



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.

# **Third Sunday after Epiphany**

## **January 26, 2025**

**St. John's Lutheran Church**  
**1000 Helena Ave.**  
**Helena, Montana 59601**  
**(406) 442-6270**

*Please be aware that as we stream this service to a live audience you may appear on camera when you are worshiping with us. We welcome those who attend online and are part of our worshiping community! Please respond with the words in **bold print** and stand, as you are able, at the places marked with an \**

**Prelude:**

**Welcome and Announcements:**

**\*Thanksgiving for Baptism:**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity,  
+ one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.*

We give you thanks, O God,

**for in the beginning you created us in your image and placed us in a well-watered garden. In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave us water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you washed us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.**

We praise you for your salvation through water,  
for the water in this font,  
and for all water everywhere.  
Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.  
Satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ,  
our living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn:** ..... “We All Are One in Mission”.....ELW # 576, verses 1,2



1 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,  
2 We all are called for ser - vice, to wit-ness in God's name.  
3 Now let us be u - nit - ed, and let our song be heard.



our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.  
Our min - is - tries are dif - f'rent; our pur - pose is the same:  
Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem - ing Word.



A sin - gle great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove  
to touch the lives of oth - ers with God's sur - pris - ing grace,  
We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,



to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.  
so ev - 'ry folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.  
our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

**\*Apostolic Greeting:**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**\*Prayer of the Day:**

Let us pray. 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.**

**First Reading: Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10:**

*The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that “the joy of the LORD is your strength.”*

<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.**

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a:**

*The apostle and pastor Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to describe how intimately connected we are in the church. For this struggling congregation in Corinth, Paul delivers a vital message of unity that is a mark of the church today.*

<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.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation:**.....**ELW #174**

*Celtic Alleluia*



**\*Gospel: Luke 4:14-21:**

*Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.*

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the fourth chapter beginning with the fourteenth verse.

**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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Children's Message:**.....**Pastor Keith Weatherford**

**Sermon:**.....**Pastor Keith Weatherford**

*(Silence For Reflection After the Sermon)*

**\*Hymn of the Day:**..... **"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.

**\*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:**

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

**\*Prayer Response:**        *(Each portion of the prayers ends with these words.)*

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.**

**\*Sharing of the Peace:**

*(...Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19))*

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*(The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say "Peace be with you" or similar words.)*

**Offering:**

*(An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need and the communion table is set.)*

**Offertory Anthem:.....“Walk in the Light” .....Traditional, arr. Andre Thomas  
Refrain by G.D. Elderkin  
Stanzas by C. Wesley  
St. John’s Sanctuary Choir**

It may seem a little odd that the text is from two different sources, and I could find very little background about George D. Elderkin. Charles Wesley, of course, is responsible for the lines from a well-known Christmas hymn: “*Hark, the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King*”. Overall, the original hymn: “*Jesus, the Light of the World*” is from a group of gospel style hymns by Elderkin. His music was intended “for prayer and evangelistic meetings, church and missionary services, Sunday Schools and young people’s societies”. Andre Thomas, the arranger, was born in 1952, served as a professor of music, and is known for his love of choral music.

*We’ll walk in the light, beautiful light  
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright  
Shine all around us by day and by night  
Jesus, the light of the world.*

**\*Offering Prayer:**

Let us pray. 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 Great Thanksgiving:**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also 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 God our thanks and praise.**

It is our duty and delight that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ who is your light made manifest to all nations. So with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



# Holy, Holy, Holy

## *Great Thanksgiving*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,



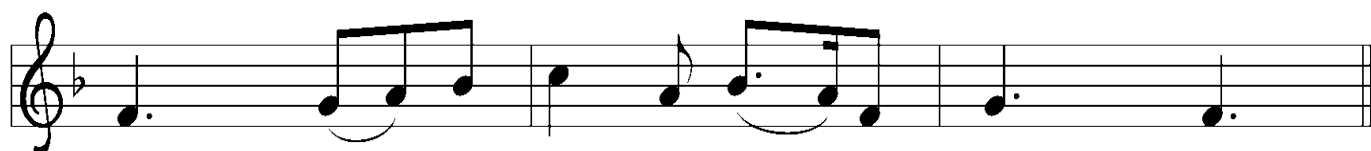
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the



high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the



name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the



high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

**\*Words of Institution:**

Holy, mighty and merciful God, in great love you sent Jesus your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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 death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*Lords Prayer:**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

**\*Invitation to Communion:**

The Joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

*(We celebrate open communion and all who are baptized are welcome to receive the forgiving and gracious presence of Christ in communion. Those who prefer not to commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.)*

**Communion Hymn:**.....“One Bread, One Body”.....ELW #496



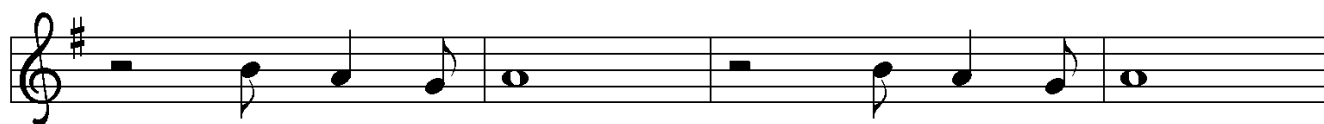
One bread, one bod-y, one Lord of all; one cup of



bless-ing which we bless, and we, though man-y



through-out the earth, we are one bod - y in this one Lord.



- |   |            |             |              |            |
|---|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | Gen - tile | or Jew,     | ser - vant   | or free,   |
| 2 | Man - y    | the gifts,  | man - y      | the works, |
| 3 | Grain for  | the fields, | scat - tered | and grown, |



wom - an	or man,	no	more.
one in	the Lord	of	all.
gath - ered	to one	for	all.

**Prayer After Communion:**

Let us pray. 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.**

**\*Sending Hymn:.....“We All Are One in Mission”.....ELW #576 verse 3**



1 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,  
2 We all are called for ser - vice, to wit - ness in God's name.  
3 Now let us be u - nit - ed, and let our song be heard.



our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.  
Our min - is - tries are dif - f'rent; our pur - pose is the same:  
Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem - ing Word.



A sin - gle great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove  
to touch the lives of oth - ers with God's sur - pris - ing grace,  
We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,



to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.  
so ev - 'ry folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.  
our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

**\*Dismissal:**

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Thanks be to God.

**\*Postlude:**

## Ministering in Worship

<b>Presiding and Preaching</b>	<b>Pastor Keith Weatherford</b>
<b>Worship Musician</b>	<b>Gretchen Munding</b>
<b>Choir Director</b>	<b>Connie Conley</b>
<b>Bell Choir Directors</b>	<b>Abby Nyhof, Renee Slocum, Christina Tielking</b>
<b>Technology</b>	<b>Angela Conley</b>
<b>Acolytes</b>	
<b>Ushers</b>	
<b>Lector</b>	<b>Ron Stegman</b>
<b>Communion Servers</b>	<b>Karen Doig, Linda Wollitz, Teresa Kinley, Bette March, Annette Jacobsen</b>
<b>Prayer Station</b>	<b>Pastor Keith Weatherford</b>
<b>Altar Guild</b>	<b>Judy Kembel, Linda Roessner</b>
<b>Witness to the Gospel</b>	<b>Members of St. John's Lutheran Church</b>

## Prayers

**In our prayers:** Linda McDonald, Susan Olson, Mike McDonald, Paula Blessinger, Diane Evans, Tammy Tetrault, Susan Boettcher, Ken Downing, Rosita Moe, Bruce Gottwig, Bob Sorensen, Deb Berg, Meg Biggs and family, Richard Bomar, Jeff Shirley, Jeremy Stockstad, Tatiana Ceaicovschi, Randy Holmes, Kamila Ruth Baker, Vicki Alpiner, Brent Bushnell, Tom Andersen, Sally Indreland, Jana Clark, Dan Jacobson, Gracie Weber, Debbie Brashear, Kynlie Weber, Everyn Weber

**For those in residential living centers, extended care or homebound:**

Mary Marty, Rev. Wayne Olsen, Rosita Moe, Esther Fuehrer, Julie Wolff, Adeline Rasmussen, Susan DeBree, Jimmie McGee

**For those who are deployed and getting ready to deploy:**

Evan Ceaicovschi, Raffy Suchikul, 1LT Maggie Smiedala

**For those who have died and now rest in God's merciful care:** All the Saints in Heaven

**Missionaries:** Missionaries around the world; Willie Langdji in Cameroon

## **IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Sunday, January 26: 9:30 am Worship with Holy Communion  
10:30 am Annual Congregational Meeting**

**Monday, January 27: 10:00 am– Staff Meeting  
6:00 pm—Celebration Ringers Rehearsal**

**Wednesday, January 29: 9:00 am– Quilting  
5:15 pm-Bells of St. John’s Rehearsal  
6:30 pm– Midweek Connection and Education**

**Thursday, January 30: 7:00 pm-Choir Practice  
4-7 pm-Point in Time Survey Soup Supper**

**Sunday, February 2: 9:30 am- Worship  
10:30 am– Fellowship  
10:45– Bible Study**

**Point in Time Survey:** Again this year, St. John’s will partner with Our Place to host a soup supper during the January 30<sup>th</sup> Point in Time Survey of Helena’s unsheltered population. We have received a Thrivent Action Grant that is sufficient to cover the basic cost of the meal. Donations of cookies would be appreciated. If you are able to assist with preparation and greeting our guests, please contact John Munding. **The event will be held at 1531 National Ave. from 4-7pm on January 30.**

**Warm Hearts:** Donations will be picked up on February 3rd and distributed to Family Promise, God’s Love, Florence Crittenton Home, Good Samaritan Ministries, Helena Community Offender Reentry Program, Rocky Mountain Development Center, The Friendship Center, and the YWCA on Valentine’s Day. Contact WarmHeartsDR@gmail.com for more information.

**Annual Chili Cookoff:** Wednesday February 5 at 6:30,. There are 5 categories: best traditional, best spicy, best white, best non-traditional, and best kid chef.

**Social Ministry for February:** Lutheran Disaster Response and Helena Food Share

**Bold Women of 2025:** voting is open from now until February 11. All are invited to vote. Ballots and ballot box are at the rear of the church.

**Women’s Book Club:** We will read “The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry” by Rachel Joyce and will meet February 13 at noon.

**FLBC Presidents Day Weekend Retreat for Middle School:** More details are coming for Feb.15-17– see Gretchen for information and registration.

**Coffee Bar:** The coffee is brewed and served by the youth and free will offerings are used to support youth activities. Come get a cup and volunteer if you would like to help.

**Sunday School:** Teachers are still needed for this vital ministry. Please let Gretchen know when you can help.

**Souper Bowl Sunday:** February 9th, collection for Helena Food Share

**Submission for Bulletin, Wednesday at noon**  
**Submission for Herald, the 25th of each month**

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**New Option for online giving.**

Please use the code here for a mobile device online giving.

Questions on how this works? Please contact the church office.

