

Sunday, January 24, 2010
Third Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 3
Holy Communion

Worship Assistants

FIRST READING: Nehemiah 8:1–3, 5–6, 8–10

A reading from _____.

The exiles have returned. Under Nehemiah they have rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and its walls. Now the people ask Ezra, the priest, to read the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it they weep for their sins, for the long years in exile, and for the joy of the Lord that was their strength.

all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ²Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁵And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁸So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 19

Refrain: The teaching of the LORD revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)

¹The heavens declare the glo-¹ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its¹ maker's handiwork.

²One day tells its tale¹ to another,

and one night imparts knowledge | to another.

³Although they have no | words or language,
and their voices | are not heard,

**⁴their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends | of the world,
where God has pitched a tent | for the sun.**

⁵It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.

**⁶It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of | it again;
nothing is hidden from its | burning heat. R**

⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re- | vives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom | to the simple.

**⁸The statutes of the LORD are just and re- | joice the heart;
he commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light | to the eyes.**

⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and en- | dures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous | altogether.

**¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. R**

¹¹By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is | great reward.

**¹²Who can detect one's | own offenses?
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.**

¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion | over me;
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.

**¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable | in your sight,
O LORD, my strength and | my redeemer. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 12:12–31a

A reading from _____.

Paul writes to the divided congregation in Corinth to tell them what it means for the church to be the one body of Christ.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many members, yet one body.

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are

indispensable, ²³and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But strive for the greater gifts.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 4:14–21

The holy gospel according to _____.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown. In the words of Isaiah, he clearly states his purpose, his mission.

¹⁴Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit through baptism, let us come before the throne of God to offer prayers for the needs of the church and world.

Let us pray for the church throughout the world, that God will make the ears of all Christians attentive to the proclamation of the word and so make the simple wise unto salvation. God of light,

show us your glory and hear us.

Let us pray for the wonders of the heavens which declare the glory of God, that all will recognize the gift of the air we breathe and will strive to preserve and improve its quality throughout the earth. God of light,

show us your glory and hear us.

Let us pray for all people living under oppressive governments, that God will strengthen those who resist and will make a way for a peaceful transition to just rule. God of light,

show us your glory and hear us.

Let us pray for those who are poor, hungry, or homeless, those imprisoned, those in nursing homes, and the sick (*especially*), that God will raise up prophets to be advocates for them. God of light,

show us your glory and hear us.

Let us pray for our congregation, that God will open our eyes to the unity we share in Christ through baptism, so that there will be no dissension within Christ's body. God of light,

show us your glory and hear us.

Let us give thanks for those who have died in the faith (*especially for the martyr Agnes*), who by their living and dying show us the ministry and passion of Jesus Christ. God of light,

show us your glory and hear us.

God of faithfulness, through the revelation of your Son we stand before you without fear and lift up to you all in need. In Jesus' name hear and answer our prayers according to your steadfast love.

Amen.

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