

**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**  
**January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 9:30 AM**

**WELCOME**

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.

- ✝ Preacher – The Rev. Wes Smith
- ✝ Officiant – Pr. Rudy Schneider
- ✝ Worship Leader – Earl Hem

**WORSHIP**

**OPENING HYMN 1: Forever**

Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King  
His love endures forever  
For He is good, He is above all things  
His love endures forever --sing praise--sing praise

With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm  
His love endures forever  
For the life that's been reborn,  
His love endures forever  
sing praise--sing praise--sing praise--sing praise

**Chorus**

From the rising to the setting Sun  
His love endures forever  
And by the grace of God, we will carry on  
His love endures forever  
Sing, praise --sing praise--sing praise--sing praise

**Chorus**

**CHORUS**

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong,  
Forever God is with us ----forever----forever

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**OPENING HYMN 2: Lord, I need You**

1. Lord, I come, I confess,  
Bowing here, I find my rest  
Without you I fall apart,  
You're the one  
That guides my heart

**Chorus**

2. Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more  
Where grace is found, is where you are  
And where you are, Lord I am free,  
Holiness is Christ in me

**Chorus**

**(Bridge)**

So teach my song to rise to you,  
when temptation comes my way  
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on you,  
Jesus, you're my hope and stay

**Chorus**

**Chorus:**

Lord, I need you, oh I need you  
Every hour I need you  
My one defense, my righteousness,  
Oh God, how I need you

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**CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**Most merciful God, you asked for my hands that you might use them for your purpose. I gave them , but then withdrew them for the work was too hard. You asked for my eyes to see the needs around me, but I closed them for I did not want to see. You asked for my life that you might work through me. I gave a small part that I might not get to involved. Lord, forgive my efforts to serve you only when it is convenient for me to do so. Renew me and lead me, so that I may delight in your will and walk in your ways. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake, God forgives you all your sins. Live now as the forgiven child of God and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you into all righteousness. **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.**

### **GOD'S HOLY WORD**

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

<sup>1</sup>All 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. <sup>2</sup>Accordingly, 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. <sup>3</sup>He 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. <sup>5</sup>And 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. <sup>6</sup>Then 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. <sup>8</sup>So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

<sup>9</sup>And 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. <sup>10</sup>Then 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 19**

<sup>1</sup>The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.

<sup>2</sup>**One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

<sup>3</sup>Although 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.**

<sup>5</sup> It 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.**

<sup>7</sup> The 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.**

<sup>9</sup> The 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.**

<sup>11</sup> By 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.**

<sup>13</sup> Above 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.**



### **HOLY GOSPEL**

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Luke 4: 14 - 21; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

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

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

<sup>18</sup> "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, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

<sup>20</sup> And 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. <sup>21</sup> Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Here ends the reading of God's Holy Word. **Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

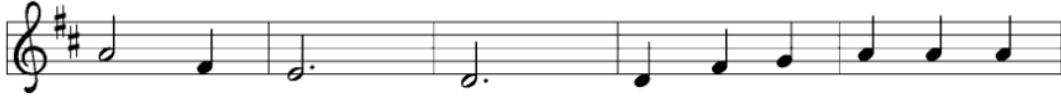
## SERMON – The Never - Ending Sermon

The Rev. Wes Smith

### HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW#815 – I want to Walk as a Child of the Light



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to  
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to  
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give  
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,  
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.  
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.  
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

*Refrain*



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

✠ At this time, we would like to also recognize those joining us via FaceBook Live, and give voice to any greetings or prayer requests submitted for our worship.

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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. Grace those from our families and community that we now name silently in our hearts, or out loud; with our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name silently or out loud)*. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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

### **OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, as you fed 5,000 from the gifts of a young boy, we pray that you will transform our gifts to feed many spiritually hungry people through the ministry and mission of this church. We offer these gifts and ourselves to your service. **Amen.**

### **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

It is our joy and delight at all time and in all places give thanks to you O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord.

Born a man, Jesus lived among us to reveal your glory and love, That our darkness should give way to His own brilliant light.

And so we remember 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.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**



Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**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** – The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

## OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!

### COMMUNION HYMN 1: Be Thou my Vision

- 1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
- 2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,  
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
- 3 Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- 4 Light of my soul, after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

### COMMUNION HYMN 2: Alleluia

- 1) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia (2X)
- 2) Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Lord....(2X)
- 3) He's my Savior, He's my Savior....(2X)
- 4) Lord we love You, Lord we love You....(2X)

**Closing Prayer** - Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray, **Amen.**

**Blessing** – The Spirit of the triune God ✝ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. **Amen.**

### CLOSING HYMN: The Trees of the Field

You shall go out with Joy, and be lead forth with peace.  
The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you.  
There'll be shouts of joy, and all the tress of the field  
Shall clap, shall clap their hands.

And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
The trees of the field shall clap their hands,  
The trees of the field shall clap their hands,  
As you go out with joy.

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**Dismissal:** Go in peace. Live in Hope. **Thanks be to God.**



### Notes:

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