

Sunday, January 25, 2026

Third Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 3, Year A

Introduction

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God’s grace and mercy.

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-4

The northern tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali experienced the gloom of defeat by Assyrian military forces, but they are assured that their condition will be reversed when God makes a light-filled appearance. The joy they will experience will resemble celebrations of great harvests, because God will deliver them from everything that diminishes or oppresses them.

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [the LORD] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 27:1, 4-9

Let us read the Psalm responsively.

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

⁴ **One thing I ask of the LORD; one thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life; to gaze
upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek God in the temple.**

⁵ For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,
hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary, and raise me high upon a rock.

⁶ **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies who surround me.
Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing; I
will sing and make music to the LORD.**

⁷ Hear my voice, O LORD, when I call;
have mercy on me and answer me.

⁸ **My heart speaks your message— “Seek my face.”
Your face, O LORD, I will seek.**

⁹ Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your servant in anger.
Cast me not away—you have been my helper; forsake me not, O God of my
salvation.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Paul calls on the Corinthians to end their dissensions and share the unified outlook of the gospel. Discord arises when we forget that we belong not to human leaders or institutions but to Christ. Indeed, the unifying word of the cross of Christ is the center of the gospel and the power of God's salvation.

A reading from First Corinthians.

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-23

Jesus begins his public ministry shortly after John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod. He proclaims the nearness of God's reign and calls four fishermen to be his first disciples.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee.

¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,

on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—

¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness

have seen a great light,

and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death

light has dawned."

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

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