**3rd Sunday after the Epiphany**

“Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.’” *Jonah 3:1-2*

**AS WE GATHER**

The Lord always sets the right time for the right people to be used for His mission and purposes. Throughout the Old Testament, He spoke through prophets to proclaim His Word, call the people to repentance, and turn back into a relationship with Him. As His own beloved Son, our Savior, came into the world when the time was right*,* God used John the Baptist to prepare the way for Christ. As John’s ministry and calling people to repentance would cease, and Jesus’ earthly ministry began, Jesus echoed and perfectly fulfilled all that would come to fruition in and through Him. As Christ calls His first disciples, the call to repentance and faith continued. Even today, as we gather in His name, that same call through those the Lord has placed in His right time is heard with open ears and willing hearts within His Church, that we may live faithful lives of repentance and faith as we follow Him.

(*LSB*, Divine Service, Setting Three, pg. 184)

**HYMN** *“O Christ, Who Called the Twelve”* (*LSB* 856)

O Christ, who called the Twelve to rise and follow You,

forsaking old, familiar ways for ventures bold and new:

grant us to hear Your call to risk security

and, bound in heart and will to You, find perfect liberty.

O Christ, who taught the Twelve the truth for ages sealed,

whose words and works awakened faith, the ways of God revealed:

instruct us now, we pray, by Your empow’ring Word.

True teacher, be for all who seek their light, their life, their Lord.

O Christ, who led the Twelve among the desolate

and broke as bread of life for all Your love compassionate:

lead us along the ways where hope has nearly died

and help us climb the lonely hills where love is crucified.

O Christ, who sent the Twelve on roads they’d never trod

to serve, to suffer, teach, proclaim the nearer reign of God:

send us on ways where faith transcends timidity,

where love informs and hope sustains both life and ministry.

O Christ, the’ apostles’ Lord, the martyrs’ strength and song,

the crucified and risen King to whom the saints belong:

though generations pass, our tribute still we bring,

our hymns a sacrifice of praise, our lives an offering.

**PSALM** 62

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Jonah 3:1-7, 10

**EPISTLE** 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 (32-35)

**HOLY GOSPEL** Mark 1:14-20

**HYMN** *“O Christ, Our True and Only Light”* (*LSB* 839)

O Christ, our true and only light, enlighten those who sit in night;

let those afar now hear Your voice and in Your fold with us rejoice.

Fill with the radiance of Your grace the souls now lost in error’s maze;

enlighten those whose inmost minds some dark delusion haunts and blinds.

O gently call those gone astray that they may find the saving way!

Let ev’ry conscience sore oppressed in You find peace and heav’nly rest.

Shine on the darkened and the cold; recall the wand’rers to Your fold.

Unite all those who walk apart; confirm the weak and doubting heart,

That they with us may evermore such grace with wond’ring thanks adore

and endless praise to You be giv’n by all Your Church in earth and heav’n.

**SERMON *“Called to What?”***

**HYMN** *“Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling”* (*LSB* 827)

Hark, the voice of Jesus calling, “Who will go and work today?

Fields are white and harvests waiting—who will bear the sheaves away?”

Loud and long the Master calleth; rich reward He offers thee.

Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?

Some take up His task in morning, to their Lord responding soon;

some are called in heat of midday, others late in afternoon;

even as the sun is setting, some are sent into the fields,

there to gather in the bounty that God’s Word so richly yields.

For as rain and snow from heaven water seeds in dusty soil,

causing them to bud and flower, giving bread to those who toil;

so the Lord sends forth His promise, words of life and joy and peace—

never void to Him returning, bearing fruit with great increase.

Hearken to the Lord whose coming marks the time when grace shall end,

when with His angelic reapers He in glory shall descend.

Soon the night, the final harvest; soon the time for work shall cease.

Then the souls His grace has garnered shall enjoy His Sabbath peace.