

**Stewardship 2025
United in Christ**



**Yesterday,
Today and
Tomorrow**

Psalm 46:7 "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold."

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP
Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 26, 2025
8:00 AM Traditional Worship**

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman
Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz
Lector: Sue Weum
Acolytes: Brady Sickles & Beckett Horswill
Ushers: Sue Walls, Sandra Maerz, Sue Weum, Sharon Manson
Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Christ, Be Our Light" Farrell/Biery

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

C: Amen

P: Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Brief silence for reflection.

P: Merciful God,

C: you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your loving kindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

P: God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In ✠ Christ, you are forgiven. In the spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

C: Amen.

Stand

HYMN: "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" ELW #886

**vs. 1: Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!**

**vs. 2: My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of your name.**

**vs. 4: He speaks, and list'ning to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe.**

**vs. 6: To God all glory, praise, and love
be now and ever giv'n
by saints below and saints above,
the church in earth and heav'n.**

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

LITANY

P: In the beginning was the word,

C: **and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

P: In the Word was life,

C: **and the life was the light of all people.**

P: The word became flesh and lived among us,

C: **and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

HYMN OF PRAISE: "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" ELW #815 vs. 1

vs. 1: I want to walk as a child of the light.

I want to follow Jesus.

God set the stars to give light to the world.

The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain

In him there is no darkness at all.

The night and the day are both alike.

The Lamb is the light of the city of God.

Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: **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.**

Sit

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

By the time the seventh month arrived, the People of Israel were settled in their towns. Then all the people gathered as one person in the town square in front of the Water Gate and asked the scholar Ezra to bring the Book of The Revelation of

Moses that God had commanded for Israel. ²⁻³ So Ezra the priest brought The Revelation to the congregation, which was made up of both men and women—everyone capable of understanding. It was the first day of the seventh month. He read it facing the town square at the Water Gate from early dawn until noon in the hearing of the men and women, all who could understand it. And all the people listened—they were all ears—to the Book of The Revelation. ⁵⁻⁶ Ezra opened the book. Every eye was on him (he was standing on the raised platform) and as he opened the book everyone stood. Then Ezra praised God, the great God, and all the people responded, “Oh Yes! Yes!” with hands raised high. And then they fell to their knees in worship of God, their faces to the ground. ⁷⁻
⁸ Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah, all Levites, explained The Revelation while people stood, listening respectfully. They translated the Book of The Revelation of God so the people could understand it and then explained the reading. Nehemiah the governor, along with Ezra the priest and scholar and the Levites who were teaching the people, said to all the people, “This day is holy to God, your God. Don’t weep and carry on.” They said this because all the people were weeping as they heard the words of The Revelation. ¹⁰ He continued, “Go home and prepare a feast, holiday food and drink; and share it with those who don’t have anything: This day is holy to God. Don’t feel bad. The joy of God is your strength!”

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL CANTICLE: “This Little Light of Mine” ELW #677

vs. 1: This little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine; (3 times)
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

vs. 2: Ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine; (3 times)
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

The Gospel is announced...

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the fourth Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 4: 14-21

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ Jesus returned to Galilee powerful in the Spirit. News that he was back spread through the countryside. He taught in their meeting places to everyone’s acclaim and pleasure. ¹⁶⁻²¹ He came to Nazareth where he had been raised. As he always

did on the Sabbath, he went to the meeting place. When he stood up to read, he was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written,

God's Spirit is on me;

he's chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,
Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and
recovery of sight to the blind,
To set the burdened and battered free,
to announce, "This is God's time to shine!"

He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the assistant, and sat down. Every eye in the place was on him, intent. Then he started in, "You've just heard Scripture make history. It came true just now in this place."

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Stand

HYMN: "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness" ELW #843

**vs. 1: Praise the One who breaks the darkness
with a liberating light;**

**praise the One who frees the pris'ners,
turning blindness into sight.**

**Praise the One who preached the gospel,
healing ev'ry dread disease,
calming storms and feeding thousands
with the very bread of peace.**

**vs. 2: Praise the One who blessed the children
with a strong yet gentle word;**

**praise the One who drove out demons
with a piercing, two-edged sword.**

**Praise the One who brings cool water
to the desert's burning sand;
from this well comes living water
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.**

**vs. 3: Praise the one true love incarnate:
Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose for many
that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness,
seeing what our God has done.
Praise the one redeeming glory;
praise the One who makes us one.**

APOSTLE'S 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A Brief Silence

P: As your word is opened in our midst, we give thanks for all who share scripture: for parents, grandparents, and godparents; teachers and mentors; deacons, pastors, bishops, and scholars. Inspire passion for the stories of faith. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: As heavens declare your glory and the sky proclaims your work, we lift our voices in awe of quarks and atoms, vast stars and solar systems. Guide us to speak on behalf of your handiwork. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: As Jesus proclaimed life and freedom in his community, energize communities and nations to eliminate poverty, engage in prison ministry and transformative justice, and envision new ways of working together for your promised reign. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: As your word and presence revive the soul, accompany all experiencing depression, anxiety, or eating disorders; be a source of strength for all affected by memory loss and their caregivers; draw near to all undergoing medical treatment or surgery. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: As we are made one body in baptism, strengthen all who serve. Renew and inspire all who use their gifts in this congregation, community, and the world. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: As our faith is strengthened by saints who have gone before us, we remember leaders of the early church, and beloved friends and family who have died. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

C: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Sit

OFFERTORY “O Word of God Incarnate” set by Porter

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

C: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

P: The Spirit of the triune God ✝ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion,
and send you in love.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Live in hope.

C: Thanks be to God.

SENDING HYMN: "Christ, Be Our Light" ELW #715

vs. 1: Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

**Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.**

Refrain

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.**

**vs. 2: Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice. *Refrain***

**vs. 5: Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain***

POSTLUDE: "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" Gläser/Callahan