

Sunday, January 27, 2019
Third Sunday after Epiphany

PRELUDE

"Hymn to Joy"

Gordon Young

***GATHERING SONG**

"God, Whose Almighty Word"

ELW 673

God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard
and took their flight:
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.

Christ, who once came to bring,
on your redeeming wing,
healing and sight;
health to the troubled mind,
sight where illusions blind;
oh, now to humankind
let there be light.

Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy dove,
speed forth your flight;
move on the water's face
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.

Holy and blessed three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might:
boundless as ocean's tide,
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth, far and wide,
let there be light.

***GREETING**

P *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

G **And also with you.**

***GLORY TO GOD**

pg. 148

℣ *Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.*

☩ **Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

℣ *Blessed Lord God,*

☩ **you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people.
Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that,
comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of
eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

"I Am the Star"

Avery and Marsh

Nancy & Phil Lewis

Carol & Jim Bunge

FIRST READING

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that the joy of the Lord is their strength.

¹All the people [of Israel] 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."

Reflection

Nehemiah is the story of the return of the people from the Babylonian exile, in which they rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Our text for today takes place after the wall has been rebuilt, and the people are "settled in their towns." (Nehemiah 7:73) They gathered together in the square of the Temple Mount at the Water Gate (no, not the hotel). What did they come to do? (verses 1-2) The "book of the law of Moses" is the Torah, which is (more or less) the first five books of the Old Testament. Who read it aloud? What was the job of the men and women who gathered? (verse 3) What did the people do when Ezra began to read from the book? (verses 5-6) What did the people who were with Ezra do? (verse 8) What did they teach the people? (verse 9) Why did the people weep when they heard the reading? What did Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites tell the people when they were weeping? (verse 10) Why is it important to us to hear the Word read in our worship? (We don't just read it silently to ourselves.) What teachers have been especially helpful to you in learning, understanding, and applying God's word to your life and our life together? One comment that the Lutheran Bible has about this passage is that we Lutherans are not particularly invested in defending the Bible as the word of God. What we do is to trust that it is God's word, try to understand it, and ask, what does God have to say to us in this Word? What parts of Scripture have been particularly important to you in hearing what God has to say to you and to us as a congregation?

PSALM 19

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

²**One day tells its tale | to another,
and one night imparts knowledge | to another.**

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

⁴**their 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.

⁶**It 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.**

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.

⁸**The statutes of the LORD are just and re- | jice the heart;
the 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.

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

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

¹²**Who 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.

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

Reflection

This is a psalm about the word of God. What does the psalmist proclaim about how the heavens proclaim the word of God? (verses 1-6) What does the psalmist say about the word of God we read in Scripture and hear proclaimed? (verses 7-11) What are the words that the psalmist uses to describe the word of God? Which of these is most important to you? What does the word of God do to enlighten us? (verses 11-13) How do we meditate on God's word and pass it on to others? (verse 14) How does this psalm (and especially verse 14) teach us to pray?

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

The apostle and pastor Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to describe how intimately connected we are in the church. For this struggling congregation in Corinth, Paul delivers a vital message of unity that is a mark of the church today.

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? ^{31a}But strive for the greater gifts.

Reflection

To what does Paul compare the church? (verses 12-14) What makes us one body? (verse 13) Are all the members of the body the same? (verse 14) Which is the most important part of the body? (verses 13-25) How do we know which are the weaker members and the stronger members? (verse 26) (Note: these are trick questions!) Who is included in the body of Christ? (verse 27) (If you're not sure, look around at everyone here this morning, and also think of those who are not here!) What are some of the positions in the church that God has appointed? (verses 28-30) We have different names for some of these positions. What do you think the point is that Paul is making? In verse 31a Paul urges us to "strive for the greater gifts." What do you think the greater gifts are? Just as an exercise, what are the gifts that you can think of that members of our particular part of the body of Christ display? Don't forget the gifts that some of our younger members have that the rest of us do not have!

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

"Thy Word" (sing refrain twice)

**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
and a light unto my path.**

***GOSPEL**

Luke 4:14-21

Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and 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."

Reflection

What was the general feeling about Jesus' return to Galilee? (verses 14-15) What do you think the people of Nazareth expected to hear from him? I've been a pastor who has come back to the old hometown (and heard many!). Most of us start out by remembering touching or funny stories about the people who live there. Jesus doesn't exactly start out that way. What is the text he either decides to preach on or that just (by chance) comes up when he preaches there? (verses 17-19) Whatever they expected to hear him teach, it probably wasn't what he said! What does he tell them? (verses 20-21) What do you think that meant to the people in Nazareth? (Small town Nazareth!) What does it mean to us? Who is Jesus? How do we hear and respond to his Word?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

"The Joy of the Lord Is Your Strength"

Rev. Roger Lenander

SONG OF THE DAY

"Let There Be Praise"

Refrain

Let there be praise
Let there be joy in our hearts
Sing to the Lord
Give Him the glory
Let there be praise
Let there be joy in our hearts
Forevermore let His love fill the air
And let there be praise

He inhabits the praise of His people
And dwells deep within
The peace that He gives none can equal
His love it knows no end
So lift your voices with gladness sing
Proclaim through all the earth
That Jesus Christ is King ***Refrain***

When the Spirit of God is within us
We will overcome
In our weakness His strength will defend us
When His praise is on our tongue
So lift your voices with gladness sing
Proclaim through all the earth
That Jesus Christ is King ***Refrain***

Ending

And let there be praise
And let there be praise

***APOSTLES' CREED**

**☒ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen!**

***PRAYER SONG**

"Come and Fill Our Hearts"

ELW 528

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
Alleluia!**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

United as one body in Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Empower bishops, pastors, deacons, teachers, evangelists, and all members of Christ's body with your Spirit. Open our hearts to hear your word of life and respond in lives of service. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For the earth. For all creatures of the land, air, and water. Heal environments damaged by disaster or pollution. Make us wise stewards of all you have entrusted into our care. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For the nations. Liberate us from our captivity to fear and ways of violence. Free those who are unjustly imprisoned and those who are imprisoned for working for freedom. Give us vision to seek the pathways of peace. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For those in need. Rescue those who suffer abuse or neglect. Bring an end to hunger and greed. Accompany those who are alone or vulnerable. Comfort those who grieve and all who are ill *especially the family and friends of Doc, Irene, Jeff, Trina, Linda, Elaine, Lisa and her baby Lara*, and for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (pause for 10 seconds). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For this assembly. Bless those who proclaim your word and those who teach. Bless those whose talents are not recognized and teach us to honor the gifts of all your people. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

With thanksgiving, we remember those who have gone before us in the faith, especially Doc Haynes. Wipe away all tears and bring us with them into the joy of the resurrection. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers and fill us with the radiance of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen!

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

☞ *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

☞ **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

“The Joy of the Lord”

**The joy of the Lord
is my strength,
the joy of the Lord
is my strength,
the joy of the Lord
is my strength,
the joy of the Lord is my strength.**

**He heals the broken-hearted and they
cry no more,
He heals the broken-hearted and they
cry no more,
He heals the broken-hearted and they
cry no more,
the joy of the Lord is my strength.**

**He gives me living water
and I thirst no more,
He gives me living water
and I thirst no more,**

He gives me living water
and I thirst no more,
He gives me living water
and I thirst no more,
the joy of the Lord is my strength,
the joy of the Lord is my strength.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE *(repeat vs 1)*

The joy of the Lord
is my strength,
the joy of the Lord
is my strength,
the joy of the Lord
is my strength,
the joy of the Lord is my strength.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P *God of all creation,*

C all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!

***DIALOGUE**

P *The Lord be with you.*

C And also with you.

P *Lift up your hearts.*

C We lift them to the Lord.

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***PREFACE**

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P *Gathered together in one baptism, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

C **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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen!**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P *Come to the table. Feast on God's abundant life for you.*

***BLESSING**

P *The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

C **Amen!**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P *We thank you, O God,*

C **that you have fed us at your banqueting table with bread and wine beyond compare, the very life of Christ for us. Send your Spirit with us now, that we may set the captive free, use your gifts to build one another up, and in everything reflect your glory revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

***BENEDICTION**

P *The God of glory dwell in you richly,
name you beloved,
and shine brightly on your path;
and the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.*

C **Amen!**

***SENDING SONG**

“Many Gifts”

Steven B. Eulberg

**There are many Gifts,
but only One
Spirit who offers them all:
One Lord, one Lord,
One Faith, one Faith,
One Hope to which we are called.
One Baptism, One Baptism,
One Baptism washes us
washes us all
One Baptism, One Baptism,
One Baptism washes us
washes us all
washes us all.**

**There are many Gifts,
but only One
Spirit who offers them all:
One Lord, one Lord,
One Faith, one Faith,
One Hope to which we are called.**

***DISMISSAL**

P *Go in peace. Christ is your light.*

G **Thanks be to God!**