



THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

27 December 2020

The Psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. In Communion we have seen God's salvation and have held Jesus in our hands. Then, like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

Today is the feast day of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist.

+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross in remembrance of baptism.

P. Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh, the Power of the Most High,
+ one God, now and forever.

C. Amen.

P. Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P. Gracious God,

C. in Christ Jesus You come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our failure to welcome Your light. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the light of Your grace, and open us to the peace of Christ dwelling in and among us. Amen.

P. God's love has appeared, born in a stable, our Savior, Christ the Lord. By His authority, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

GREETING

P. Good news of great joy, light and life, grace and peace be with you all.

C. And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. Almighty God, You wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In Your mercy, let us share the divine life of the One Who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen

+ WORD +

FIRST READING. Isaiah 61:10—62:3

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that God's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1} For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

² The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³ You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 148

Hallelujah!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise Him in the heights!

² Praise Him, all you angels of His;
praise Him, all His host!

³ Praise Him, sun and moon;
praise Him, all you shining stars!

⁴ Praise Him, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for He commanded and they were created.

⁶ He made them stand fast forever and ever;
He gave them a law which shall not pass away.

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,

⁸ fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind doing His will!

⁹ Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰ Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and winged birds!

¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the world!

¹² Young men and women alike,
old and young together!

¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for His name alone is exalted;
His splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴ He has raised up strength for His people,
praise for all His loyal servants,
a people who are near Him.
Hallelujah!

SECOND READING. Galatians 4:4-7

Paul seeks to show that Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as beloved children.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶ And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son

into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL: St. Luke 2:22-40

Luke’s narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus’ connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the Law, and Jesus Himself is recognized as One Who will bring glory to Israel.

C. Glory to You, O Lord.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”),²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him what was customary under the law,²⁸ Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ “Master, now You are dismissing Your servant in peace,
according to Your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen Your salvation,

³¹ which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to Your people Israel.”

³³ And the Child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about Him.

³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to His mother Mary, “This Child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the Child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.⁴⁰ The Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him.

P. The Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *In His Temple Now Behold Him*



1 In his tem - ple now be - hold him, see the long - ex -
2 In the arms of her who bore him, vir - gin pure, be -
3 Je - sus, by your pre - sen - ta - tion, when they blessed you,
4 Prince and au - thor of sal - va - tion, be your bound - less

pect - ed Lord; an - cient proph - ets had fore - told him,
hold him lie, while his a - ged saints a - dore him,
weak and poor, make us see your great sal - va - tion,
love our theme! Je - sus, praise to you be giv - en

God has sent the prom - ised Word. Now to praise him,
ere in per - fect faith they die. Al - le - lu - ia!
seal us with your prom - ise sure; and pre - sent us,
by the world you did re - deem, with the Fa - ther

his re - deem - ed shall break forth with one ac - cord.
Al - le - lu - ia! Lo, the in - car - nate God Most High!
in your glo - ry, to your Fa - ther, cleansed and pure.
and the Spir - it God of maj - es - ty su - preme!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation

He came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen

SHARING THE PEACE

✚ PRAYER ✚

OFFERING

If you have not signed up for electronic giving, you can mail your offering in to Bethel (P.O. Box 126, Porter, 56280), you may drop it in the offering box at the church, or you may make your offering online at our website (www.bethelofporter.com).

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P. Let us pray. Lord God,
C. accept the offerings we bring this day, the work of our hands, the gifts of our labor, our lives to serve You. Gladden our hearts as we watch for Your coming and help us to share that joy with all the world. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Night and day, all creation praises You, O God. Strengthen Your church across nations, denominations, and traditions. Fill us with wisdom and unify our proclamation of Your forgiveness and mercy. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

All creation is holy to You, O God. You cause the earth to bring forth its shoots and gardens to spring up. Protect hibernating animals and frozen lands that wait eagerly for longer days of awakening and growth. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

The nations are upheld by Your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth in every land, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send Your Spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the common good. Bring peace within and between the nations. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Send the Spirit of Your Son into our hearts, O God. Come quickly to hearts that race with fear, hearts that break with grief, and hearts that long for wholeness and healing, especially Merv, Emily, Angie, Shirlee, Lynette, Bill & Karen Pohlen, Bill Ningen, Gail, Tom, Carol, Dick, and Jim and Bruce. Come to all who are in need, the hungry, the homeless, the war-torn. Guide us in and through this fearsome pandemic. Visit those sick with COVID-19. Abide with all for whom the holiday season is overwhelmed by sorrow. As 2020 comes to its end, we ask You to help us overcome its heartaches and to welcome 2021 with hope. Keep revelers safe from contagion. In the New Year, give all peoples an increase of health and harmony. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Adopt us into Your family, O God. Bless our elders with the peace and joy of Simeon and Anna. Strengthen those who have retired, those who work in older age, and those in need of income, food, or health care. Embrace those isolated by dementia, and connect young and old across generations. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Let us depart in peace, O God, according to Your word. We praise You for all who have died in the faith, especially the apostle and evangelist John, and those whom we love. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all Your witnesses and make us ready to join with all Your saints in life everlasting. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to You, in the name of Jesus. **C. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father Who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses

as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

+ SENDING +

BENEDICTION

P. In all your Advent preparations, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, Whose birth in a manger is but a promise of His coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever.

C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN *Angels from the Realms of Glory*



1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.



Refrain
Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

DISMISSAL

P. The coming of the Lord is near. Come, Lord, and do not tarry.

C. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Those who Serve.

Ministers. All the People of God

Organist. Lou Knutson

Camera: Josh Sumption

Presiding. Pastor Munter

Reader. Linda Bruns

Projection:

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Prayers of Intercession: Sundays and Seasons, lightly edited by Pastor Munter.



Christmas Wreaths that have been given in memory of loved ones:

- In loving memory of Harvey Syltie, and Hans and Elvina Syltie, given by Paula Syltie.
- In loving memory of Carol Ningen, Florene Ningen, Marcie Ningen, Ed and Clarice Ningen, Carl and Myrtle Moen, Orvin and Deloris Johnson, Linda Johnson, Lillian Mamer, Keith Tuttle, and Robert Andersen given by Bill Ningen, Brian and Carmon Mamer and Family, Mike and Sheila Ningen and Family, and Korey and Monica Tuttle and Family
- In loving memory of Paul and Adelia Dybsetter, Ralph Kaelke, and Stanley and Gertrude Fluck given by Dan and Terry Dybsetter
- The Sumption Family in Memory of Calvin, Irene, and Betty Sumption, Linda Wittrock, and Arthur and Marguerite Petersen given by the Sumption family
- Larry Dybsetter family in Memory of Jennifer (Dybsetter) Erickson, Edwin Dybsetter and Lou Dybsetter Capp
- In honor of their family given by the Randy and Anna Kamrath family
- In Loving Memory of Ernest and Bernice Thomsen, Given by Virginia Thomsen
- The Family of Ray and Opal Anderson and Noel Olson, in their Memory given by Ivan Anderson
- Lou Knutson in loving memory of Curt Knutson, Henry and Esther Knutson and Arnold and Ione Thomsen.

The Altar Poinsettias

- Doug and Barb Anderson.
-

The Balcony Garland

- Given in Loving Memory of Donald Anderson, Erwin Bruns, Frank and June Schwartz, and Mavis Anderson by Jerome and Linda Bruns and family