

ETERNAL GOD, THE REFUGE AND HELP OF ALL YOUR CHILDREN,  
WE PRAISE YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE GIVEN US,  
FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR US,  
FOR ALL THAT YOU ARE TO US.  
IN OUR WEAKNESS, YOU ARE STRENGTH,  
IN OUR DARKNESS, YOU ARE LIGHT,  
IN OUR SORROW, YOU ARE COMFORT AND PEACE.  
WE CANNOT NUMBER YOUR BLESSINGS,  
WE CANNOT EXPLAIN YOUR LOVE:  
FOR ALL YOUR BLESSINGS WE BLESS YOU.  
MAY WE LIVE AS IN YOUR PRESENCE,  
AND LOVE THE THINGS THAT YOU LOVE,  
AND SERVE YOU IN OUR DAILY LIVES;  
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN  
~ ST. BONIFACE (CA. 672-754)

# Living Water Fellowship

3<sup>d</sup> Sunday in Epiphany – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023

## COME TO JESUS

PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION    WHAT LOVE, MY GOD (CITYALIGHT) CCLI 384660

**SONG:**                    Invitation (AT 598)  
                                  May the Words (AT 518)

**WELCOME & PRAYER:**

## GROW IN HIS GRACE

**BIBLE READING:**                    Matthew 5:1-12

<sup>1</sup>One day as Jesus saw the crowds gathering, he went up on the mountainside & sat down. His disciples gathered around him, <sup>2</sup>and he began to teach them.

<sup>3</sup>“God blesses the poor in spirit, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

<sup>4</sup>God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>God blesses those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

<sup>7</sup>God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

<sup>8</sup>God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.

<sup>10</sup>God blesses those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,  
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

<sup>11</sup>“God blesses you when people mock you & persecute you & lie about you & say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice & be glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. Remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.”

**CHILDREN’S TIME:**

**FAITH CHAT:**

1. What would happen if a group of people sought to live as Jesus describes here, loved one another (& others) sacrificially, & shared the gospel boldly?
2. What would you need to do that intentionally & fervently starting now?

**THE MESSAGE:**                    *IT’S TIME: KINGDOM LIVING*

**OFFERING SONG:**                    Filled My Life with Grace (AT 548)

**PRAYERS:**

## THE COMMUNION:

### Preparation:

*O Lord, forgive us when we fail to respond to your call with faith. Forgive us when we are frightened of the future or pull back from the demands of your calling. Forgive us when we fail to sense your presence in our past, to acknowledge your grace in the present moment, or to trust you for our future.*

***Through your Spirit we offer ourselves to you alone. We stand together as your disciples seeking renewed & renewing faith. Touch us now with your Spirit, Lord. Touch us now with your Spirit. Fill us with your presence & use us as your kingdom requires. Make our lives holy & wholly yours.***

*The light of God's love shines into the dark places of our world, healing its brokenness, & bringing hope to places of despair. The light of God's love in Jesus Christ; crucified, risen & reigning forgives us to make us his & whole.*

### Thanks be to God!

### Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

### Worship during Communion:

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*GO IN HIS POWER*

## THE BLESSING:

***(Name), † child of God, the Father fills you with the life of Christ in all the small places.***

***Amen.***

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: *Because we Bear Your Name (AT 292)*

*SHOW HIS LOVE*

## Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12. Is your familiarity with this text an obstacle to hearing it anew? What questions immediately come to mind?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose this setting & this format to both instruct his disciples & describe life under the blessing of the Father? What does the word "blessed" mean?
3. What does "blessedness" or "complete & total happiness" look like in the eyes of today's cultural understanding? What do you think accounts for the difference? What does it look like to pursue happiness apart from God? How does such a pursuit show itself to be empty & ultimately fruitless?
4. Why do we have to come to the end of ourselves before we can truly follow God? Has God brought you to the end of yourself? If so, how? If not, why not?
5. What will characterize a person's life or my life if I am hungering & thirsting for righteousness? To seek, hunger/thirst for, righteousness, means to pursue God as our only source of fulfillment. What else in this world have you sought to fulfill you? Why did it fail to deliver true satisfaction? What keeps you from wholeheartedly pursuing God as the only true source of fulfillment?
6. How are we to extend blessing to those we meet? Do you consider yourself gentle, humble, and thoughtful? How can you learn to live in such a way? What interferes with you growing in those character traits?
7. Jesus in vs 3 & vs 10 describes those who receive the Kingdom. What does "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" mean? What does that imply or suggest we live toward? Is the Kingdom a prize we earn or a gift we receive? How? (Note Luke 12:32)
8. How does God view His children? What privileges do we have as His children?
9. According to Jesus, those who follow him should expect to be persecuted. What does it mean to be persecuted? Have you experienced persecution in your life? If so, how did you respond to it? If not, why do you think you have not been persecuted?
10. Do you think the world understands, accepts or respects Christ's definition of happiness or those who live as described by the Beatitudes? Why or why not?
11. What would happen if a group of people sought to live as Jesus describes here, loved one another (& others) sacrificially, & shared the gospel boldly? What stops you & some friends from doing that right now?