

Sunday 26th January, 2025

The Third Sunday after Epiphany

Minister: Rev. Ian Taylor, A.C.I.B.S., B.D., Th.M., Dip. P.S.R.P.

Musical Director: Mr. Alan Craig. B.Mus., P.G.C.E.

Members of the congregation who are able to stand are invited to do so as the Bible is brought in and taken out of the Church.

Intimations

Introit

Call to Worship

Hymn 263 God of freedom, God of justice,

- 1 God of freedom, God of justice,
you whose love is strong as death,
you who saw the dark of prison,
you who knew the price of faith-
touch our world of sad oppression
with your Spirit's healing breath.
- 2 Rid the earth of torture's terror,
you whose hands were nailed to wood;
hear the cries of pain and protest,
you who shed the tears and blood-
move in us the power of pity
restless for the common good.
- 3 Make in us a captive conscience
quick to hear, to act, to plead;
make us truly sisters, brothers
of whatever race or creed-
teach us to be fully human,
open to each other's needs

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Approach and Confession

Children's Address

Hymn 256 May the God of hope go with us every day,

- 1 May the God of hope go with us every day,
all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.
*Praying, let us work for peace ;
singing, share our joy with all ;
working for a world that's new,
faithful when we hear Christ's call.*
- 2 God will be our Shepherd as we go our way
and will not forsake us when we go astray.
Even though the load of life is hard to bear,
we must not forget that God is always there.

verse 1 Spanish traditional translated Alvin Schutmaat verse 2 Ann Mitchell Reproduced from CH4 CD-ROM edition, number 256 Words and Music: © CRC (Christian Reformed Church Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Nehemiah, Chapter 8, verses 1-3, 5-6, 8-10

¹ 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. ² 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. ³ 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.

⁵ 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. ⁶ 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 worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.'

Anthem

St. Luke, Chapter 4, verses 14-21

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:

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,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

²⁰ 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. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

Hymn 533 Will you come and follow me

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare,
will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free
and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found

to reshape the world around
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

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Sermon

The Offering (& Sung Doxology: Hymn 807)

Prayers of Intercession and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn 10 The stars declare his glory; (Psalm 19)

- 1 The stars declare his glory ;
the vault of heaven springs
mute witness of the Master's hand
in all created things,
and through the silences of space
their soundless music sings.
- 2 The dawn returns in splendour,
the heavens burn and blaze,
the rising sun renews the race
that measures all our days,
and writes in fire across the skies
God's majesty and praise.
- 3 So shine the Lord's commandments
to make the simple wise ;
more sweet than honey to the taste,

more rich than any prize,
a law of love within our hearts,
a light before our eyes.

- 4 So order too this life of mine,
direct it all my days ;
may meditations of my heart
be innocence and praise,
my rock and my redeeming Lord,
in all my words and ways.

Based on Psalm 19 Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. 1926) Reproduced from CH4 CD-ROM edition, number 10
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Benediction

Choral Amen