Liturgical Reading: The Church and the Christ

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

The church is a family,
related and interrelated,
sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, adopted and adopting,
living together, loving together, learning together.
So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone,
and especially to those who are of the family of faith.
For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.
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.
The church is a family, and Christ is the heir.

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