

## A New Community

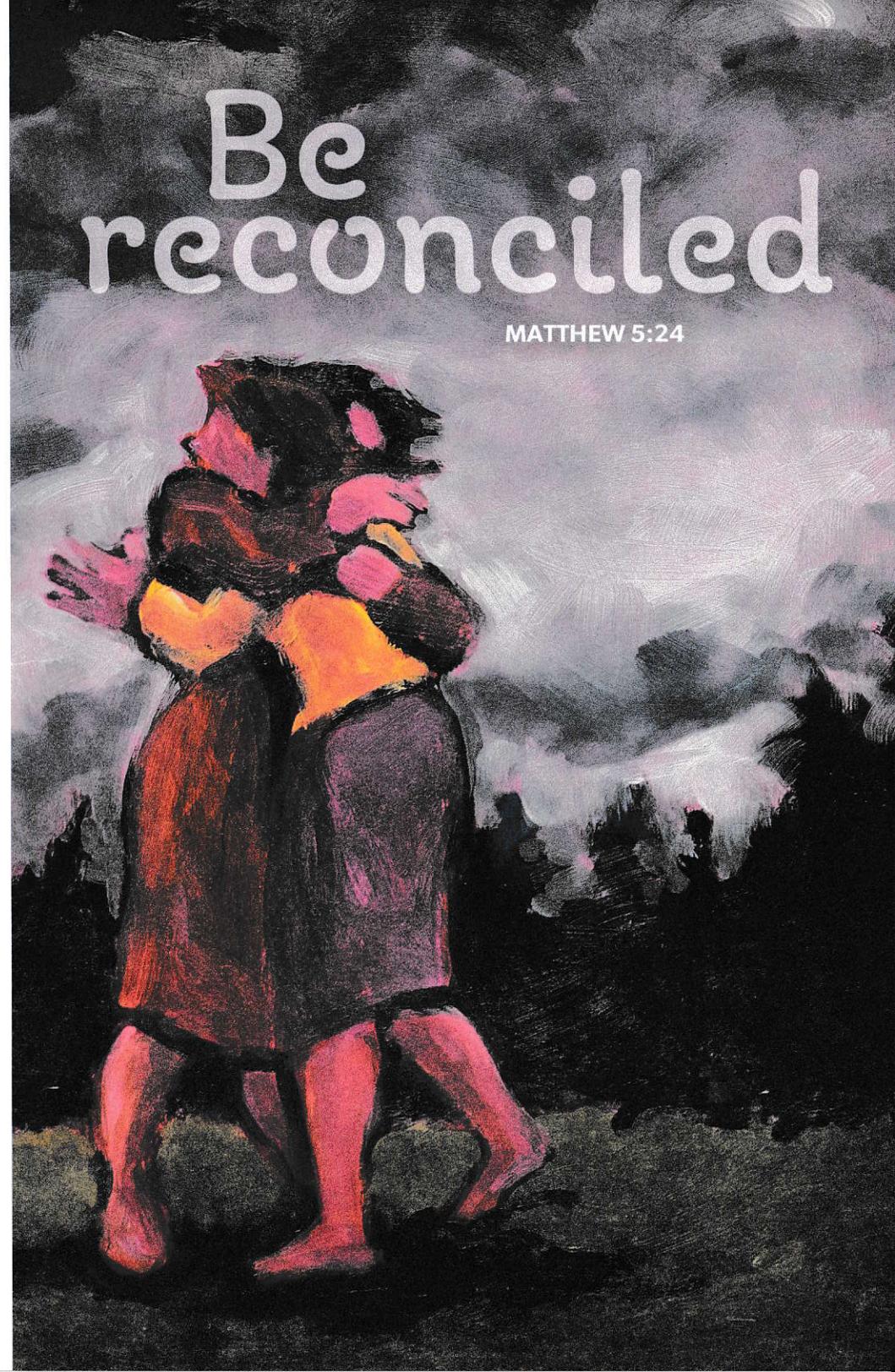
Anyone who has ever lived or worked with other humans likely knows that community is messy. We hurt each other, sometimes intentionally but often by accident. We say things we regret. We stay silent when we should speak up, or we impose our own beliefs on others when we should start by listening instead. We act rashly out of fear or ignorance or exhaustion. We trample over one another in an attempt to achieve, to win, to earn, or to protect what we assume is rightfully ours.

Jesus knows this side of humanity, and today he invites us to imagine another way. Today's gospel sounds harsh to our ears, but it might actually be an invitation into a community that looks more like the kingdom of God: a community of radical inclusivity, compassion, and care for one another. In this type of community, no one can be simply thrown aside or left behind. Honesty and integrity are the foundation of communication. People are seen in their full, beloved humanity, not as objects to be consumed or cast aside for the sake of others.

In our world today, we might wonder if such a community is possible, but in worship, we get to practice living in a community of faith together every week. Through the reading of scripture, we are reminded of the larger story of God in which we find our meaning: a living story of love, grace, and mercy. We confess our sins before one another and receive forgiveness and a fresh start. We are given our identity as God's beloved through baptism, and we are fed with Christ's own body and united with one another in holy communion. It is Christ at work in us who makes true healing and reconciliation possible, both in our congregations and throughout the world.

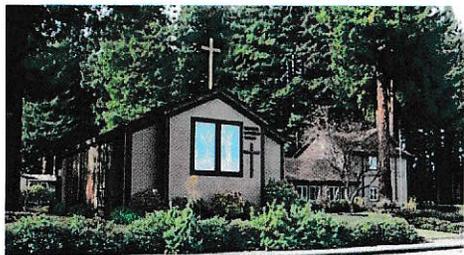
# Be reconciled

MATTHEW 5:24



# IMMANUEL LUTHERAN

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## Sixth Sunday after Epiphany February 12, 2023, 10 AM

P) Christ is in our midst!

C) He is and always will be!

Hymn #398 *Holy Spirit, Truth Divine*

P) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C) **And with your Spirit.**

Hymn of Praise: Glory to God in the highest... (Hymnal Page 148)

Prayer of the Day:

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalm: Psalm 119:1-8

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

C) Alleluia Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 5:21-37

Sermon:

Hymn #599 *Lord Jesus, Think on Me*

Special music by Greg Ganoff, piano, Elizabeth Rau, voice

- Seek My Face\* - Make a Joyful Noise\*

## Apostles Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall 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 life everlasting. Amen.

## Prayers of the Faithful:

### Offering:

P) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restoring to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit. Amen.

### Holy Communion Liturgy:

(page 152 - front of the red hymnal)

### Blessing:

P) The Lord bless you, and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor, and give you peace. And the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now, and forever. Amen.

### Hymn #807 *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

P) Go in peace to Love and serve the Lord and your neighbor.

C) **Thanks be to God!**

### Announcements, Birthdays, and Anniversaries:

- Greg Barsanti, February 15<sup>th</sup>
- Peter & Mollie Bermudez, February 13<sup>th</sup> (35 years!)

\* Songs composed by Greg Ganoff

### Holy Communion Liturgy:

P) The Lord be with you.

**C) And also, with you.**

P) Lift up your hearts.

**C) We lift them to the Lord.**

P) Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C) It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P): Prayer.

**C) Holy, holy, holy Lord. Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

P) Words of Communion.

**C) The Lord's Prayer:**

**C) Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

P) Peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C) And also, with you.**

**Distribution:**

#### *Spiritual Communion Prayer*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

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Pastor continues to do well in his recovery from knee surgery.

Our special music (thanks to Elizabeth!) will continue next Sunday, the 19<sup>th</sup>, with [Howdy Emerson](#) playing the harp.

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### Zoom Immanuel Lutheran Church Service, Sunday, 10 AM

Via Website Link:

[www.spselca.net/immanuel-lutheran-eureka](http://www.spselca.net/immanuel-lutheran-eureka)

Via Direct Zoom Link: *Hold the control key and click.*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84655587701?pwd=Q1hMSFRRdDNhQXZTc1svUTNLdWN0dz09>

Via Phone: 1-669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 846 5558 7701 Passcode: 00000

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The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Inspire your church that it may be a sign of life throughout the world. From the exploration of faith with children and new believers to missionaries and bishops, shape lives of faithfulness, so that all find abundant life in your ways. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Nourish your creation. Accompany all who plant and water. Bless the work of farmers; provide for subsistence farmers facing drought and climate change. Guide the work of agricultural scientists toward sustainable ways to feed the world. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Give growth where there seems to be no hope for life. In nations and regions where reconciliation seems impossible (*especially*), empower peacemakers with your Spirit. Where death holds sway through violence, disease, and hunger, equip relief workers to bring hope. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

## Preparing for Next Week

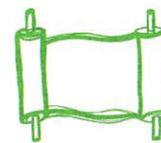
**Monday** Psalm 119:9-16. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs) James 2:1-13. **Wednesday** Proverbs 2:1-15. **Thursday** Psalm 2. **Friday** Hebrews 11:23-28. **Saturday** (commemoration of Martin Luther, renewer of the church, died 1546) Mark 9:9-13. **Transfiguration of Our Lord** Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2 or Psalm 99; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9.

CELEBRATE February 12, 2023

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13 of 14  
Tracks 1 and 2



# Celebrate

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany  
February 12, 2023

*In today's reading from Deuteronomy we are called to choose life by loving and obeying God. Much of today's gospel reading echoes portions of the Ten Commandments. Jesus' instructions to the crowd reveal a pattern of behavior that honors both God and the neighbor, resulting in life and health for the whole community. We too are invited to embrace these commandments, not out of fear of retribution, but because God has promised that to do so means life for us.*

## Prayer of the Day

O God, the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## First Reading

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

*The LORD sets before the people of God a clear choice. Life and prosperity will come to the faithful; loss of the land will be the consequence of disobedience. Choosing life entails loving and holding fast to the LORD. Life in God's presence presupposes the promise made to the ancestors.*

[Moses said to the people:] See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them,

<sup>18</sup>I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

or Sirach 15:15-20 [not printed]

*Wisdom literature has a high estimation of human possibilities. We are God's trusted creatures. Wisdom invites people to choose to keep God's commandments. God does not command people to be wicked or give them permission to sin.*



Hap - py are they who fol - low the teach - ing of the LORD.

Happy are they whose way is blameless,  
 who follow the teaching of the LORD!  
<sup>2</sup>Happy are they who observe your decrees  
 and seek you with all their hearts,  
<sup>3</sup>who never do any wrong,  
 but always walk in your ways.  
<sup>4</sup>You laid down your commandments,  
 that we should fully keep them. **R**  
<sup>5</sup>Oh, that my ways were made so direct  
 that I might keep your statutes!  
<sup>6</sup>Then I should not be put to shame,  
 when I regard all your commandments.  
<sup>7</sup>I will thank you with a true heart,  
 when I have learned your righteous judgments.  
<sup>8</sup>I will keep your statutes;  
 do not utterly forsake me. **R**

*Human leaders in the church are not the ones who control ministry. Rather they are coworkers who belong to God, the one who truly controls and continuously empowers the ministry of the church.*

Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, <sup>3</sup>for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? <sup>4</sup>For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

<sup>5</sup>What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. <sup>6</sup>I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. <sup>7</sup>So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. <sup>8</sup>The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. <sup>9</sup>For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

## Gospel

Matthew 5:21-37

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts his followers to embrace standards of righteousness that exceed legal requirements and traditional expectations.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' <sup>22</sup>But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. <sup>23</sup>So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup>Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

<sup>27</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' <sup>28</sup>But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>If your

right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

<sup>31</sup>"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' <sup>32</sup>But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

<sup>33</sup>"Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' <sup>34</sup>But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup>or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one."