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Liturgical Reading: The Church and the Christ

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Liturgical Reading: The Church and the Christ

LEE MAGNESS

This reading, exploring and reflecting on some of the biblical metaphors for the church, is configured here for a leader and three other readers.

L The church is a body,
1 inter-connected and inner-connected,
2 skin and skeleton, eyes and ears, hands and hearts,
3 living, growing, living, dying, living, living.
1 For just as the body is one and has many members,
2 and all the members of the body, though many, are one body,
3 so it is with Christ.
1 For the body does not consist of one member but of many.
2 If all were a single member, where would the body be?
3 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.
1 If one member suffers, all suffer together;
2 if one member is honored, all rejoice together.
3 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
L The church is a body, and Christ is our head.

L The church is a family,
1 related and interrelated,
2 sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, adopted and adopting,
3 living together, loving together, learning together.
1 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone,
and especially to those who are of the family of faith.
2 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.
3 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all in one family.
That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters
L The church is a family, and Christ is the heir.

L The church is a temple,
1 joined and fitted, living stones on living stone,
2 a building, yet growing, a building, yet building,
3 a holy habitation, the dwelling of God.
1 Do you not know that you are God's temple
2 and that God's Spirit dwells in you?
3 For God's temple is holy,
1 and you are that temple.

- 2 For we are the temple of the living God;
 3 in whom the whole structure, being joined together,
 All grows into a holy temple in the Lord.
 L The church is a temple, and Christ is the cornerstone.
- L The church is a nation,
 1 a new allegiance, a separate citizenship, a new kind of kingdom,
 2 the people who produced the peoples,
 3 the nation formed from the nations.
 1 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,
 All a holy nation,
 2 a people for his own possession.
 3 But our citizenship is in heaven.
 1 Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals,
 2 for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
 3 from every tribe and language and people and nation,
 All and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God.
 L The church is a nation, and Christ is the king.
- L The church is a bride,
 1 beloved and betrothed,
 2 nourished and cherished,
 3 given to the one who has given himself.
 1 The marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;
 2 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure—
 3 for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.
 1 Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,
 2 that he might sanctify her,
 3 having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word,
 1 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor,
 2 without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
 3 that she might be holy and without blemish.
 L The church is a bride, and Christ is the bridegroom.
- L Who is the church?
 1 family and nation,
 2,3 body and building and bride.
 L Whose is the church?
 1 head, heir, and groom,
 2,3 cornerstone, Christ is king.

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