

*Sunday, January 31, 2021*  
*Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany*  
*Order of Service*

**Gathering Song**..... **“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”** (*Hymnal, #334*)  
*(being sung this morning by Doris Akers)*

There’s a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it’s the spirit of the Lord; There are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord. Sweet holy Spirt, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us filling us with your love; and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise; without a doubt we’ll know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

**Greeting/Call to Worship**..... **Ms. Cynthia / Larry**

**Leader:** We have come to worship our Creator God.

**Larry:** **Our week has been challenging as we’ve strived to serve you.**

**Leader:** But we live with great expectations for ourselves and others.

**Larry:** **Today we have found peace in the God who created us.**

**Leader:** Come, may our steps be steady and purposeful.

**Larry:** **We are all precious in the Lord’s sight, honored and loved. We have come to bless you and to hear your promises as we strive to do what is right in your sight.**

**Hymn of Praise**..... **“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”**  
*(sing along with piano accompaniment)*

1 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but you are mighty;  
hold me with your powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,  
feed me now and evermore,  
feed me now and evermore.

2 Open now the crystal fountain,  
where the healing waters flow.  
Let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through.  
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,  
ever be my strength and shield,  
ever be my strength and shield.

3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside.  
Death of death, and hell’s Destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan’s side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises  
I will ever sing to you,  
I will ever sing to you.

**Prayer of Confession and Assurance..... Ms. Cynthia**

Gracious God, what we must confess today is more obvious. We haven't always paid any attention to you when you called us to any task. Even when we've heard you loud and clear, we like Jonah have said NO. Thank you for believing in us beyond our failures. And thank you for giving us a chance to say "YES". **Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer..... Ms. Cynthia**

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. **Amen.**

**The Invocation**

**Song of Meditation — "Touch From You" (featuring Tamela Mann)**

**The Prayer of Illumination ..... Ms. Cynthia**

As we journey into the sacred story, help us along the path toward faithfulness. Create in our lives a place of faith, hope and love. In the name of Jesus we pray. **Amen.**

**Scripture Reading #1 ..... Larry**

*(Deuteronomy 18:15–20, Common English Bible)*

<sup>15</sup> The LORD your God will raise up a prophet like me from your community, from your fellow Israelites. He's the one you must listen to. <sup>16</sup> That's exactly what you requested from the LORD your God at Horeb, on the day of the assembly, when you said, "I can't listen to the LORD my God's voice anymore or look at this great fire any longer. I don't want to die!"

<sup>17</sup> The LORD said to me: What they've said is right. <sup>18</sup> I'll raise up a prophet for them from among their fellow Israelites—one just like you. I'll put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. <sup>19</sup> I myself will hold accountable anyone who doesn't listen to my words, which that prophet will speak in my name. <sup>20</sup> However, any prophet who arrogantly speaks a word in my name that I haven't commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods—that prophet must die.

**Scripture Reading #2 ..... Erica**

*(1 Corinthians 8:1–13, Common English Bible)*

**8** Now concerning meat that has been sacrificed to a false god: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes people arrogant, but love builds people up. <sup>2</sup> If anyone thinks they know something, they don't yet know as much as they should know. <sup>3</sup> But if someone loves God, then they are known by God.

<sup>4</sup> So concerning the actual food involved in these sacrifices to false gods, we know that a false god isn't anything in this world, and that there is no God except for the one God. <sup>5</sup> Granted, there are so-called "gods," in heaven and on the earth, as there are many gods and many lords. <sup>6</sup> However, for us believers,

There is one God the Father.

All things come from him, and we belong to him.

And there is one Lord Jesus Christ.

All things exist through him, and we live through him.

<sup>7</sup> But not everybody knows this. Some are eating this food as though it really is food sacrificed to a real idol, because they were used to idol worship until now. Their conscience is weak because it has been damaged. <sup>8</sup> Food won't bring us close to God. We're not missing out if we don't eat, and we don't have any advantage if we do eat. <sup>9</sup> But watch out or else this freedom of yours might be a problem for those who are weak. <sup>10</sup> Suppose someone sees you (the person who has knowledge) eating in an idol's temple. Won't the person with a weak conscience be encouraged to eat the meat sacrificed to false gods? <sup>11</sup> The weak brother or sister for whom Christ died is destroyed by your knowledge. <sup>12</sup> You sin against Christ if you sin against your brothers and sisters and hurt their weak consciences this way. <sup>13</sup> This is why, if food causes the downfall of my brother or sister, I won't eat meat ever again, or else I may cause my brother or sister to fall.

**Psalter (Psalm 111) ..... Ms. Cynthia / Larry**

*Ms. Cynthia: Great are the works of the Lord, which abound to the ends of the earth.*

*Ms. Cynthia: Praise the Lord.*

**Larry: I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.**

*Ms. Cynthia: Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who have pleasure in them.*

**Larry: Full of honor and majesty are the works of the Lord whose righteousness endures forever,**

*Ms. Cynthia: who has caused his wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful.*

**Larry: The Lord provides food for the faithful and is ever mindful of his covenant.**

*Ms. Cynthia: Great are the works of the Lord, which abound to the ends of the earth.*

*Ms. Cynthia: The Lord has shown his people the power of his works by giving them the heritage of the nations.*

**Larry: The works of the Lord's hands are faithful and just; the precepts of the Lord are trustworthy; they are established for ever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.**

*Ms. Cynthia: The Lord sent redemption to his people and has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and wondrous is God's name!*

**Larry: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. The praise of the Lord endures forever.**

*Ms. Cynthia: Great are the works of the Lord, which abound to the ends of the earth.*

**Scripture Reading #3 ..... Gemma**

*(Mark 1:21–28, Common English Bible)*

**Jesus throws a demon out**

<sup>21</sup> Jesus and his followers went into Capernaum. Immediately on the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and started teaching. <sup>22</sup> The people were amazed by his teaching, for he was teaching them with authority, not like the legal experts. <sup>23</sup> Suddenly, there in the synagogue, a person with

an evil spirit screamed, <sup>24</sup>”What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the holy one from God.”

<sup>25</sup>”Silence!” Jesus said, speaking harshly to the demon. ”Come out of him!” <sup>26</sup>The unclean spirit shook him and screamed, then it came out.

<sup>27</sup>Everyone was shaken and questioned among themselves, “What’s this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands unclean spirits and they obey him!” <sup>28</sup>Right away the news about him spread throughout the entire region of Galilee.

**Doxology – “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” ..... Ms. Cynthia**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here be low; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

**The Affirmation of Faith — “The Apostles’ Creed” ..... Ms. Cynthia**

I believe in God the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth:  
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried:  
the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.**

**The Gloria Patri – “Glory Be to the Father” ..... Ms. Cynthia**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. **Amen.**

**Children / Youth Moment .....Sister Jaime**

**Hymn of Preparation — “Highway to Heaven” (featuring Jessy Dixon)**

**Inspirational Message..... Rev. Eugene W. Matthews**

## ***“The Alphabet of Praise”***

*(Sermon Text: Psalm 111)*

**Praise and Prayer Concerns**

**Invitation / Altar Call**

**Invitation Selection — “Anyway You Bless Me” (featuring Hezekiah Walker)**

**Announcements**

**Benediction**

# Announcements

## Pray Daily at Noon

Please remember to pray daily at NOON. Some areas to include in your prayer, can include the pandemic, racial healing, government leaders, educational challenges, and most importantly for our sick and shut-ins and each other.



**Wednesdays (7:15 p.m.) — Wednesday Night Experience. Call-in Information: 712-770-4010 (Access code: 331960)**

**Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup> (11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) — Communion elements** will be passed out in the church parking lot. Please remember to follow social distancing rules.

**Its that time again!!! Girl Scout Cookie time.** Jaylah is a member of Troop #4887 and is taking orders, for additional information reach out to Tiara at 202.603.9800. Varieties include: **Lemon Ups, Trefoils, Do-Si-Dos, Tagalongs, Samoas, Thin Mints, GS S'Mores, Toffee-Tastics.** Initials orders due January 11<sup>th</sup>, but it is never to late to order. Monies due when you receive your cookies.

**Note from Finance:** First, let us give a big thank you to all that have been giving. This is a reminder that there are several ways to get your offering to the church:

1. You can drop it off at the church, place in the mailbox (Cynthia and David Burley check it regularly) **(This will save you postage)**
2. You can mail it to the church (601 Eighth Street, Laurel, MD 20707)
3. You can use on-line giving (Give–St. Marks — <https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/stmarkslmd>)
4. Reach out to member of finance, they will try to accommodate you.

Again, thank you. Just remember, even during the pandemic, the church building still has obligations that need to be met.



***"Proclaiming Christ to the generations...  
Equipping disciples to transform the world"***

**Special Prayers / Sick and Shut-In List:** If you hear of anyone that is in need of special prayer or is taken to the hospital, please contact: Rev. Eugene Matthews (443.257.2730 (cell), 410.379.0600 (home), [reveugene@comcast.net](mailto:reveugene@comcast.net))

Aaron Burley, Eric Smith, Brian Bailey, Rayvon Roy, Joyce Gibson, Tony Tingle, Mitchell Talley, LaKisha Thomas, James (Stoney) Carroll, Marva Thomas, Nena Hughes, Deysha Gibson, Gloria Thomas, Sharon Thomas, Rev. George F. DeFord, Wanda Dumas, Sherman / Erica Roy, Janeen Thomas, Eunice Harding (Gemma's Mother), Tyrone / Pat Mundell, Samuel / James Briggs (Cynthia Burley's brothers), Charles Burley, Joan Moore, Larry Powell, Veronica Miller, Jeanette Reeves, Ernestine Gibson, Mildred Awkward, Grace Elaine Catchings, James Matthews, Birdie Walker, Paul Browder, Laura Dotson, Phillip Reese, Lamar Payne, Kevin Miller, Nancy Daniels, Eunice Parker, Hannah Polk, Delores Tyler

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**Eric Smith's story:** [https://www.spotfund.com/story/5700aa0f-3368-4593-92ac-1cbcad6fa551?created=true&fbclid=IwAR22RY6XyC06K4w5c6Sy-3x29Pn7pZ29akpYwLOMgjuJCoNSItaleImQSWM&referral\\_id=032c0c58-c7d8-4ca8-a181-4d44d1b3b971](https://www.spotfund.com/story/5700aa0f-3368-4593-92ac-1cbcad6fa551?created=true&fbclid=IwAR22RY6XyC06K4w5c6Sy-3x29Pn7pZ29akpYwLOMgjuJCoNSItaleImQSWM&referral_id=032c0c58-c7d8-4ca8-a181-4d44d1b3b971)