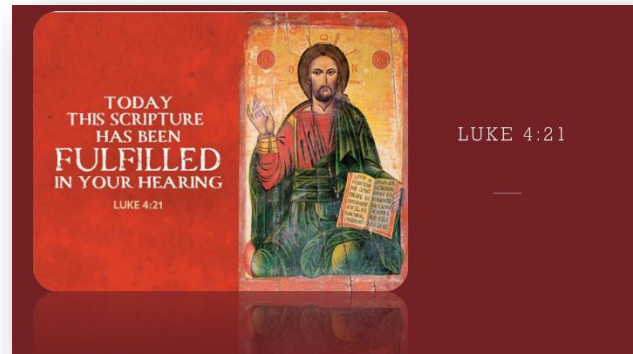


## The Readings on This Day

\*\*\*Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)

### Third Sunday after Epiphany

This year throughout the standard Sundays between Epiphany and Lent, the lectionary reads semi continuously through Luke. Recurrent emphases are the power of God's Spirit in Jesus and the availability of the good news of forgiveness for the whole world. Luke remains relatively benign about the authority of the Roman Empire.



### [Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10](#)

The excerpt from Nehemiah, the sole selection from Nehemiah in the three-year lectionary, is set next to Luke 4 to show that Jesus continued the Jewish pattern of communal worship at which the Hebrew Scriptures were proclaimed and interpreted for the hearers. Although hearing the words of the law may incite mourning, Ezra says that encountering the voice of God always is joyful: “eat the fat and drink sweet wine”: in other words, let the party begin, and share it with others. We continue this pattern of worship on Sunday morning.

### [The Psalm for the Day](#)

To respond to the account of the people hearing Ezra read from the Torah, we join in [Psalm 19](#), the first half of which praises Creator God for the sun and the second half of which praises our Redeemer for the words God has spoken, “more desired than fine gold, sweeter far than honey.”

### [1 Corinthians 12:12-31a](#)

The people who gather to hear Jesus proclaimed in the Hebrew Scriptures and interpreted in the New Testament are the body parts that Paul metaphorically describes. For Paul, the church's communal embodiment of Christ is inspiring, for we have company in sorrow, and we join together in joy.

### [Luke 4:14-21](#)

Luke says that Jesus, filled with the Spirit, preaches that he himself is the fulfillment of historic hopes for the social transformation and physical healing that the messiah will bring. We on Sunday morning still hear Jesus speaking through the word, and we are to join him in proclaiming God's good favor to all, experiencing this healing, and enacting social transformation.