

*At once
they left their
nets and
followed him.*

MATTHEW 4:20, NIV



St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran – Jan. 22, 2023
3rd Sunday after Epiphany

120 North 8th Street, Upper Sandusky, Ohio 43351

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 8am-12pm, 1-5pm

Phone: 419-294-2831, Fax: 419-294-5542

Pastor Barry Halter, Jr.: 419-852-9823

Listen live on WYNT 95.9 FM or watch on Facebook Live

*=stand as you are able

Assistive listening devices are available. Ask an usher.

Introduction to the day

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God’s grace and mercy.

+ GATHERING +

PRELUDE

"Thy Word" Smith

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who makes all things new, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Trusting in God’s mercy, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One, source of our renewal, **we confess that we are wrapped up in sin and cannot free ourselves. We have not practiced your righteousness. Our hearts have turned away from you. For the sake of the world you so love, forgive us, that we may be reconciled to one another for the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

Thus says our God: “The former things have come to pass and new things I now declare.” God’s mercy makes us new. We are forgiven in the name of ☩ Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

*GATHERING SONG: <i>"Dearest Jesus, at Your Word"</i>	Hymn 520
---	----------

*GREETING

p. 147

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

DISMISSAL TO JR. CHURCH

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-4

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

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

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

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

p. 151

*GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 4th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

...This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Barry Halter, Jr.

HYMN OF THE DAY: " <i>Will You Come and Follow Me</i> "	Hymn 798
---	----------

HOLY BAPTISM

p. 227

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Following each petition: ...Merciful God, **receive our prayer.***

SHARING OF THE PEACE

+ MEAL +

OFFERING

Please fill out the registration form in the red pew pad and pass it along in your row and then back to the center.

OFFERING MUSIC

"*Jesus Loves Me*" arr. Paxton

OFFERING PRAYER

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

...We look with hope for His coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

...Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

"LAMB OF GOD..."

p. 154

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Lord's table – All baptized persons are welcome at the table. If you do not desire to receive communion, you may come forward for a blessing. Your wish to receive the Sacrament is indicated by your upturned hands. Those with an aversion to wine may receive grape juice (in the center of the ring) or commune in one kind (bread only). Those with a wheat allergy may commune in one kind (wine only) or request a piece of rice cake. If you're not comfortable to receive communion from servers, you may come forward to get a packaged kit. The Lord has prepared the welcome table. Come and eat.

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

+ SENDING +

*BLESSING

*SENDING SONG: "We Are Marching in the Light"

Hymn 866

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace! Follow in the way of Jesus!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Sinfonia" Purcell

PRAYER CONCERNS: the family & friends of Ann Schuster, Gene Chandler, Lon Schmidt, Betty Romich, Deb Rife, Paul Amos, Virginia Berberick, Shannyn Swinehart, Dale Shroll, Ron Banta, Maveryck Breece, Cheryl Forman, Caleb McMillan, and all first responders & healthcare workers

ALTAR FLOWERS are given by Brooke & Caroline McCleary in loving memory of Brooke's dad, Dwight McCleary, who would have been 70 this year.

HOLY BAPTISM is celebrated today in the life of Charlotte Christine Trautwein, daughter of Eric & Heidi Trautwein and Charlie Jo Boes, daughter of Cory Boes & Kelly Mays. Charlotte's sponsors are Alyssa Newman, Jennifer Newman, and Amanda Styer. Charley's sponsors are Tiffany Diem and Kayleigh Taylor. We celebrate with these families today as we welcome our new sisters in Christ!

OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY is extended to the family & friends of Ann Schuster. Ann was called into the arms of the Lord last Sunday. Please keep her family in your prayers.

THE ANNUAL MEETING will take place today immediately following worship in Fellowship Hall. At this meeting, we will hear about all the great things that happened at St. Paul last year! In addition, we will hear about plans for our mission in 2023! A FREE lunch will be provided. Plan to stay!!!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Please get all February submissions to Beth by Tuesday. Thanks!

WORD ON WEDNESDAY continues this week beginning at 7pm. Join Pastor Barry in The Gathering Place for a discussion of the upcoming week's lessons. The lessons for next Sunday are Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, and Matthew 5:1-12. All are welcome!!!

NEXT SUNDAY we will have a speaker from Project Noelle share what all they do for people in our community and Pastor Brad Binau, son of St. Paul, will be our supply pastor.

2022 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS are ready! Please let Beth know if you would like a copy of yours. We do not send them to everyone, only those who ask for them. Thanks!

ARE YOU INTERESTED in helping our with our social media ministry??? Join us Thursday, January 26 at 7pm in The Gathering Place. We would like to discuss how we might move our social media ministry forward.

THE MISSION OUTREACH line on your offering envelope will go to Project Noelle in January.

CHRISTIAN FOOD CENTER: We are collecting toilet paper during January. Please bring your donations forward during the offering and put them in the chancel. No more containers please! Thank you!

JANUARY DUTIES:

Acolytes: 22 – Caroline Baker & Robert Roszman
29 – Abbi Ault & Erica Ruhlen

Assisting Ministers: 22 – Beth Collins
29 – Matt Schultz

Ushers: Brent Gottfried, Mike & Missy Breidenbach, Becky Krock

Greeters: Bruce & Sue Decker (west)

Readers: 22 – Bruce Decker
29 – June Eier

Communion Assistants: Jill Eyestone & Jane Smalley

Host in The Gathering Place: 22 – Kelly Fahle/Ana Barth
29 – Nancy Ross



Today

11:15am – Annual Meeting & lunch

Monday, January 23

8am – Pinning & knotting

7pm – Dartball (H) vs. Salem-Cass

Tuesday, January 24

5pm – Drumming exercise class in FH

6:30pm – Cub Scout meeting

7pm – Advanced Bell Choir practice

Wednesday, January 25

8am-12:30pm – Wyandot Cares classes

12-9pm – Fellowship Hall in use

7pm – Word on Wednesday

Thursday, January 26

8am-12:15pm – Wyandot Cares classes

5pm – Drumming exercise class in FH

7pm – Social Media Team meeting

7:30pm – Dartball @ Sycamore

Friday, January 27

8am-12:15pm – Wyandot Cares classes

Sunday, January 29

9am – Adult Sunday School

10am – Worship

11:15am – Choir practice

Worth the Risk

Perhaps Peter, Andrew, James, and John had heard rumors of this wandering preacher Jesus. Maybe they had been growing restless for some time in their lives as fishermen. It's possible they sensed that something was shifting in the world around them. They could have been fed up with the brutality of the Roman Empire and were looking for a leader to bring about change. Maybe they longed for something more, for a better way of living and loving and being. Maybe they were just so taken aback by this invitation to drop everything and follow that they couldn't help but say yes. We don't know their reasons for joining the Jesus movement that day, but there was clearly something so compelling about this kingdom of heaven (Matthew 4:17) that they were willing to drop their nets, risk everything, and not look back.

Perhaps we too hear in the gospel today a renewed invitation to get swept up in this kingdom, a call to drop old ways of being and embrace a life of following Jesus. Maybe this vision of the kingdom catches us when we witness ancient scripture finding new life in our hurting world. Perhaps we glimpse the possibilities of the heavenly kingdom when communities of unlikely people gather to share bread and wine at the same table, and when we see the hungry being fed, the suffering being cared for, the lonely finding welcome, the oppressed finding freedom. Suddenly, we know that this is God at work.

As Jesus reminds us, the kingdom of heaven is not a far-off kingdom. It draws near to us, breaking in around us perhaps in the moments when we least expect it. And when we catch sight of it, we just might never be the same. A world where the sick are healed, the hungry are fed, the outcasts find belonging, and ordinary days are filled with holy purpose? That's a kingdom worth risking everything for.