

**Making Faith Connections - Cross of Hope Small Group Ministry**

**February 1, 2026**

**4th Sunday after Epiphany**

**Walk in the Light – preacher**

**Gathering and Check-in ... *share where you've encountered God this week.***

**Prayer**      Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (ELW p23)

**Introduction:** Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving. (from Sundays and Seasons)

**Discussion Questions:**

*Read again Matthew 5: 1-12*

- What do you notice about this story as you read/hear it this time?
- What is challenging or confusing as you read/hear it this time?
- What does this gospel tell us about Jesus?
- How does this story reveal Christ as preacher?
- How does Jesus' sermon reveal a countercultural way of living and serving?
  - What does this sermon lead to repentance?
  - Why is this proclamation important to our faithful living?
- What do we learn about preaching from Jesus?
- Why is Jesus' preaching important to those who seek to walk in the light of Christ?

*Read again Micah 6: 1-8*

- What do you notice about this story as you read/hear it this time?
- What does this reading reveal about God?
- How does this story inform our faithful living walking in the light of God's love?

*Read again 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31*

- What do you notice about this story as you read/hear it this time?
- How is 'boasting in the Lord' (v31) an act of humility?
- Why is finding wisdom in the weakness of the cross an act of faith?

*Read and reflect on Psalm 15 if you'd like.*

**Prayer Requests and Prayer**