name	to	bring	glad	tid -	ings
bur -	dened free;	where	hope	is	dim,	to
joy	like seed	and,	all	our	days,	to
to	pro - claim.	God's	Spir -	it	has	em -



to	the	poor,	God's	fa -	vor	to	pro -	claim.
share	a	dream	and	help	the	blind	to	see.
cher -	ish	life,	to	do	the	lov -	ing	deed.
pow -	ered	us;	we	go	in	Je -	sus'	name.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: CHESTERFIELD, attr. Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

Sit

## Announcements

### A New Birthday Song

Using the tune KREMSE, We Praise You, O God

**We celebrate with you the life that God gave you.**

**We thank God for letting us share in your joy.**

**God bless you and keep you and shine Christ's light upon you.**

**With love we sing together: happy birthday to you.**

**Dismissal** Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. **Thanks be to God.**

### Voluntary

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

Max Drischner

*Everyone is invited to enjoy light refreshments and conversation  
in the fellowship hall following worship.*

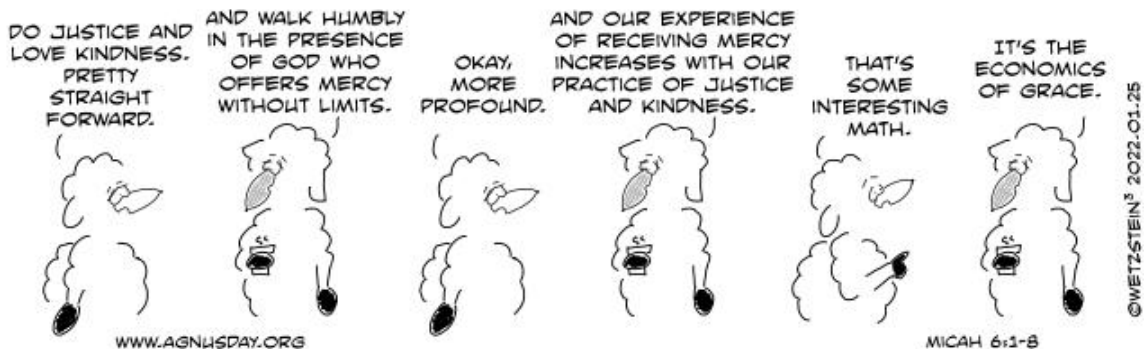
## Commemorations this Week

**Monday, February 2 Presentation of Our Lord** Forty days after the birth of Jesus we mark the day Mary and Joseph presented him in the temple in accordance with Jewish law. There they were greeted by Simeon, an aged priest who offered the song "Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace," as well as by the prophet Anna, who spoke of the redemption of Israel.

**Tuesday, February 3 Ansgar, Bishop of Hamburg, missionary to Denmark and Sweden, died 865** A monk who helped bring Christianity to Scandinavia, Ansgar returned to Germany where he was named bishop of Hamburg. He is remembered for his love for poor people.

**Thursday, February 5 The Martyrs of Japan, died 1597** Christianity was brought to Japan in the sixteenth century by Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries. The religion was suppressed, however, and in 1597 twenty-six missionaries and converts were crucified. Nevertheless, Christianity survived and later prospered.

The comic strip *Agnus Day* is a lectionary-based comic strip. Each week, Rick (the one with the dark nose) and Ted discuss one of the assigned readings from the Common Lectionary. Their conversation drives at a point and sometimes sparks a laugh. *Agnus Day* is the creation of Pastor James Wetzstein, a Lutheran pastor who serves as one of the campus pastors at Valparaiso University. *Agnus Day* appears with the permission of [www.agnusday.org](http://www.agnusday.org).



## Something Bigger Than Us

The beatitudes could easily be read as a list of rewards and consequences, and the kind of behaviors that will merit one or the other. We are well accustomed to understanding the world in such terms. Children receive rewards for good behavior. Students earn awards or scholarships. Athletes win medals or trophies. Success is a ladder we climb and, if we've done our part, our job is rewarded in the end.

Jesus talks about a great reward, but it's not one we can earn. On a closer look, the nature of many of the so-called "blessings" in the beatitudes is as much about what is done to us as about anything we do for ourselves. Jesus begins his sermon by going up the mountain, but his words push us not to new heights but to greater depths. Poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger, thirst, and persecution—these are not behaviors to strive toward for a reward. Instead, they are circumstances in which we can find ourselves when the ladder we've been climbing falls to the ground. Alternatively, to be merciful or pure in heart or a peacemaker is to choose to get off the ladder altogether for the sake of something bigger than our small selves.

The beatitudes as a whole suggest that Jesus wants more for us than simply collecting a heavenly prize in the end. His blessings assure us that all along the way, no matter our circumstances, we have an inherent, God-given dignity that no one and nothing can strip from us. At the table of Christ, all who hunger and thirst for righteousness are filled. This meal isn't awarded to us for a job well done. Rather, it feeds us for the work still to be done, that of sharing God's mercy and peace with others.



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**Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)**