

JANUARY 26, 2025
THIRD SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY



Jesus sets us free.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

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|-----------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sunday | Luke 4:14-21 | Jesus returns to Nazareth |
| Monday | Nehemiah 8:1-10 | Ezra reads God's law to the people |
| Tuesday | 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 | One body, many parts |
| Wednesday | Isaiah 61:1-7 | The good news of deliverance |
| Thursday | Leviticus 25:1-24 | The year of jubilee |
| Friday | Galatians 5:13-15 | Christian freedom |
| Saturday | Psalms 19 | God's glory in creation and the law |
| Sunday | Luke 4:21-30 | The prophet Jesus is rejected |

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"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, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4:18-19 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, for your message of freedom that is more desired than gold and sweeter than honey, we praise you through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Psalm 19:10)

Mealtime Prayer:

For this food that strengthens the body and your word that strengthens our souls, we thank you. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Spirit of Christ Jesus bless you and set you free.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Soli Deo Gloria



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What burdens or worries do you have? What would help set you free from them?
- Jesus came to set us free. From what would you like Jesus to set you free?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 4:14-21.

This is Jesus' first sermon in Luke. That makes it a particularly important message, one that reveals recurring themes in Jesus' ministry. Jesus chooses to read from Isaiah 61. The message is clear. Jesus has God's Spirit to encourage the poor, free captives, give sight to the blind, and set free those who are burdened. Finally, he is to announce the "year of the Lord's favor" (v.19), a phrase that represents the year of jubilee announced in Leviticus 25. Every fifty years slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be forgiven, and lands lost to debts would be returned to ancestral owners. This keeps society from unraveling into unlimited wealth for some and perpetual poverty for others. Jesus brings all sorts of new beginnings for powerless people. Jesus would be one of the powerless and die on a cross as a criminal. His life, death, and resurrection become the good news for a world where unfairness and abuse of powers seem to win the day, but never really will in God's rule.

Discuss: Where is there a need in today's world for Jesus' freeing power?

Pray: **Almighty and merciful God, we thank you for freeing us to serve you with thanksgiving and serve our neighbor in love, through Christ Jesus who preaches good news for all. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, how can you help someone be released from their worries?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The closing prayer in Psalm 19 is often used at the beginning of sermons, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer" (v. 14). Pray this verse as part of a morning prayer ritual to honor the day and see your actions and thoughts as a form of praise to God.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org