

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany January 24, 2016
LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

**A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings
become a part of the rhythms of your life.**

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At either “Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”

January 21, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship service on Wednesdays, 5:30pm, at the home of Robert Russo, a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details.)



<http://media-cache-ec0.pinimg.com/736x/a4/9d/fe/a49dfe9e88a1da70c9f7707c4754cada.jpg>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 839 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 512

“O Christ, our true and only light”

This is a very Lutheran hymn in usage. What else would you expect if Catherine Winkworth is the translator! It also appears in TTT-Himnaro Cigneta as [Al turnopunkt' de sunleviĝ' kaj ĝis ekstremo de la ter'](#) Visit Wikipedia to learn more about the language - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esperanto>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j17-7SihEYA> “One LSB Hymn a Week”

[English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#)

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Back on track with the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) – almost. This week and next there are several places where the optional verses are not included in the RCL.

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 (next week: *Jeremiah 1:4-10 [17-19]*)

[Ezra Reads the Law](#)

8 And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the LORD had commanded Israel. ² So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. ³ And 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. ⁴ *And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand.* ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. ⁶ And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁷ *Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites,^[a] helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places.* ⁸ They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly,^[b] and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

[This Day Is Holy](#)

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 as 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 to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

- a. [Nehemiah 8:7](#) Vulgate; Hebrew *and the Levites*
- b. [Nehemiah 8:8](#) Or *with interpretation, or paragraph by paragraph*

“These events take place about a century after the Jewish exiles were allowed to return from Babylonia to Jerusalem after a lengthy exile. Life has not been easy. The people have suffered from hostile neighbors and crop failures. While they succeeded in rebuilding the temple, their new temple compares poorly with Solomon's Temple—the temple that the Babylonians destroyed when they sacked Jerusalem.

Nehemiah, acting as governor (5:14; 8:9), has overseen the the rebuilding of the walls around the city (6:15-19), providing protection to the city's inhabitants from hostile neighbors (4:1-23). He has also shown remarkable leadership in dealing with some of the social ills of his community (5:1-18).

However, hardship has led to disillusionment and spiritual weariness. Now Ezra, priest and scribe (v. 9), comes to read the sacred scriptures to the assembled crowd. Ezra, who can trace his lineage to Aaron, the first high priest, has impeccable credentials (Ezra 7:1-5). More important, he is "a ready scribe in the law of Moses...(with) the hand of Yahweh his God on him" (Ezra 7:6)....

The scope of the scripture reading is necessarily limited, because people today are not prepared to listen to the scripture being read by the hour, as they were in Ezra's time.

However, the preacher should be aware that there is more to this holy day than our lectionary reading has covered. The people proceed to celebrate the Festival of Booths (8:13-18). They then make a lengthy confession, in which they remember the Lord's faithfulness and the unfaithfulness of their ancestors (9:1-37). Their leaders (who are named in 10:1-26) then sign a covenant in which they promise "to walk in God's law" (10:29; see also the remainder of chapter 10). In other words, they make this holy day even holier by their pledge of fidelity to the Lord.

http://www.lectionary.org/EXEG_Engl_WEB/OT/16-Neh-WEB/Neh.8.1-10.EXEGESIS.htm

Psalm 19:(1-6), 7-14 (Psalm 71:1-6 [7-11])

The Law of the LORD Is Perfect

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

19 The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above^[a] proclaims his handiwork.

² Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.

³ There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.

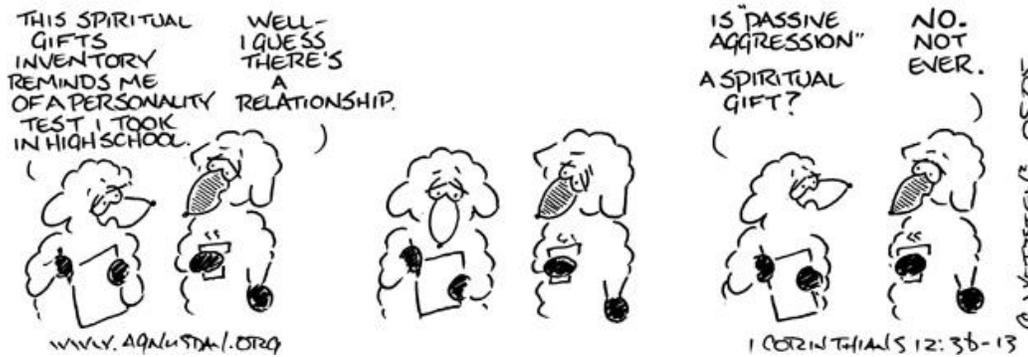
⁴ Their voice^[b] goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
In them he has set a tent for the sun,
⁵ which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.
⁶ Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect,^[c]
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;
⁸ the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
⁹ the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules^[d] of the LORD are true,
and righteous altogether.
¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.
¹¹ Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

¹² Who can discern his errors?
Declare me innocent from hidden faults.
¹³ Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins;
let them not have dominion over me!
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

- a. [Psalm 19:1](#) Hebrew *the expanse*; compare [Genesis 1:6–8](#)
- b. [Psalm 19:4](#) Or *Their measuring line*
- c. [Psalm 19:7](#) Or *blameless*
- d. [Psalm 19:9](#) Or *just decrees*



1 Corinthians 12:12-31a (1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13)

One Body with Many Members

¹²For 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. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves^[d] or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should 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. ¹⁶And if the ear should 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. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts,^[e] yet one body.

²¹The 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.” ²²On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way. (Part b of verse 31 begins next week)

The **apostles** hold the chief place, as immediately called; as those who laid the foundations of the churches among the Gentiles (see Rev. 21:14); and as those who were led by the Holy Spirit, into all truth, and thus were absolutely infallible. In the second rank are placed the **prophets**, who taught concerning future or abstruse subjects, such as those in the Church at Antioch (Acts 11:27), Judas and Silas (Acts 14:32), Agabus (21:10), and the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9). In the third rank are placed the **teachers**, who although they did not speak from immediate revelation, nevertheless were divinely endowed with a peculiar gift for teaching. If the question be asked why in this catalogue the Apostle omits the “evangelists and pastors,” who in Eph. 4:11 have the third and fourth places, while the “teachers” have the fifth place; the reason, I think, is that the evangelists are comprehended here, partly under the prophets and partly under the teachers, as, like Mark and Luke, they were divinely inspired, or were not. ... From this order, it is clear that there is a subordination of ministers of the Church; and, that it is of divine right, and necessary for the harmonious constitution of the mystical body, and differs in ranks of dignity, [Johann] Huelsemann proves: 1. From the word “hath set,” which is employed equally concerning the natural appointment of members of the body, from the pure will of God (ver. 18), and the application of this will in appointing ministers in the Church, especially if the word *tienai* be explained by parallel passages, as Acts 20:28; Rom. 4:17; 9:33; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Thess. 5:9; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11. 2. Because the same natural necessity of subordination occurs in the harmony of the natural (vers. 13-15), and of the ecclesiastical body (vers. 27-29). 3. A diversity of dignity is manifest also from the terms “honorable” and “less honorable” (vers. 22,23,24). 4. Also from the diversity of dignity between the eye and the toe (vers. 17,22). 5. From the offices signifying precedency of order and dignity (ver. 28). 6. Finally, by a comparison of the offices. For as teaching and prophesy, in the abstract, excel bodily and external ministries (Acts 6:2,3; 1 Cor. 14:39; 1 Tim. 5:17), so, in the concrete, ministers occupied in these diverse offices are of higher rank one to the other, according to the above cited passage in the Epistle to Timothy, and here (vers. 28,29), as well as in the last verse, where “the greater gifts” are mentioned. <http://www.angelfire.com/ny4/djw/lutherantheology.calovius.html>

ABRAHAM CALOVIUS (From *Biblia Illustrata*, Vol. IV [1719]; quoted in Henry Eyster Jacobs, *The Lutheran Commentary*, Vol. VIII [1897], pp. 88-90.)

https://www.lutheranonline.com/servlet/CpsServlet/DBPAGE=page&MODE=display&GID=20101503103106233701111555&PG=20110597784632010901111555&START_COUNT=2 is a link to a Bible study procided with funding from Thrivent. The material is extensive but has format issues if you attempt to print.

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 4th Chapter”

“Glory to You, O Lord”

Luke 4:16-30; RCL Luke 4:14-21 (Luke 4:31-44; RCL Luke 4:21-30)

Jesus Begins His Ministry

¹⁴ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and 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 proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, **“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”** ²² And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph's son?” ²³ And he said to them, **“Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Physician, heal yourself.’ What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.”** ²⁴ And he said, **“Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers^[a] in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”** ²⁸ When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, he went away.

- a. [Luke 4:27](#) Leprosy was a term for several skin diseases; see [Leviticus 13](#)

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“From a thematic perspective, Luke 4:16-30 may be the central passage of the Gospel (Ford 1984:63). Surprisingly, some Bible commentators pass over the central verses in this section, verses 18-19 without a single word of explanation! (See Barclay 1975:47-48; Lightfoot 1989:68-72; Pentecost 1981:140). This

passage contains a mission statement from Jesus about His ministry and also provides foreshadowing for how His ministry will be received (cf. Wright 2006:301). The rest of the Gospel of Luke unfolds how Jesus fulfilled this mission, and yet was continually misunderstood and rejected by the people He worked among.

Above even this, it could be argued that Luke 4:16-30 is the foundation passage for the Book of Acts. If the Gospel of Luke shows how Jesus fulfilled the mission mandate of Jesus as recorded in Luke 4:18-19, then the Book of Acts shows how the church, guided and empowered by the same Spirit, worked to carry on the ministry of Jesus. As such, some argue that Luke 4:16-21 is "the key text not only for understanding Christ's own mission but also that of the church" (Bosch 1991:84, 89, 109).

As discussed in Luke 4:14-15, this event occurs after one year of ministry, and Jesus is now beginning to transition from gaining disciples to training them." <http://gracecommentary.com/luke-4-16-19/>

The complete commentary from this site goes into great detail about the reading and makes for an interesting read. Give it a try.

Another commentary that is a short summary is from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN This is a sample from the one page commentary.

"Reading Scripture aloud in a synagogue service was a common practice, and a person did not necessarily need to hold a special office to offer leadership in worship and instruction (compare Acts 13:13-15). The biblical text cited in Luke 4:17-19 is not a single passage from Isaiah but a combination of Isaiah 61:1-2a and part of Isaiah 58:6. These two passages are probably combined here in Luke because in the Greek translation of the Old Testament the same word is found in both places. This word is *aphesis*, which appears when Jesus says he is "to proclaim *release* to the captives" and also "to let the oppressed go *free*." Combining the two passages from Isaiah emphasizes this theme of "release" that characterizes Jesus' ministry. The same word appears elsewhere in Luke to describe people's release (usually translated "forgiveness") from sins. The word also appears frequently in Leviticus 25:8-55, which discusses the jubilee year, a "year of release" meant to preserve justice in Israel through the fair and regular distribution of wealth and personal freedoms. Jesus' sermon, therefore, implies that his ministry is one that liberates people from social and economic oppression, just as other pronouncements indicate that Jesus also frees people from sin's oppression."

<https://www.enterthebible.org/resourcelink.aspx?rid=139>



"We are pleased to announce that thanks to the mad coding skills of [Eric Demay](http://ericdemay.com), the Agnus Day website is back up and running! www.angusday.org "