

**SERMON**

*“How God Changes Us”*

**MIDWEEK LENT 1**  
Wednesday, February 21, 2024

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

**Pastor:** Be present, merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of life may find our rest in You. “God, You are calling me to change and so I say”

**People:** **“Here I am.”**

**Pastor:** Abide with us, Lord, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Abide with us and with Your whole church. Abide with us at the end of the day, at the end of our life, at the end of the world. Abide with us with Your grace and goodness, with Your holy Word and Sacrament, with Your strength and blessing. Abide with us when the night of affliction and temptation comes upon us, the night of fear and despair, the night when death draws near. Abide with us and with all the faithful, now and forever.

**People:** **Amen.**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**BENEDICTION**

**Pastor:** Though God’s footprints were not seen.

**People:** **He led His people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.**

**Pastor:** May the Almighty God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—lead you into new seasons of change and joy and peace.

**All:** **Amen and Amen!**

**HYMN**

LSB #827

*“Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling”*

**Silent Prayer:** Lord Jesus, you are calling me to change. Empower me to say with Moses, “Here I am!” Amen.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Church Office, (260) 744-3228 Fax Number, (260) 744-3229

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Monday – Friday)

***Our Worship Schedule:***

*Saturday Worship Service at 4:00pm - Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am*



**Bethlehem**

LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Gathering – Welcoming – Serving – Restoring*

**WHO WE ARE**

*As forgiven children of God, Bethlehem Lutheran Church shows Christ’s love through acts of service so that we can share the hope of the Gospel with others.*

## ✠ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS ✠

### Theme of the Day

*Change.* It's often said that the only person who likes *change* is a baby with a wet diaper!  
*Change.* That's God's plan for Moses. That's also God's plan for us!

### HYMN

LSB #440 (stanzas 1–4)

*“Jesus, I Will Ponder Now”*

### INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

*(During the sermon series on Exodus we are using psalms that celebrate Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Today we use selected verses from Psalm 77.)*

Pastor: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your miracles of long ago.

People: **You are the God who performs miracles.**

Pastor: You display Your power among the nations.

People: **With Your mighty arm You redeemed Your people.**

Pastor: The descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

People: **The waters saw You, O God, the waters saw You and writhed.**

Pastor: The very depths were convulsed.

People: **Your path led through the sea.**

Pastor: Your way through the mighty waters.

People: **Though Your footprints were not seen.**

All: **You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron!**

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Hear me, merciful and mighty Father, as I confess my bondage to sin and death.

People: **I know that nothing good lives in me.**

Pastor: That is, in my sinful nature.

People: **I have the desire to do good.**

Pastor: But I cannot carry it out.

People: **What I do is not the good I want to do.**

Pastor: No, the evil I do not want to do, this I keep on doing.

People: **I find this law at work—**

Pastor: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

People: **In my inner being I delight in God's law.**

Pastor: But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war and making me a prisoner of the law of sin and death.

All: **Who will rescue me from this body of death?**

*(You are invited silently to reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, Christ's love is greater.)*

Pastor: Hear the good news! The same God who delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage also delivers you from your body of sin and death! Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed and His blood forgives you and sets you free! He turned the sea into dry land, we passed through the waters on foot. Though God's footprints were not seen.

All: **He led His people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron!**

### HYMN

LSB #440 (stanzas 5–6)

*“Jesus, I Will Ponder Now”*

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, right where we are, You love us with an everlasting love. But You love us too much to let us remain there. Give us faith and humility to accept Your process of change so that—more and more—we become like Jesus. We pray in His name,

All: **Amen.**

*(Today's scripture lessons are about God's plan to change us.)*

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Exodus 3:1–14

### EPISTLE LESSON

Romans 12:1–2

### GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 16:21–28

### HYMN

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*“Here I Am, Lord”*