

January 23, 2022
HYMNS FOR 3rd SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
LBW #559 “Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”
LBW #35 “Hark the Glad Sound!”
WOV #723 “The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P 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.

C Amen.

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 your 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.”

PSALM: Psalm 19

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

¹The heavens declare the glory 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. R**

⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

⁸**The statutes of the LORD are just and rejoice the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light to the
eyes.**

⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and endures 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. R**

¹¹By them also is your servant 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. R**

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.¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.¹⁵ If 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.¹⁶ And 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.¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be?²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body.²¹ The 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.”²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,²³ and 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;²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member,²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another.²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.²⁸ And 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.²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?^{31a} But strive for the greater gifts.

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.

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

¹⁶ When 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,¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

^{18a} “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."

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

A brief silence.

A You reveal yourself to us in the reading of scripture. Fulfill your word through the faithful witness of your church. Send us out to bring your liberating good news to all people. God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

A All creation proclaims your handiwork. Teach us to love the intricate and beautiful bodies that you have created. Bless tiny insects, enormous whales, and every creature in between. Sustain species at risk of extinction. God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

A You desire that there be no dissension among us. Where we are divided in our society, nation, or world, come quickly to reunite us into one body. Ease conflict, dispel violence, and bring an end to war. God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

A Anoint with your Spirit all who seek your favor. Grant provision and justice for people living in poverty, people living with disability, those living with pain, or those living under oppression (*especially*). God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

A Build up the body of Christ in this place. Bless the variety of ministries in this congregation (*especially*). Empower us to freely welcome and deeply value each person who enters into worship and ministry among us. God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A In thanksgiving we lift before you the saints for whom the promise of salvation has now been fulfilled. Tend to those who mourn (*especially*). Bring us together in your everlasting glory. God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

P Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.