

Order of Worship for January 14, 2024

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: *“Hail, O Source of Every Blessing”* – Hymn #409

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all.

C: If we walk in the light as God himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Entrance Psalm:

P: I have not hidden Your deliverance within my heart;

C: I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation;

P: I waited patiently for the LORD;

C: He inclined to me and heard my cry.

P: He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,

C: and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

P: He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

C: Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

P: Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust,

C: who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!

P: You have multiplied, O Lord my God, Your wondrous deeds and Your thoughts toward us;

C: none can compare with You!

P: I will proclaim and tell of them,

C: yet they are more than can be told.

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: I have not hidden Your deliverance within my heart;

C: I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation.

Hymn of Praise: *“Voices Raised to You We Offer”* – Hymn #795

Epistle Lesson: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

R: “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The

two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

R: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Confession:

P: The Lord calls each of us by name, to follow faithfully, pure in heart and life, and makes our bodies His temple.

P: Almighty God,

C: You dwell in light unapproachable. Unprotected, we perish in your presence. For our hearts are darkened, our minds beclouded; we glorify ourselves with our bodies instead of You; we call for night to cover our deeds; we have loved darkness rather than the light.

P: Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome.

C: For His sake we beg forgiveness.

P: For His sake God hears your prayer. You were bought with a price. God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ will also raise you by his power.

C: We have seen the Lord's glory; we have heard the Lord's voice.

P: Walk, then, as children of light and temples of the Most High God; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Second Lesson: John 1:43-51

P: The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to Philip, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And Jesus said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

P: O Lord, have mercy on us,

C: Thanks be to God.

Children’s Message:

Sermon Hymn: “*By All Your Saints in Warfare*” – **Hymn #518 (1, 23, 3)**

Sermon: “*Come and See*” - John 1:43-51

In these days leading up to the Iowa Caucuses, the candidates are making their final pushes to win. They’re hosting events all across the state, trying not to let winter weather stop them. With every event, text messages and emails and phone calls go out with the invitation to come and see the candidates.

That invitation comes because of what makes the caucuses different than normal elections. With the caucuses, national candidates have to interact with voters in more intimate settings. It is different trying to pitch yourself to a couple dozen people in a Pizza Ranch than it is to talk to hundreds from a debate stage, or millions through television or the internet. Seeing people up close and personal can upset preconceptions, and change expectations. It all starts with that invitation to come and see.

Of course it is not just politicians that people come and see. Caitlyn Clark and the Iowa women’s basketball team sells out everywhere they play, as people want to see the chance to see her play in person. Hilton was packed Tuesday night, despite the weather, because Cyclone fans want to see in person what this team can do. The Cubs Convention in Chicago is packed because fans want the chance to see their favorite players up close, as well as get the chance to ask the owners why they haven’t made as many offseason moves as fans expected.

When Philip comes to find Nathanael and brings him to see Jesus, there’s a clash of expectations there. Philip has seen Jesus, has been called by Jesus, and is following Jesus. We don’t get any details, or anything about what made Philip agree to follow Jesus. Maybe he’d heard from Andrew and Peter, since they were from the city, but we’re not clearly told that. Whatever it is, though, Philip is excited. He goes to find his friend Nathanael to share what he’s found. Nathanael seems less than enthusiastic, though.

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to Philip, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Nathanael is unlike the other disciples. Everyone else that Jesus calls seems to come right away. Peter, Andrew, James and John are called from their fishing boats and follow, no questions asked. Matthew leaves his tax collecting booth. Philip is called by Jesus and follows immediately. But not Nathanael. He’s skeptical. He spends his time under a fig tree, a traditional place for reading the Scriptures and prayer. He hasn’t found anything in his studies about Nazareth. It’s not even mentioned! He’s from Cana in Galilee, we find out in the next chapter, and so this isn’t the scorn that someone from the big city of Jerusalem would have. All he knows about it is Nazareth is a small town that’s not quite in the middle of nowhere, but you can see it from there. How could anything good come from there? His expectations are low, to say the least.

Philip responded to Nathanael's skepticism with an invitation—"Come and see!" When Nathanael asked if anything good could come out of Nazareth, Philip didn't try to debate him or prove it to him first. He merely answered, "Come and see." Instead of arguing with Nathanael Philip invited him to meet Jesus and experience for himself meeting Jesus could change his life forever.

That's what happens. Jesus saw Nathanael where he was and knew him as he was (Jesus is the omniscient, all-knowing God, after all). He saw that Nathanael was a sinner in need of forgiveness, and that is why he called him to faith through Philip.

Jesus sees you where you are in your spiritual journey and knows you for what you are. And yet he still loves you and forgives you. That is the kind of God Jesus is. He sees you sitting under the fig tree, driving to work, changing your baby's diapers, or sitting here in church. He knows your every thought and the number of hairs on your head! He even knew you before you were born. All of that is what Jesus meant when he told Nathanael, "Before Philip called you, when you were sitting under the fig tree, I saw you."

Nathanael was overcome by Jesus' words. He didn't know what to do or say. His heart overflowed with wonder and joy and hope, and he knew that Philip's claims were true. No, he did more than just know it—he *believed* that Jesus is the One that Moses and the Prophets wrote about in what he spent all of his time reading. In a bold confession of faith, he proclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Once he saw for himself, he believed. All it took was that simple invitation from Philip.

Philip gave his friend Nathanael the gift of seeing the unexpected. When Philip said, "Come and see," and Nathanael did, he met not only Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth, but Jesus, Son of the Eternal God, the one of whom the law and prophets spoke, the ruler of all times and places. In listening, though with skepticism, to his friend Philip, Nathanael met Jesus, the one who saw Nathanael studying scripture under the fig tree, the one who sees us working and playing, worshipping and praying, the one to whom and through whom we all are called. Nathanael didn't expect much, didn't think anything good could come from such a small town. Little did he know.

When we are asked to share our faith, we are good at coming up with excuses. "I'm just a kid; who am I that God would call me to tell my classmates about Jesus?" "I don't have time to do anything for God because I'm always busy with classes and clubs and computer games." "I can't speak Chinese, and I can't remember any English grammar rules." "I'm too old." "There has to be someone else who would be better at this than I am."

We can overcomplicate things sometimes. All it takes to share our faith is the simple words of "Come and see" as we tell others of how God has been at work in our lives. That's it. The Holy Spirit works faith.

When people are asked what initially brought them to church, by far the highest number is that they were invited by a friend or relative, around 83%. The Holy Spirit can work on anyone. An invitation to "come and see" may not work at first, and may include more of showing how God is at work in your life first, and the possibility of further invitations later on.

“Come and see.” Jesus sees you where you are and knows you for what you are. Still today he calls you to follow him. And he invites you and everyone to “come and see” what he is all about. Come and see, and your life will never be the same.

Apostle’s Creed:

Sharing Our Ministry:

Prayer of the Church: (P: “Lord in Your mercy” C: “**Hear our prayer.**”)

Lord’s Prayer:

Hymn: “*O Christ, Who Called the Twelve*” – **Hymn #856**

Third Lesson: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

R: Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” and ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But Eli said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So Samuel went and lay down. And the LORD called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But Eli said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if He calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for Your servant hears.”

R: O Lord, Have Mercy on us:

C: Thanks be to God.

Prayer of The Day:

P: Almighty God, give us the ears of Samuel,

C: "Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening,"

P: who heard Your midnight whispers and opened himself to Your message. Give us the eagerness of Philip,

C: "We have found Him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote,"

P: who shared with his friend the happy news of Your Son. Give us the willing faith of Nathanael,

C: "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

P: who saw the wondrous works of Christ and believed.

C: Perfect our faith!

P: Give us the dedication of Paul, who trained his body and resisted temptation.

C: “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.”

P: Help us to live as Your temples, with Your Spirit dwelling within us.

C: We will glorify You in our body.

Closing Prayer:

P: Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing: (Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: *“Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens”* – **Hymn #589**

Postlude: