



**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and
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February 2025

Worship and Discipleship by Margo Geesing

“Being a Prophet”

February 2, 2025 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 4 verses 21-30

This first Sunday of February continues last Sunday’s Gospel lesson. Jesus is still in his home town of Nazareth and is preaching in the synagogue. People are amazed and in awe of his preaching, until they stop and think, this is Joseph’s son; we watched him grow up; how can **HE** be telling us anything?!? Then they get angry, to the point where they try to throw him from a cliff. Why? Because he reminds them that God is not “owned” by them. God’s love and care cannot be limited to just them. God loves and cares for the “other” in this world. We are called to do the same. We are challenged to love and care for those we don’t understand, who are seen as “less than”. We are called to care for and to share God’s love with the poor, ill, hurting, disregarded, shunned, and the different. We are called to something higher than society’s judgement; we are called to live and care and work and love by God’s judgement which is always layered with love and mercy.

February 9, 2025 – Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 5 verses 1-11

In this Gospel passage we have the calling of Simon, James, and John. This is different from the other Gospel’s telling of the story. This time Jesus begins by preaching and using Simon’s boat to preach from. He then sends them out to fill their nets again. They receive a great catch and Simon in his humility, begs Jesus to leave him since he is a sinful man. Jesus tells Simon to come with him and he will make him a catcher of people. And they lift with Jesus. This is the same thing that occurs at Worship. Jesus calls us to community, so we come to the church. We greet one another in hospitality just as Simon welcomes Jesus into his boat. We take time in humility and sorrow to ask Jesus for forgiveness just as Simon does. We follow Jesus in obedience as we pray and partake in Holy Communion just as Simon did in going out to fish again. Then we are called to risk all we have to follow Jesus just like Simon. We are told each week at the end of the service to, ***“Go in peace, share the good news.”*** in some form and this is what we try to do when we live out the Gospel message of love, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion and share this message with others.

February 16, 2025 – *Sixth Sunday after Epiphany*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 6 verses 17-26

The third Sunday of February we hear Luke's version of the Beatitudes. Luke places Jesus on a plain rather than a mount as he is in Matthew's Gospel. Living in Arizona, I can understand that Jesus could be both on a mount and a plain at the same time. The mesas of the southwest are found as a flat place on the top of a hill or mountain. Luke focuses on four themes within his presentation of the Beatitudes and he pairs them with four "woes" to show counterpoint to the blessings: poor vs rich, hungry vs full, weeping vs laughing/mourning, hated vs being spoken of well. Both the blessings and the warnings end with the idea of how prophets were treated: good prophets got the blessings false prophets got the warnings. Just as Jesus was rejected as a "prophet" in his hometown at the beginning of the month, we need to be aware of when we are being a good prophet and how we are treated. But we also need to be mindful when we are being addressed by a good prophet, even when they are not who we would expect.

Sunday, February 23, 2025 – *Seventh Sunday after Epiphany*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 6 verses 27-38

Jesus can be quite radical in his teachings. Today's Gospel is just one example. He starts out telling his followers to turn the other cheek, and to give up their shirt. These are actually quite radical for the times. There were limits on how you could punish those under you. You could only hit with the back of an open left hand. By turning your cheek, it prevents a second hit. It was sinful for a person, other than a spouse, or doctor, etc., to see someone unclothed. The sin would be on the one seeing not the one unclothed. Therefore, if someone takes your cloak removing your shirt also, now becomes a problem. Jesus does not want his followers to be doormats. He wants them to be like him. Jesus was strong, forgiving, merciful, understanding, and loving. Jesus was also willing to stand up for what is right in God's eyes, give his life for others, and address social issues of the time. Jesus calls all of us to that radical love where we love and pray for our enemies, where we do not judge a person, where we are kind, forgiving and merciful. And because we believe in a God of abundance: we will receive more kindness, forgiveness, and mercy from God. So, go, be a prophet of a kind, loving, forgiving, and merciful God.