



The Messenger

International Lutheran Church

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A NOTE FROM PASTOR CARL

EPIPHANY PURPOSE

But he [Jesus] said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." (Luke 4:43 ESV) As the season of Epiphany continues, so the Light of Christ continues to shine and disperse as part of God's very design and plan. Today Luke shares with us the early days of Jesus' growing ministry of teaching and healing. Here we discover the purpose and divine mandate behind Jesus' coming.

Many of us at one point or another in our life has asked the question, "Why is this happening to me?" Here I don't mean the cause-and-effect realities of our lives, as in, how cold weather results in snow. No, I mean the questions that seek our greatest need of understanding, meaning, and purpose for our lives. These questions may not always be center stage. But especially when things are turning out differently than we had hoped, expected, or desired, the question of meaning and purpose is critical for moving ahead.

In today's gospel lesson, Jesus continues his early ministry of preaching and healing in and around the city of Capernaum. We read this morning of three different settings which Luke uses to help us gain a sense of Jesus' overall purpose and mission, especially as the expected events take a different turn for those who were witnesses of it. We should note that for Luke, the healing ministry of Jesus and the teaching ministry of Jesus are not distinct or separate ministries but part of what the Spirit was doing in and through Jesus' life. The passage from Isaiah 61 that Jesus had read in the synagogue in Nazareth speaks to this in saying, "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me... to proclaim good news to the poor... and recovering sight to the blind..." (Luke 4:18/Isaiah 61:1).

So as Jesus enters the synagogue in Capernaum, we see He is first confronted by the shrieking disturbance of a man controlled not by his own will but by unclean spirits or demons. "Their" question concerning Jesus' presence in relation to them begins to unfold the purpose of Jesus' ministry in Luke. "Have you come to destroy us?" While Jesus' presence is not good news for the unclean spirits, it is freedom for the captive! The man is freed and left unharmed from their grip. The casting out of the one means wholeness and restoration for the other. God's Word is at work to root out as much as it is at work to build up - to bind as it simultaneously loosens.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM	<i>Bible Class</i>
10:00 AM	<i>Divine Worship Service</i> (in-person and live stream)
7:00 PM	<i>Bible Study</i> (live stream)

OTHER EVENTS

Go to ilcseoul.org > Upcoming for other events

Next, Jesus enters into the house of Simon (later to be called Peter but not yet). His mother-in-law is struck with a fever and trapped in her bed in a similar way that the man was gripped by the unclean demon. Yet, just as Jesus' presence frees the man, so we see His presence in Simon's home, literally standing over her, now frees his mother-in-law. With a word she is restored and now can even serve them! This isn't a gradual but remarkable release that ends in service to others.

Finally, Luke tells us that late into the night people of all the surrounding area came bringing their loved ones and friends to Jesus that He would touch them. Here the superlatives of "many" and "all" ring again and again to emphasis how the front door of Peter's home became a shining beacon of health and healing. Not until early morning does Jesus find a quiet moment and place to commune with the Father. As the crowds converge on Jesus, their expectation of returning to the unending needs already likely lining up at the door seem to go unfulfilled. Jesus is off in a different direction. He is on to other towns and villages, synagogues, and homes. Why, Jesus? Are there not needs to be met and sermons to be given? In His reply, we hear the commission of His Father. The One who again and again had sent His servants, young and old, to root-out and build up, to bind and release had sent His Only Son for this purpose. Jesus sees His path before Him as God's mandate of love! He sets out even now on His way forward that all would know His grace and kindness. This is why He has come, that He would go even to the top of a cross for you and me.

Now this purpose that is fulfilled in Him calls to you and me. With Love Divine His purpose in our lives is part of His own Epiphany calling. We, too, are called to follow and shine like the stars for all to see His love in our world today. We are part of His Epiphany light, His love for all. His Epiphany purpose shines through your life and mine as we are set free in Him.

Pastor Carl

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Unless otherwise noted, you may direct inquiries for any announcement to seouilc.volunteer@gmail.com. Links to online or live stream events will be included in either the electronic version of *The Messenger* or will be sent out on Sunday morning.

CHURCH360

We are now transitioning to a new church management system called Church360. Thank you for your assistance in helping us get this software fully functioning as we reach out to individuals and families for information that can help us connect better with you.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NOTICE

We will continue to fill in the volunteer duties with the names on our January volunteer list, recognizing that it will be difficult to know who will be in physical attendance due to the protests. If your name appears on the 'Worship Assistants' table and you are not planning to attend church in-person, please do not worry: we will be able to find another to take your place when the service begins.

MEN'S GROUP FELLOWSHIP

The Men's Group will meet online this Saturday, February 1 for a time of fellowship and discussion. The book that will guide the discussion is Trevor Sutton's *Being Lutheran*. We have a few copies of the book at church, so please ask James or Pastor Carl so you can get reading!



GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

ONLINE GIVING

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN FAITHFULLY MAKING USE OF ONLINE GIVING.

If you are unable to attend in-person church, we encourage you to make use of offering your tithes and gifts via online giving. Giving in this way will be recorded for your personal end-of-year giving statement.

CITIBANK 260-00497-243-01

READINGS

February 2: Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

OT	Jeremiah 1:4-10
NT	1 Corinthians 12:31b - 13:13
Gospel	Luke 4:31-44

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

If you are interested in serving as a worship assistant, or need to make a scheduling adjustment, please write to seouilc.volunteer@gmail.com. Thank you!

FEBRUARY 2

10:00 AM

ACOLYTE	Emeth & Genesis
GREETER	James
USHERS	Chuck & Esther
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Adam
LIVE STREAM	Olivia
KITCHEN HELPERS	Yoonsil & Juwon
OFFERING COUNTERS	Joohun & Olivia