

# Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church & Preschool

January 26, 2025

## Third Sunday after Epiphany

Rev. Paul Pfeffer

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Member of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
(ELCA – [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org))



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### All Are Welcome – All the Time!

You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to participate in any part of worship. If you wish to take communion, we ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus. His body and blood were given and shed for you.



Christ Lutheran Church & PreSchool is a community committed to the work of equity and inclusion, bringing justice and support for all of God's beloveds. We welcome those who are seeking God's love and grace for the first time or as a life-long believer. We welcome because Jesus shows us how to welcome, regardless of race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, economic resources, relationship status, health challenges or anything else that too often divides us. It is in our welcome which we commit ourselves to being an anti-racist space, a space where we seek daily to deepen our work of inclusion in the life of our church. Our unity is in Christ. All are welcome here.

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS & SHARING OF PRAYER CONCERNS**

*By Kathy Davis, who will provide updated Prayers of Intercession*

## **INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.*

*– Silence for reflection –*

*Most merciful God,*

**We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed,  
by what we have done and what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart.**

**We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may  
delight in your will and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together in Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit that Christ may live in our hearts. **Amen.**

## **SONG: Arise, Your Light has Come, ELW #314**

*Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal.*

Arise, your light has come! The Spirit's call obey;  
Show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.

Arise, your light has come! Fling wide the prison door;  
Proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light has come! All you in sorrow born,  
bind up the brokenhearted ones, and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light has come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing, God's power will make us strong.

## **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and  
the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you!**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.**

## **READING – Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, Ezra the priest 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. Thanks be to God*

## **RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 19:1, 7-14**

The heavens are telling the glory of God,  
**and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.**

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;  
**the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple;**

the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;  
**the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes;**

the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever;  
**the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.**

More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;  
**sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.**

Moreover, by them is your servant warned;  
**in keeping them there is great reward.**

But who can detect one's own errors?  
**Clear me from hidden faults.**

Keep back your servant also from the insolent;  
**do not let them have dominion over me.**

Then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression.  
**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.**

## **READING – 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a**

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. 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 powerful deeds? 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. Thanks be to God.*

– *Please stand as you are able* –

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (SUNG) – ELW 172**

Halle, halle, halle – Iujah. Halle, halle, halle – Iujah.  
Halle, halle, halle – Iujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah!

## **THE GOSPEL – Luke 4:14-21**

The Holy Gospel according to Luke. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding region. 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 set free those who are oppressed, 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.”

*The Gospel of our Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.*

## **SERMON – Rev. Paul Pfeffer**

## **SONG: Thy Word**, by Amy Grant & Michael W. Smith

*Printed on bulletin insert*

**Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.**

**Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.**

When I feel afraid – Think I've lost my way – Still you're there right beside me.  
And nothing will I fear – As long as you are near; Please be near me to the end...

***Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet...***

I will not forget Your love for me and yet – My heart forever is wandering.  
Jesus be my guide, and hold me to your side. I will love you to the end...

***Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet...***

## **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.

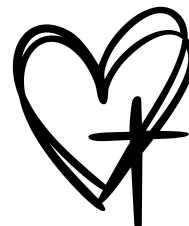
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** *(on separate sheet)*

***God of grace... Receive our prayer.***



## **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

***The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.***

***– Please share a greeting or sign of peace –***



## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks & praise.**



## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION** *(not printed/Presider's book on altar)*

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

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 OF COMMUNION AT THE FRONT**

**All are welcome to receive the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of Holy Communion.** You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to receive the sacrament. We ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are interested will be invited by an usher to come up the center aisle to the front to select a single-serving Communion kit from the tray, or to receive a blessing. Then return to your seat via the side aisle to open the kit and partake in Communion. An usher will offer a basket to collect the container. *For those worshipping at home, please consider joining in Holy Communion by taking a bit of bread or cracker and a sip of wine or juice.* **All are welcome.**

### **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

#### **BENEDICTION**

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## **SONG: Christ, Be Our Light, ELW #715**

*Verses 1, 2, 4, 5; Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal*

Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see...

**Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.**

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice...

**Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts...**

Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone.

**Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts...**

Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another, signs of the kingdom come.

**Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts...**

## **DISMISSAL**

*Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God!*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Congregation Meeting Next Sunday, February 2** – right after worship. Materials available now on the information table in the Fellowship Hall or on the website ([ChristLutheranVH.org](http://ChristLutheranVH.org)). Thank you for making plans to participate – it will only take about 30 minutes or so, and you can enjoy cake and coffee as we talk.
- **Thank You for the Gift Bags** – Holly and Theresa worked with the PreSchool and our congregation to create gift bags for approximately 60 children (and one puppy) served by Sue's Pantry here in Vernon Hills. Thank you for your generosity.
- **Supporting the Homeless** – Thank you to all who sent items for the camp near Pastor Pdraig's home in Chicago. There was so much we must send a second load. Thank you!
- **Caring Hands** – 9a to Noon on the following Saturdays: February 15, March 15, April 12, May 17, June 21, September 20, October 18, November 15. Making prayer shawls, comfort blankets, hats/mittens. ([CaringHandsVernonHills@gmail.com](mailto:CaringHandsVernonHills@gmail.com))
- **Donating to Wildfire Victims** – ELCA's Lutheran Disaster Response is one of the oldest, most effective and most respected organizations for getting money where it can be put to good use. Donate at [ELCA.org](http://ELCA.org). There is also a link on our website under "WORK."
- **Scouting!** – Boys and girls ages Kindergarten through high school have an opportunity to build skills and have fun through Scouting. Thanks for supporting our Pack/Troop 273!
- **PreSchool Prayers** – Keep the children, families and staff of our PreSchool in prayer.
- **Support for Anelly** – Our ministry partner Anelly, a young mother of two who has supported refugees in Chicago, has a recurrence of cancer and other challenges. Please lift her in prayer and consider supporting the Meal Train ([HollySJ@earthlink.net](mailto:HollySJ@earthlink.net)).
- **Sue's Pantry** – Call for toilet paper! And anything needed to keep a home and family clean – dish soap, laundry detergent, body wash, shampoo.
- **Love INC** – Housewares, nonperishables and volunteers. Want to learn more? Have a family in need of a bundle of clothes or housewares? Give the details to Natalie she will get us covered! (Thanks, Natalie.) (<https://loveinclakecounty.org/>)
- **COOL Ministries** – We support the COOL pantry in Waukegan with non-perishables. Collection bins in hallway or give online. ([CoolMinistries.org](http://CoolMinistries.org))
- **Prayer concerns?** Consider reaching out so that our network of Prayer Warriors can pray. You may remain anonymous. Email [ChristLutheranVH@aol.com](mailto:ChristLutheranVH@aol.com) with your request. Would you join with us in prayer? Send an email to be included on the prayer mailing list. The task is simple-but-powerful – when time permits, open the email and read/pray with us.
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.** Your presence in worship is very important. Thank you for being part of this community of faith. If you would like to support our service, we welcome donations, which can be provided by credit card or Paypal through the link at the bottom of our webpage, [ChristLutheranVH.org](http://ChristLutheranVH.org). Thank you!