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Sunday, January 26, 2025

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

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# WELCOMING OF GUESTS AND VISITORS

## GATHERING

### Prelude

*(PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE)*

P We gather in the name of God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C Amen!

### HYMN

*Jesus Loves Me*

*ELW 595*

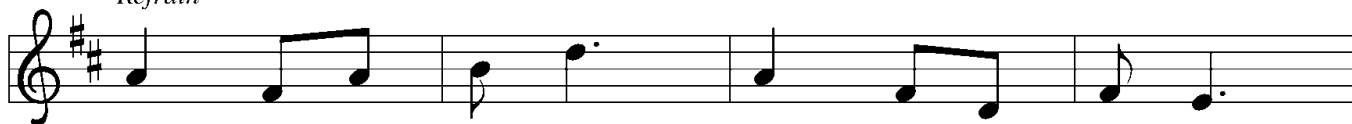


1 Je - sus loves me! this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so;  
2 Je - sus loves me! he who died heav - en's gates to o - pen wide;  
3 Je - sus loves me! he will stay close be - side me all the way;



lit - tle ones to him be - long, they are weak, but he is strong.  
he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.  
when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

*Refrain*



Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me,



yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

C Amen.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P** Together we pray,

**C** Merciful God, 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 lovingkindness. 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.

**HYMN OF PRAISE** *ARISE, YOUR LIGHT HAS COME!*

*ELW 314*



1 A - rise, your light has come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;  
2 A - rise, your light has come! Fling wide the pris - on door;  
3 A - rise, your light has come! All you in sor - row born,



show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.  
pro - claim the cap - tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.  
bind up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.

**THE 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.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

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P Together we 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.**

### THE 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.”

L The word of God.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## THE SECOND READING

*1 Corinthians 12:12-31a*

<sup>12</sup> For 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. <sup>13</sup> For 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.

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

<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

<sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

<sup>31a</sup> But strive for the greater gifts.

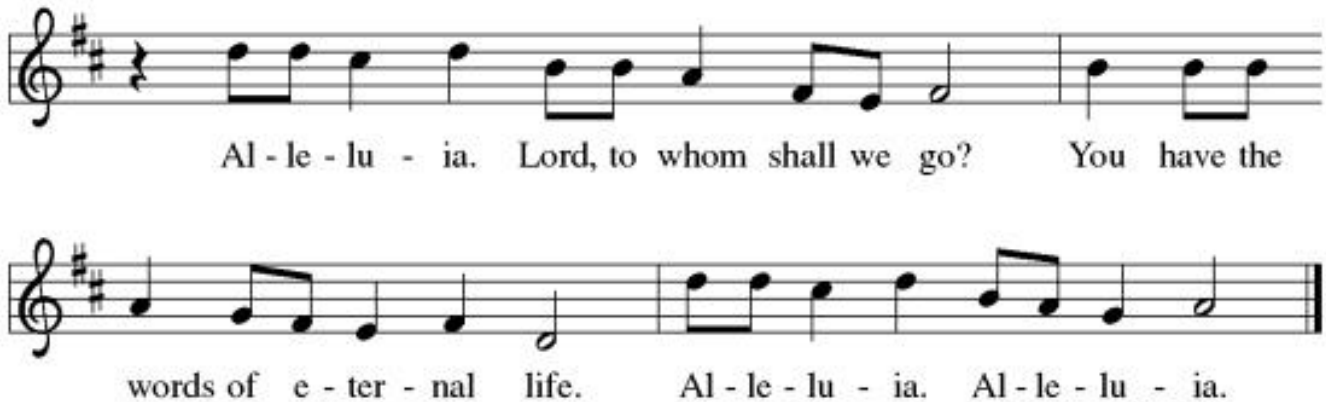
L The word of God.

**C Thanks be to God**

## PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

### ACCLAMATION

s142a



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.

### GOSPEL

*Luke 4:14-21*

#### **C 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.”

**L** The Gospel of our Lord.      **C**      **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### SERMON

Pastor Armen

PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

HYMN

*Christ Be Our Light*

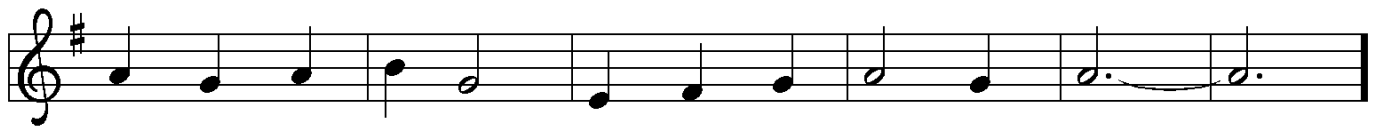
ELW 715



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for  
2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for  
3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for  
4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for  
5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,  
hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone  
wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,  
warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,  
hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.  
has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.  
bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.  
shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.  
to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.



*Refrain*  
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

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A Together we confess our faith,  
**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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

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

God of grace, **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.**

## OFFERING

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*In thanksgiving for God's blessing, we respond with our tithe and offering*

## OFFERTORY HYMN

**ELW 884**

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be-low;

praise him a-bove, ye heav'n-ly host; praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost.



## OFFERING PRAYER

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A Together we pray,

**C 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. Amen.**

## THE MEAL

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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.**

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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are 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 in the high - est.

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.

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.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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A Together we pray,

**C 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.**

## DISTRIBUTION

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As we celebrate the meal of our Lord, all are invited. If you are a guest and regularly commune at your church, you are welcome to commune here. Both wine (red) and grape juice (white) are available at communion. Grape juice is in the inner section of communion tray, wine in the two outer rings.

If you would like a gluten-free wafer, please notify the server.

If you are unable to come to the altar rail and would like to receive communion in your seat, please notify an usher.

*after all have communed*

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.      **C Amen.**

A Together we pray,

**C We give you thanks, O God, that you make your home with us, bringing heaven to earth in this holy meal. Fill us with your Spirit as we go from here, that we may wipe away tears, tend to those in mourning and pain, seek the healing of the nations, and bring to earth the presence of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

C Amen.

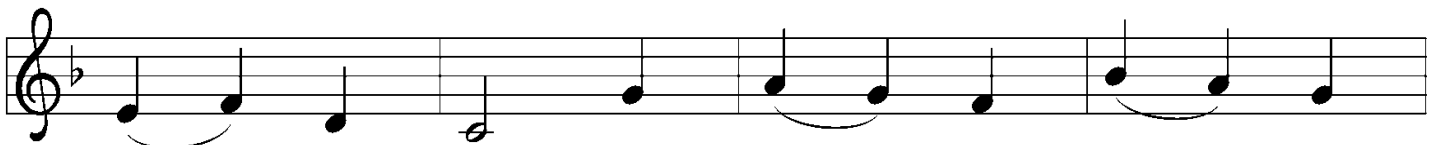
**HYMN**

*The Spirit Sends us Forth*

*ELW 551*



1 The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in  
2 We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the  
3 We go to be the hands of Christ, to scat - ter  
4 Then let us go to serve in peace, the gos - pel



Je - sus' name to bring glad tid - ings  
bur - dened free; where hope is dim, to  
joy like seed and, all our days, to  
to pro - claim. God's Spir - it has em -



to the poor, God's fa - vor to pro - claim.  
share a dream and help the blind to see.  
cher - ish life, to do the lov - ing deed.  
pow - ered us; we go in Je - sus' name.

**DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Live in hope.

C Thanks be to God.

**Postlude**

## ***Faith's Weekly Announcements***

*Welcome to all of you attending this morning!*

Please join us between services for our annual business meeting. Members, you will be voting on council members, the proposed budget for 2025 and some proposed constitutional amendments.

### **Work Crew Change**

You are invited to join the Work Crew at their new time, 8:30 on Tuesday mornings. There is a job for everyone, and you end the morning with coffee and goodies!

### **Next Sunday Morning**

Next week we will have a special presentation by the Holy Land Christian Solidarity Cooperative. A Christian family from Bethlehem will be telling us the story of the Christians of the Holy Land, and will be presenting carvings for sale after the services. More details are in the February newsletter, Happenings, available this coming week.

### **The February Ladies Luncheon**

The next luncheon will be held at 11:30 am, Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, at Big Bamboo Asian Fusion restaurant. It is located at 4104 El Jobean Road, on the way to Port Charlotte. (If you come to the Harley Davidson place you've gone too far.) Their menu offers something for everyone – Chinese, Thai, Poke Bowls, Sushi and vegan dishes. We will order off the menu with separate checks. Come for the enjoyment of fellowship and laughter! Sign up on the sheet in the narthex. Deadline is Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. For more information, see or call Kathie Wiley (941-662-5383).

**Attendance last week: 47 (8:30) + 40 (10:30)**

## **Friendship Dinner at Church (note change in venue)**

On February 13 we will gather in the church for a dinner hosted at individual tables. If you are able to host a table, please check the box marked "able to host." Host duties: prepare an entrée and contact your guests to let them know what they can bring for the dinner. Anyone, member or not, is welcome to come. Bring yourself and a spouse, significant other, or friend. Contact Ellen Lindhurst (941-681-5542) or Mary Lou Fitzgerald (609-713-8725) for more information. Don't miss this chance to meet your church family.

## **Job Opening**

For many years Marcia Wilkins has scheduled ushers for weekly services. She has come to a point where it is no longer a job she can do. Basically, you just ask the regular volunteers to sign up again and pick a week. Schedule changes twice a year and most of the work is telephone calling. If you would like to take over for Marci, see Jeff Petersen or call Barbra in the church office (941-697-3313).

## **Food Pantry**

This week the food bank especially needs cereal. All donations should be placed in the bin in the narthex.

## **Worship & Music Committee**

Your next meeting will be on Monday morning, February 10, at 9:30. Please mark your calendars now.

## **Looking Ahead...**

Our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner will be held on Sunday, March 23, at 11:30 am at the Rotonda West Community Center. Cost will be \$15 per person and you will have a choice of beef or chicken. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex this morning. If you have questions, see a committee member (Larry and Linda Bennett, Ruth Ash, Cyndy Hoops, Bob Wormuth, Marcia and Gary Wilkins). Deadline for registration is March 9<sup>th</sup>.

## THIS WEEK AT FAITH

<b>Every week day morning</b>	6:30 am	AA meets at church
<b>Monday</b>	8:00 pm	AA meets at church
<b>Tuesday</b>	8:30 am	Work Crew
	9:00 am	Lutheran Chicks
	11:30 am	Bell practice

### Serving To day

**Altar Guild:** Joan Thoren

#### First Service

**Worship Assistant:** Joan Thoren

**Lector:** Jim Hughs

**Usher:** Art Hanson

#### Second Service

**Lector/ Worship Assistant:** Ellen Lindhurst

**Ushers:** Ken Stephens, Doug & Sue Schuemann

### WE PRAY FOR...

Sandy Cox

Bob Ash

Larry Bennet

Deb Bush

Chris Hoops

Jim Porter

Carolyn Furman

Ginny Linsberg

Toni Newton

Zack Stearns

Lynette Cormier

Byron Myrick

Kay Culver

Barbara Hanson

Todd Schultz

Marcia and Gary Wilkins

John and Linda Schleede

Sylvia and Al Armen

### Your Church Council

Jeff Kamm (President), Larry Bennett (Vice President), Sandy Cox (Secretary), Art Hanson (Treasurer), Jim Taylor, Jeff Petersen, Gene Newlon, Jay Fisher and Sue Baran