

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

JANUARY 21, 2024, AT 8 AM

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Please keep a prayerful quiet as we prepare for worship.

*The People's responses are printed in **bold**.*

This liturgy is derived from Year W, for which the lectionary and its translation are the work of Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney. See the liturgical note for more information.

THE WORD OF GOD

Opening Acclamation

Blessed be God: Mother, Sufferer, and Advocate.

And blessed be her reign, now and forever. Amen.

Opening Sentences

Hear the word of God: As an eagle stirs upon her nest, and hovers over her young, as she spreads her wings, takes them up, and bears them aloft on her pinions, God alone guides us.

—Deuteronomy 32:11-12, *adapted*

Song of Praise

God is our Mother;

From her Womb comes all Life.

The Son of a Woman suffered on our behalf,

Salvation born on a cross.

She is our Advocate

And lights our path to peace.

Collect of the Day

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God of healing and restoration, give us grace to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may receive his liberating glory; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading *seated* 2 Kings 5:1-4, 9-14

Naaman, commander of the army of the ruler of Aram, was a great man in the sight of his master and highly esteemed, because through him the HOLY ONE had given victory to Aram. The man, a great warrior, was diseased in his skin. Now Aramean troops went out and took captive from the land of Israel a young girl, and she was placed before Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would take his skin disease away." So Naaman went in and told his master the girl from the land of Israel had said this and this.

Then Naaman came with his horses and chariot and stood at the entrance of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to him, who said, "Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be unblemished." But Naaman became angry and left, saying, "Look here! I thought that for me he would surely come out and stand and call on the name of the MOST HIGH, his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and take away the skin disease! Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be restored?" Then he turned and went away in a rage. But his slaves approached and said to him, "My father, were it a great thing the prophet told you to do, would you not have done it? How much more, when what he said to you was, 'Wash, and be restored?'" So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was renewed like the flesh of a little boy, and he was restored.

For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 103:1-8 *read responsively by whole verse*

Bless the FOUNT OF WISDOM, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless her holy Name.

**Bless the FOUNT OF WISDOM, O my soul,
and forget not all her benefits.**

She forgives all your sins
and heals all your infirmities;

**She redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;**

She satisfies you with good things,
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

**SHE WHO IS WISDOM executes righteousness
and judgment for all who are oppressed.**

She made her ways known to Miriam and Moses
and her works to the children of Israel.

**WISDOM's womb is full of love and faithfulness,
slow to anger and overflowing with faithful love.**

The Gospel *standing as you are able* Mark 3:1-12

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now Jesus returned to the synagogue and a person was there who had a withered hand. And the women and men in the synagogue were watching him carefully to see whether he would cure the person on the sabbath so that they might accuse him. Then Jesus said to the person who had the withered hand, "Come up to the middle." Then Jesus said to the women and men in the synagogue, "Is it permissible to do good or to do evil on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And looking around at them with anger Jesus was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the person, "Stretch out your hand." And the person stretched it out and their hand was restored. Then the Pharisees went out with the Herodians and immediately began to conspire against Jesus, how they might destroy him.

Then Jesus with his disciples departed to the sea and a great multitude from Galilee followed, and from Judaea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and the region around Tyre and Sidon, hearing all that he was doing, they came to him. And he told his disciples to have a boat at hand for him because of the crowd of women, children, and men lest they crush him. For he had cured many, so that as many as had diseases pressed upon him to touch him. And the unclean spirits, when they saw him, they fell down before him and shrieked, "You are the Son of God!" But Jesus rebuked them strongly not to make him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon The Rev. Mitchell Felton

Please be seated at the invitation of the preacher. A period of silence will be observed after the sermon.

Creed *standing as you are able*

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Mother, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God: Mother, Sufferer, and Advocate. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Intercessor She who speaks life brought the world to being and entrusted it to our care. Creating God, guide the universal church in knowledge and love of you, remind us to care for the fullness of your creation, assist us in supporting the flourishing of your people around the world.

Ever living God, **hear our prayer.**

She who is exalted is the ruler of all and the lover of justice. Mighty God, lead those in authority toward justice, freedom, and peace; orient our individual pursuits of justice toward you and your kin-dom.

Ever living God, **hear our prayer.**

She who provides and saves will never stop caring for her people. Loving God, be present with our community; offer your healing and mercy to . . . and to those we name aloud or in our hearts . . .

Ever living God, **hear our prayer.**

She who is faithful has offered us many great gifts. Generous God, we praise you with gratitude and thanksgiving for . . . and for the blessings we name aloud or in our hearts . . .

Ever living God, **hear our prayer.**

She who is eternal grants us everlasting life in her glory. Heavenly God, mercifully accept your servants who have died into your house. We pray especially for . . . and for the departed we name aloud or in our hearts . . .

Ever living God, **hear our prayer.**

Mighty and merciful God, we lift our prayers to you. Respond in your loving kindness, and strengthen us to do your will. In your holy name we pray. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution *standing or kneeling as you are able*

Presider Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence may be kept.

**God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

Peace *The Presider says to the People*

The peace of Christ be always with you.

And also with you.

All greet one another in the name of Jesus Christ.

Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

At the Offertory

The Holy Spirit inspires us to give generously, to extend Christ's mission in this place and the wider world. Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/GivetoSCEC> to make your offering, or you can text to give using your phone. Text SCEC and AMOUNT to 73256 (QR code in Connections) and you will receive a text with instructions. Please stand as you are able as the offering is brought forward and blessed.

The Great Thanksgiving

God is here.

Her Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them unto God.

Let us give thanks to our Sovereign God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, O God, our light and our salvation; to you be glory and praise for ever. From the beginning you have created all things, and all your works echo the silent music of your praise. In the fullness of time you made us in your image, the crown of all creation. You give us breath and speech, that with angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven we may find a voice to sing your praise:

Sanctus and Benedictus

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

How wonderful is the work of your hands, O God. As a mother tenderly gathers her children, you embraced a people as your own. When they turned away and rebelled, your gaze remained steadfast. From them you raised up Jesus to be our Savior, born of Mary, to be the living bread, in whom all our hungers are satisfied. He offered his life for sinners, and with a love stronger than death, he opened wide his arms on the cross.

On the night before he died, he came to supper with his friends, and, taking bread, he gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave thanks, and said: "Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Remembering his life, death, and resurrection, we present to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon them that they may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son, holy food and drink of new and unending life. Form us in the likeness of Christ, and build us into a living temple to your glory.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ by whom, with whom, and in whom, with all who stand before you on earth and in heaven, we worship you in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honor and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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 for ever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The bread is broken and silence observed.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Invitation to Communion

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Whoever you are, wherever you find yourself on the journey of faith, you are welcome at Christ's table.

Communion

Christ welcomes all to communion. ■ Receive the bread in open and outstretched hands and sip the wine, guiding the chalice to your lips. ■ If you do not want to sip the wine, it is also perfectly appropriate to receive the bread only. We do not allow dipping the bread into the wine. ■ Respond to communion by saying "Amen." ■ If you prefer a blessing, cross your hands over your chest. ■ Gluten-free wafers are available at each communion station. ■ Baptism is offered several times a year; speak to a priest to learn more.

Prayer after Communion *standing as you are able*

Let us pray.

Nourishing God, thank you for inviting us to your table where all are welcome, and for feeding us with the bread of life and quenching our thirst with the cup of blessing. As you have filled our lives with love and hope, may we be a source of your love and hope for others who hunger and thirst for good news. Amen.

Presider As we are gathered, fed, and sent by God, let us ask ourselves: With whom can I share the Good News? Whom will I invite to join us at this table?

Sending Forth of Eucharistic Ministers *when scheduled*

In the name of St. Columba's we send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that N. may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

We who are many are one body, as we all share one bread, one cup.

Blessing

The People respond **Amen.**

Dismissal

The People respond **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Liturgical Note

During the Season after Epiphany, St. Columba's is engaging *The Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church*, compiled and translated by the Rev. Dr. Wilda C. Gafney. This series is often short-handed as "Year W" for woman and womanist. Womanism is a movement of Black Women that recognizes the intersections of gender, race, and class.

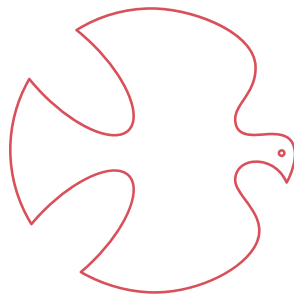
Throughout the season, we will hear feminine characterization of God, and we'll engage the women of the Bible anew. This is an experiment that allows us to notice how stories and names for God impact our connection to God and to one another. Listen for what comforts and challenges you, for what encourages or confuses you. *The Women's Lectionary* gives the opportunity to be curious and to notice.

Names of God included in Opening Prayers and Prayers of the People also come from resources by the Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney.

Land Acknowledgement

We give thanks that we meet today on the traditional land of the first people of Nacotchtank, who had been its custodians for thousands of years, caring for and nurturing it. We pray for all who live on this land and pay our respects to the native leaders past, present, and emerging.

Readings: From *A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church—Year B* © Church Publishing, 2021. Used by permission. ~ Creed: Affirmation of Faith E12 from *Common Worship: New Patterns for Worship* © The Archbishops' Council 2002. Used with permission. ~ Prayers of the People: The Rev. Adelyn Tyler-Williams. Used by permission. ~ Confession: From *Enriching Our Worship* © 1998 Church Pension Fund. Reprinted by permission. ~ Eucharistic Prayer G: From *Common Worship* © The Archbishops' Council 2002. Used with permission. ~ Postcommunion Prayer: Reprinted by permission from *Book of Common Worship* © 1993 Westminster/John Knox Press.



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