

## PROPERthoughts

## Series A, Epiphany 3

### Lessons for the Third Sunday after the Epiphany

January 22, 2017

Psalm 27:1-9 (10-14) (*anti: vs. 1*) ~ *David trusted confidently in the Lord to deliver him from his enemies.*

Isaiah 9:1-4 ~ *God will give light and liberty to those in the bondage of darkness.*

1 Corinthians 1:10-18 ~ *We are united by the saving power of Christ's cross.*

Matthew 4:12-25 ~ *The light of salvation shines in Jesus' preaching of the Kingdom.*

### GATHERING THE TEXTS: The Circle of Light

In "The Magician's Nephew," C.S. Lewis wrote about the creation: "One moment there had been nothing but darkness; next moment a thousand, thousand points of light leaped out..." Today's lessons speak of one bright point of light that encircles the nations through the ministry and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Isaiah anticipated the time when the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali would be set free from the darkness of Assyrian oppression. St. Paul urged the Corinthian church to recognize the freedom from the darkness of dissension that Christ has provided us through our Baptism. The light of salvation burst upon sin-darkened humanity as Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching, preaching, and healing.

**PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE:** Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Light of the World. Help me always walk in your light, living out the freedom from sin and death that you have given me as I express the forgiveness and unity that is mine through your sacrifice. Let the light of faith shine in my life so that others will be drawn to your glory. Amen.

**STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT:** God has called us out of daily routines and away from personal allegiances that entangle us. He has blessed our work and our relationships so that both income and family can be opportunities to serve Him by meeting the needs of those around us who are suffering and sorrowing, as we proclaim the dawn of Christ's Kingdom of Grace.

**OFFERING PRAYER:** Lord, You have called us to lay down the nets  
of toil that tangle us, and walk away;  
to follow in Your Kingdom way that lets  
us preach the dawning of this brand new day! Amen.

**CONVICTION AND COMFORT:** God's day of redemption has dawned in Christ! The bright light of freedom from sin and death breaks forth in our lives just as it did for those first disciples who heard Jesus' call to become fishers of men. We, too, have been enlisted in the proclamation of God's Kingdom! When our daily routine makes us indifferent to the task or our personal allegiances overcast the new dawn with dark clouds of division and quarreling, we leave ourselves bound in a land of deep spiritual darkness. Thanks be to God, the power of Jesus' death on the cross sweeps away the gloom and gives us courage to greet the new day and announce it with joy!