



December 31, 2023

The First Sunday of Christmas

Rev. Ken Bersche

*Janis Lapham, Organist
Maggie Kent, Secretary*

Prelude

Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

♪ Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’ angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
~Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

♪ Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th’ incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! ~Hark!...

♪ Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. ~Hark!....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 380 -Text: Charles Wesley 1707-88; Tune: Felix Mendelssohn 1809-47;
Setting: William H. Cummings 1831-1915; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

Invocation

I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;

With my mouth I will make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 89:1

Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens.

You who have done great things, O God, who is like You?

Psalm 71:19

My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to You;

My soul also, which You have redeemed.

Psalm 71:23

Blessed be the LORD forever!

Amen and Amen.

Psalm 89:52

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19b

Amen.

Confession and Absolution

People redeemed by the Lord, let us now make confession of our sins to God, our heavenly Father.

Merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We repent of having sinned in thought, in word, and in deed. So often we have left undone those things which we ought to have done and have done those things which we ought not to

have done. We sincerely repent of our sins and humbly ask for the grace and forgiveness that we know to be ours in Jesus, our Savior. By the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, lead us, heavenly Father, to change what is sinful in our lives so that each day we grow in righteousness and godly living to the glory of Your holy name.

God has promised pardon, life, and salvation because of the atoning sacrifice of His beloved Son, who has replaced slavery to sin with a priceless inheritance of freedom and joy. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. As you believe, so may it be.

Amen.

Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Gracious God of endings and beginnings, we commit to Your grace and forgiveness the year now being completed and commend to Your kindness and love the year about to begin. Throughout the coming weeks and months make the presence of Your Holy Spirit known in our lives, drawing us ever closer to Jesus and uniting all generations of Your faithful people in bonds of love and care, as we continue to grow in our baptismal grace and await the joy of eternal life in Your glorious presence. This we ask for the sake of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

Hymn of Praise *Please Be Seated*

“Joy to the World”

- ♪ Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- ♪ Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- ♪ No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
- ♪ He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 387-Text: Isaac Watts 1674-1748; Tune: George Frideric Handel 1685-1759;
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Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 61:10–62:3

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul 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 like a priest with a beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch.

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

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

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Epistle

Galatians 4:4–7

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

“Let All Together Praise Our God”

- ♪ Let all together praise our God Before His glorious throne;
Today He opens heav'n again To give us His own son, To give us His own Son.
- ♪ He leaves his heav'nly Father's throne, Is born an infant small,
And in a manger, poor and lone, Lies in a humble stall, Lies in a humble stall.
- ♪ Within an earthborn form He hides His all-creating light;
To serve us all he humbly cloaks The splendor of His might, The splendor of His might.
- ♪ He undertakes a great exchange, Puts on our human frame,
And in return gives us His realm, His glory, and His name, His glory and His name.
- ♪ He is a servant, I a lord! How great a mystery!
How strong the tender Christ Child's love! No truer friend than He, No truer friend than He.
- ♪ He is the key and He the door To blessed paradise;
The angel bars the way no more. To God our praises rise, To God our praises rise.

Please Stand

- ♪ Your grace in lowliness revealed, Lord Jesus, we adore
And praise to God the Father yield And Spirit evermore; We praise You evermore.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 389-Text & Tune: Nicolaus Herman c.1480-1561; tr. F. Samuel Janzow 1913-2001 vv.1,3-7;
tr. August Crull 1845-1923 v.2; ©1969 Concordia Publishing House; Used by permission; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:22–40

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

²²And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” ²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

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

³³And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

Children's Message *Please Be Seated*

The Hymn

“What Child Is This”

♪ What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;

Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!

♪ Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?

Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;

Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!

♪ So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 370-Text: William C. Dix 1837-98; Tune: English 16th cent.;
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Proclamation of the Word

“360 Days of Not Waiting”

Luke 2:22–40

Offering and Musical Offering

Prayer of the Church *Please Stand*

Each petition is concluded with the following:

Lord, in Your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

Amen.

Hymn Introduction

Recessional Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

♪ O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home:

♪ Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, And our defense is sure.

♪ Before the hills in order stood Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

♪ A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

♪ Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream Dies at the op'ning day.

♪ O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last And our eternal home!

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 733-Text: Isaac Watts 1674-1748; Tune: William Croft 1678-1727;
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Postlude