

# **ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH**

**READINGS FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025**

**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY**

## **THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD**

### **THE COLLECT**

Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## **OLD TESTAMENT: NEHEMIAH 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

***Persia has conquered Babylon. An edict from the Persian king, Cyrus, permits Jewish exiles to return home. The people now gather near one of the gates in the walls of Jerusalem to hear the prophet Ezra reading from Leviticus. He reads in Hebrew, and priestly assistants translate and interpret.***

***A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of Nehemiah, Chapter 8, beginning at the first verse.***

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. 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. 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. 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. 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. So they read from the book, from the law of God,

with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

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. 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**

***The people:*** *Thanks be to God.*

## **PSALM 19**

***This psalm is a hymn which glorifies the Creator God, with special praise for God's law and a prayer for avoidance of sin.***

1. The heavens declare the glory of God, \*  
and the firmament shows his handiwork.
2. One day tells its tale to another, \*  
and one night imparts knowledge to another.
3. 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.
5. In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; \*  
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.
7. The law of the LORD is perfect  
and revives the soul; \*  
the testimony of the LORD is sure  
and gives wisdom to the innocent.
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.

9. The fear of the LORD is clean  
and endures for ever; \*  
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.
11. By them also is your servant enlightened, \*  
and in keeping them there is great reward.
12. Who can tell how often he offends? \*  
cleanse me from my secret faults.
13. 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.
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son:\*  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now:\*  
and shall be forever. **Amen.**

## **THE NEW TESTAMENT:**

### **1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31A**

***Paul has told the Christians at Corinth that spiritual gifts come through the Holy Spirit and are given by him, as he chooses, for the benefit of the whole community. Now he turns to the nature of the Church – using the analogy of the human body.***

***A Reading from the Word of God, written in the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, Chapter twelve, beginning at the twelfth verse.***

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. 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.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 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. 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. 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? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body.

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." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 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; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 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. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts.

### **The Word of the Lord**

***The people:*** *Thanks be to God.*

## **THE GOSPEL: LUKE 4:14-21**

***Jesus has been tempted by the devil in the wilderness – to misuse his power for his personal benefit, for worldly domination, and for protection from God’s plan fulfilled on the cross. While there he was “led by the Spirit”. Now he applies the words of Isaiah to himself: he is the predicted messiah; he will bring freedom to the oppressed.***

***Gospeler: The Lord be with you.***

***All: And also with you.***

***Gospeler: A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.***

***All: Glory to Christ Our Saviour.***

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

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

*"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,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

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. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

**This is the Gospel of Christ**  
***The people: Praise to Christ our Lord.***

(NRSV)

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