Lessons for Second Sunday After the Epiphany   January 15, 2023
Psalm 40:1-11 ~ *David's trust in God's help was based on his faithfulness in the past.*
Isaiah 49:1-7 ~ *The Servant of the Lord is a light of salvation for all people.*
1 Corinthians 1:1-9 ~ *All who call on the name of the Lord Jesus are kept holy in Him.*
John 1:29-42 ~ *Jesus is the Lamb of God, sacrificed for all the world!*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Chosen for a Greater Task
In the second of Isaiah's "servant songs" we learn that the Lord's servant was hidden away within Israel for the special mission of bringing God's chosen people back to Him; but God would use Him for a greater task than that. His light gathers people from all nations! The Lord's chosen servant was revealed by John at the Jordan, where he proclaimed: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Now all who call on the name of the Lord are chosen for the great work of pointing out to the nations the Lamb who has brought salvation for all the world.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: How wonderful is your love, Lord, that you should send your own Son to be my servant and give his life as the Lamb of God to take away my sins! Help me, in thanksgiving for your gifts, to be a good witness to your forgiving love until the day of Christ's return. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Just like John, we are to use all of our resources and energies to point out to the world that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who came to rescue us from our sin.

OFFERING PRAYER: Jesus Christ, O Lamb of God, the light
                                    of Your eternal grace has pierced the night!
                                    You draw all people to Yourself. Now send
                                    us out to use these offerings to that end. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We can celebrate Jesus as the promised servant, chosen by the Father to be a light to the nations of the world, but it is in those dismal times when we recognize with Israel that "we have labored in vain and spent our strength for nothing,' that we call out to Him who is the Lamb of God, set aside to take our place for all the suffering of our sins. Then we give thanks to God that He has gathered us from the nations and will sustain us guiltless until the coming of our Lord Jesus the Christ!

Questions to Consider: What greater task than the redemption of Israel?

- Of what significance is a sharpened arrow hidden in an archer's quiver?
- How can we, who are sinners, be blameless on the day of Christ's return?
- What is the meaning of John's identification of Jesus as "the Lamb of God?"
- What does this news compel Andrew to do? How should it affect us?

Bonus on next page: a celebration of God's grace and the witness of His people (especially stanzas 4,5,6,7)

Now We Your People

Psalm 79:8-9, 13; 119:89-90

Now we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture,
will praise You forever, forever, Amen!
One generation will pass to another
their songs of Your praises, forever. Amen!

Do not remember our former transgressions
or let our iniquities crush our weak hearts.
Raise up the broken; come heal with compassion
and give us the life that Your Spirit imparts.

Always Your people, the sheep of Your pasture
will cling to Your faithfulness days without end.
All generations will join with each other
while jubilant voices Your praises commend.

Steadfast, Your faithfulness endures forever,
established in heaven, abiding on earth,
Word of Your promise that nothing can sever,
now joined in the flesh at our Lord's holy birth!

Then we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture
will sing of Your mercy for all of our days!
Each generation will raise up another
to fill every moment with songs of Your praise!

Rescue and help us, great God of salvation,
and cover our sins with the blood of the Lamb.
Glory and honor and great adoration
be sung evermore to the mighty I AM!

Now we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture,
will praise You forever, forever, Amen!
One generation will pass to another
their songs of Your praises, forever. Amen!

Gilbert A Franke, 1/23/2011
For the 100th Anniversary of
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Bishop, TX
Original composition by Allison Ulmer
(11 11 11 11)