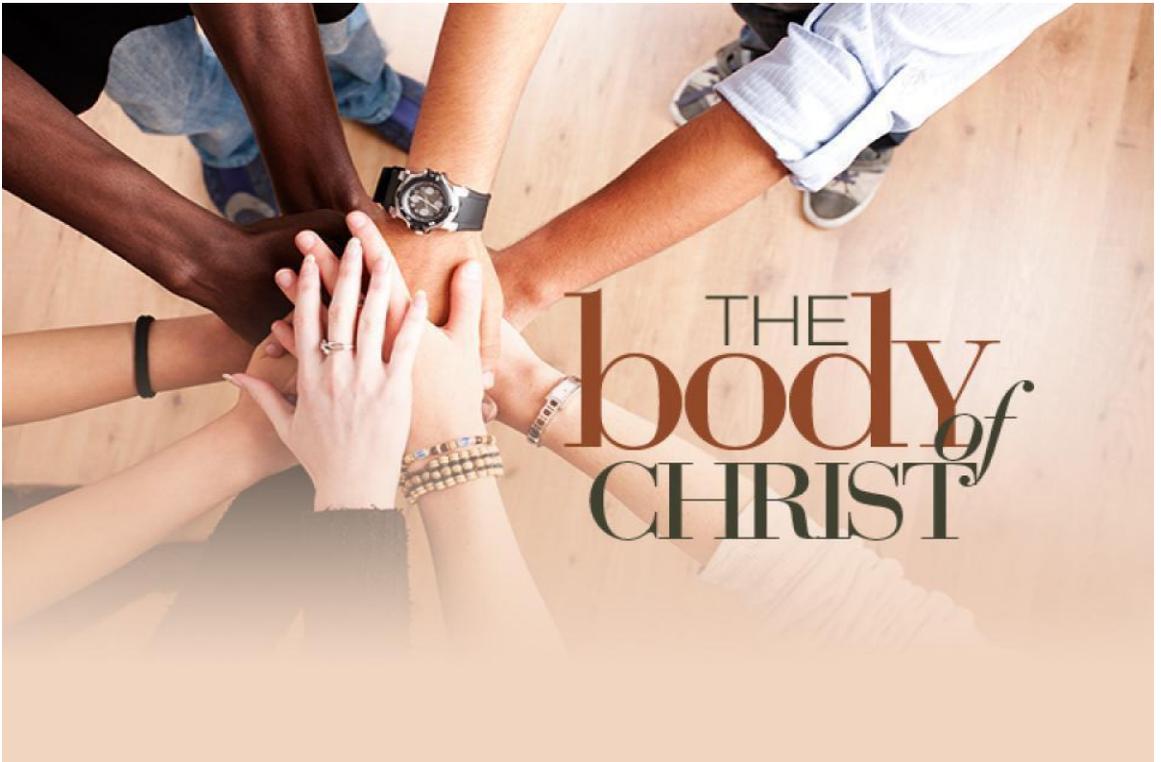
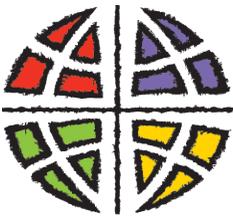


Triune Lutheran Church



Third Sunday after Epiphany



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

*We thank you for joining us here
at Triune Lutheran Church, a
family united by our Risen Lord,
Jesus Christ!*



In order to make you feel more at home, here are a few notes about the service. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. We hope to make your time here as meaningful as possible!

Worship

- The * by the headings throughout the service indicate when we invite you to stand, as you are able.
- The light print will be spoken by the pastor or another worship leader, while we encourage you to speak the **bold print**.
- The hymns are chosen from our *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW) hymnal, which is the red book directly in front of you in the pews. You will find the hymns in the last two-thirds of the book with the bold numbers on the top of the pages.
- We welcome all the baptized to join us in the Lord's Supper, where we believe Jesus is present "in, with, and under" the bread and wine as his body and blood. After the organist and assisting minister commune, you will be invited to come forward up the non-organ side aisle to the pastor, who will give you bread (gluten-free wafers also available upon request). You are encouraged to keep the bread in your hands and then dip it into the chalice of wine for intinction. You may also come forward to receive a blessing by simply keeping your hands folded. You may return to your seat up the center aisle. If you are unable to come forward, the elements will be brought to you.
- For visitors, if you so choose, we encourage you to fill out a card available at the center-aisle end of the pew to learn more about us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates us and forms us,
who redeems us and calls us,
who unites us and sends us.

Amen.

Gathered in God's presence, let us confess our sin.

You are invited to kneel or remain standing. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

Mighty and loving God,
we confess that we are captive to sin
and cannot free ourselves.
We seek our own way.
We divide the body of Christ.
In your mercy, cleanse us and heal us.
Let the words of our mouths,
the thoughts of our hearts,
and everything that we do
be filled with faith, hope, and love.
Amen.

Hear the voice of Jesus:
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
to proclaim release to the captives.”

In the name of † Jesus Christ,
I proclaim to you
that your sins are forgiven and you are released.
The joy of the Lord is your strength,
and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are yours forever.
Amen!

***GATHERING HYMN**

“Arise, Your Light Has Come!”

ELW 314

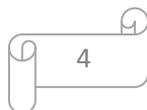
***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

God of all times and places, you have shaped the stories of your precious children from ages past to be written in the scriptures for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, and learn from them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of the ultimate Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen!**

FIRST READING

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

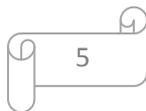
¹All the people of Israel gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel.
²Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. 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.

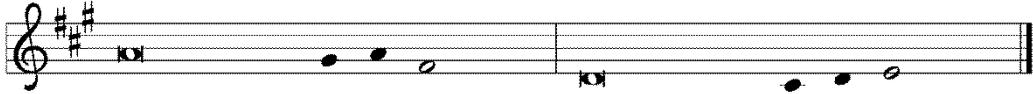
⁹And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the 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.”

The Word of the Lord!
Thanks be to God!



PSALM

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- | joice 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.

**¹⁰More 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.**

**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.**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

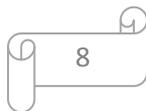
**¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and
all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so
it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized
into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were
all made to drink of one Spirit.**

**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.

The Word of the Lord!
Thanks be to God!



*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al-le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*GOSPEL

Luke 4:14-11

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord!

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.”
This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Will You Let Me Be Your Servant”

ELW 659

***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!**

***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.

God of the church universal, empower bishops, pastors, deacons, teachers, evangelists, and all members of Christ's body through you as the Holy Spirit. Open our hearts to hear your word of life and respond in lives of service. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Creating God, we lift up 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.**

God of all nations, liberate us from our captivity to fear and ways of violence. Free those who are unjustly imprisoned, and give us all the vision to seek the pathways of peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Healing God, 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, including Joann Loede, Bev Deitrick, Hazel Schwab, Trudy Weidman, Mardell Weiss, Dave & Clara Wilcox, Ed Uhler, Jenny Bennett, Cathy Gallagher, Mary Phillips, Richard Jakubcin, George Tomaselli, those serving in the armed forces and as first responders, and all those we name in our hearts...Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Transforming God, we give you thanks for our family of Triune. Bless all of us in proclaiming your word of new life to those we meet. 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. 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!**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always!
And also with you.

OFFERING

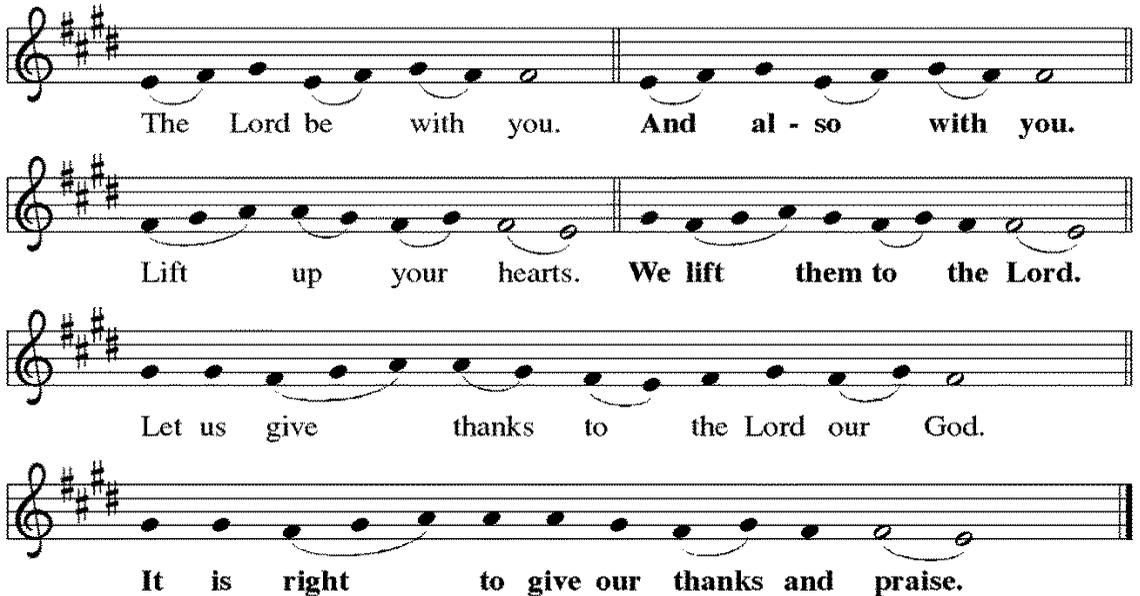
***OFFERING HYMN**

“Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ” VERSE 1 ELW 674

***OFFERING PRAYER**

God of all creation,
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!

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

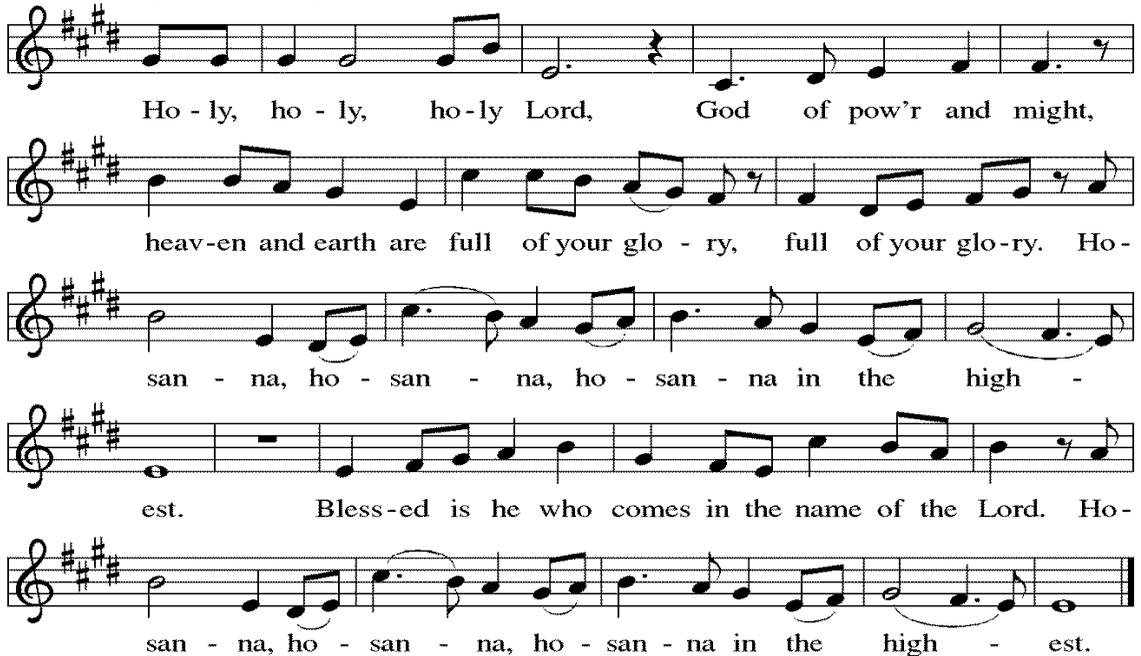
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

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;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of
everlasting life.

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Blessed are you, O holy God:

you are the Life and Light of all.

By your powerful word you created all things.

Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son.

He is your Light, shining in our darkness
and revealing to us your mercy and might.

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.

Remembering, therefore,
his preaching and healing,
his dying and rising,
and his promise to come again,
we await that day when all the universe
will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

Holy Spirit, bless us and this meal,
that, refreshed with this heavenly food,
we may be light for the world,
revealing the brilliance of our Lord.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
both now and forever.

Amen!

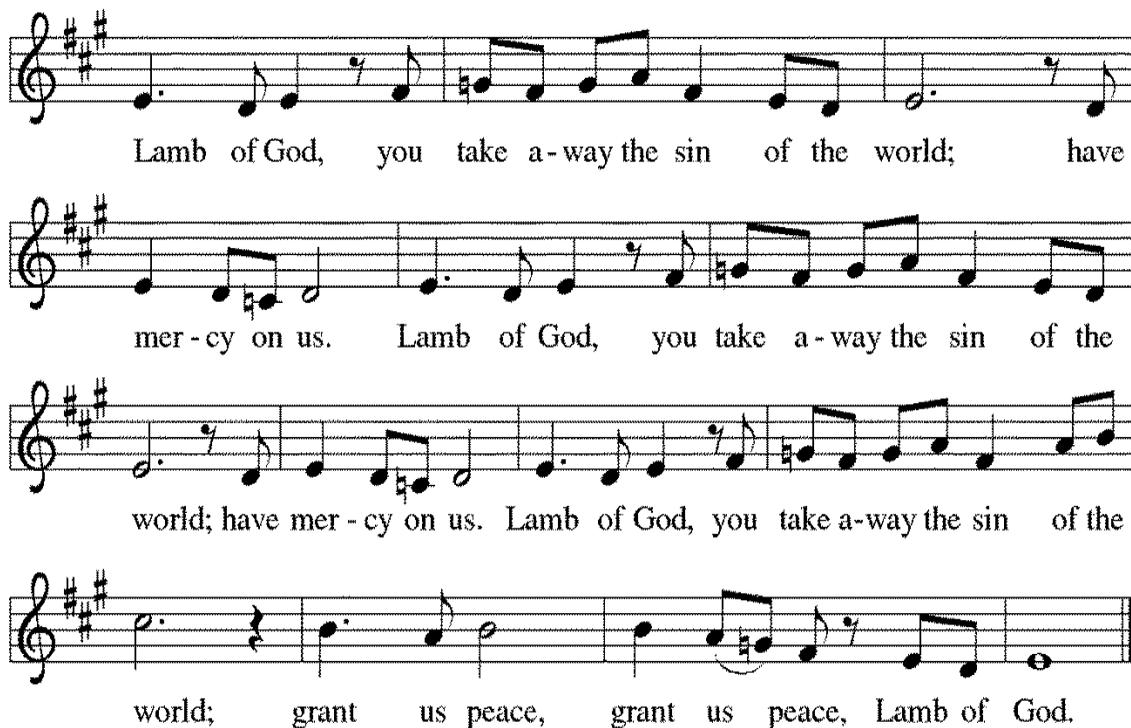
***LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Come to the table.
Feast on God's abundant life for you!
Thanks be to God!

*COMMUNION HYMN



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

COMMUNION

*COMMUNION PRAYER

We thank you, O God,
that you have fed us at your banqueting table
with bread and wine beyond compare,
the very life of Christ for us.
Holy Spirit, continue 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!**

***BLESSING**

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.
Amen!

***SENDING HYMN**

“O Lord, Now Let Your Servant”

ELW 313

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is your light!
Thanks be to God!

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Pastor: ***Brad Ross***
Organist: ***Edith Schatt***
Worship Leader: ***Dale Kirk***
Office Manager: ***Jan Piskac***

What Scripture Does to and for Us

It was a time of deep political upheaval, when enemies were literally at the gates and questions raged within the country about who really belonged and what it meant to be patriotic. Moreover, ideas about what faithful adherence to traditional religion looked like were in deep flux. Charismatic leaders stepped forward, some arguing one way and some arguing another, but all claiming God was on their side, until many people were confused. Sounds relatable, right? Of course it does. I was trying to describe the situation in Jerusalem as the exiles started to return from the Babylonian captivity, and in the Holy Land under Roman occupation. But I'm also describing the feelings of many in the world today. In both situations, deep uncertainty about the future and trepidation about the present drove people to Scripture.

The Nehemiah passage describes the reading of the law to the people on the Feast of Trumpets, or Rosh Hashanah. The first thing to notice is that the public proclamation of the law, rather than coming from the top down, was requested by the people: "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" (Nehemiah 8:1). The author is careful to note that everyone showed up to hear the proclamation of the Law: "the men and the women and those who could understand" (8:3). There was a great desire to hear what God had said to the people and what they had been commanded, such that the people gathered and insisted that their religious leaders teach them God's word.

The teaching that day was especially careful. There are two Hebrew words in verse 8 that provoke a multitude of translations. I think a literal one is most useful here, and I read the verse to be saying something like: "They read from the book of God's Torah/teaching, breaking it down and putting it so [the people] could understand the readings" (Nehemiah 8:8).

Reading Scripture is all well and good, but even Martin Luther, with his love for *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone), was still a professor and pastor who saw the value in translating and explaining the Bible so common people could understand it. Scripture is a treasure trove of deep wisdom that is worth the time taken to explore and wrestle with it. Certainly, God's Spirit is always moving and can and does bless even the simplest reading of God's word. Also, the methodical breaking down of Scripture to understand what it meant to the communities that first received it is a blessing for we who read it today. This careful unpacking of Scripture into understandable sections is exactly what Ezra and his co-readers did.

The explanation of Scripture touched the hearts of the people that day, such that many of them wept with sadness at sections (especially in Deuteronomy) describing why their community had been punished for betraying the covenant. The priests were quick to remind them of the importance of celebrating the Feast of Trumpets, however, and urged them to celebrate and to share with those who had nothing (Nehemiah 8:10). The people did exactly that, giving thanks to God and sharing everything they had with the poor, specifically as a response to their new understanding of the Scripture (8:12). Hearing and understanding God's word led directly to celebration that included justice for the poor.

Several hundred years later, Jesus roamed the Holy Land during another period of instability and unrest. The Persians had gone, but the Romans had come. The needs of the people in occupation were shockingly similar. People were hungry to hear teaching on Scripture, and they flocked to the synagogues to hear Jesus' message (Luke 4:14-15). Jesus, like Ezra before him, not only read the Scripture but expounded on its meaning. When sitting down to teach, Jesus *began* his explanation by saying, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). And what Scripture was fulfilled? That Jesus had been sent to offer good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners, healing to the blind and freedom for the oppressed. Whatever else, the preaching of Scripture should always ameliorate the suffering of the poor and oppressed.

A pattern emerges from these two passages that we would do well to follow today. In times of national uncertainty, the people turned to hear a message not from civil leaders but from God's word. God's chosen leaders then carefully and faithfully broke down the meaning of Scripture for the people, making the word of God accessible to everyone. Finally, the strong connection between understanding God's word and caring for the poor can't be denied. If we treasure God's word and faithfully wrestle with its meanings, we will automatically join Jesus and Ezra in their proclaiming and living out the good news for the poor. So let us read God's word, seek out teachers who will help us understand, and love and serve the less fortunate.



Cory Driver is an adjunct professor of North African history and religion. He earned his doctorate in Jewish religious cultures from Emory University. He is a rostered ELCA deacon waiting for his first call and lives with his family in Valparaiso, Ind. Cory blogs the lectionary readings at corydriver.com