

# Third Sunday after the Epiphany

9:30AM, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Asterisk (\*) indicates standing, as able. Bold/colored type indicates text spoken in unison.

PRELUDE "Be Still My Soul"

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP Responsive

Children of God, we gather to worship, to sing and proclaim with joy the good works God is doing in our midst.

**We gather to worship, as is our custom.**

We also gather today to pray for our families, our community, and our world. To name the challenges that press in around us, to lament the suffering in our world, to declare our trust in God in the midst of hardship.

**We gather to worship, as is our custom.**

We, like those in Nazareth, gather to hear and receive the Word of God proclaimed among us. To encounter the life-giving message of God's love redeems us to be bearers of love and freedom in this world.

**We gather to worship, as is our custom.**

Children of God, listen. Pay attention. Ready your hearts. God is here. Jesus has come among us. The Spirit brings the Word to life in our midst. Are you ready?

**We gather to worship, as is our custom. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

\*HYMN "How Great Thou Art" UMH # 77

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH Apostles' Creed UMH # 881

OPENING PRAYER Unison

**We thank you, O God, for calling us into your church to be your people. We have gathered, God of grace and wisdom, because we have heard your call. You have reached out to us in Jesus Christ; you have touched us with your Spirit, and we have turned toward you, seeking to love as we have been loved. We call upon your holy name: empower us to worship and serve you, walking gently on this earth, through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PARDON Unison

**God, we do not understand Jesus, the prophet. We do not want to get our hands dirty with the poor, the oppressed, the prisoners. Forgive us for being insulated and isolated. Open our hearts to the poor and help us to love them as you love them, working to bring in the good news of the reign of God. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

In the time of Nehemiah, when the people heard God's instructions read aloud, they began to weep. Perhaps they suddenly understood how miserably they had failed to live up to God's expectations. We don't know; the text doesn't say. It does say that Nehemiah said to the people: "This day is holy...Don't mourn or weep... Don't be sad, because the joy from the Lord is your strength!" We need to hear these same words today, for our strength comes from the Lord. In God, our joy and our forgiveness is assured!

**Thanks be to God.**

JOYS, CONCERNS AND PASTORAL PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 (NRSV)

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 5 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.
- 6 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.

- 8 So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.
- 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 when 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 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."

**MESSAGE** "We Need God's Word" Rev. Dongkue Jee

**RESPOND TO THE WORD**

\* HYMN "Thy Word is a Lamp" **UMH # 601**

THE LORD'S PRAYER **UMH # 895**

**OFFERING**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

\*DOXOLOGY "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" **UMH # 95**

\*PRAYER OF OFFERING Unison

**Faithful God, who calls us to follow and empowers us by your Spirit, we bring these gifts to you in gratitude and hope. May they be used to proclaim good news, set the oppressed free, and bring sight to the blind. Transform our offerings into acts of love and justice that reflect the mission of Jesus in this world. In his holy name, we pray. Amen.**

**SENDING FORTH**

\*HYMN "Here I Am, Lord" **UMH # 593**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "We Are The Church" **UMH # 558**

\* The offering plate is located at the entrance of the sanctuary. Please feel free to participate.

\* Fellowship follows the worship service. Please join us for refreshments and fellowship in the Parlor.



*Welcome to*  
**Mendham United Methodist Church**

[www.mendhamumc.org](http://www.mendhamumc.org)

10 East Main Street, Mendham, NJ 07945

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**Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**



Ezra Reads the Law, 1860, Schnorr von Carolsfeld, Julius, 1794-1872, Print

**Rev. Dongkue Jee, Pastor**

Cell Phone: 469-544-6373

Church Office: 973-543-6376

**Pianist: Janet Bell**