

First Sunday after Christmas **Sunday, December 31, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.**



Welcome!

To our guests and visitors:

We are glad that you are here with us today!

If you have no church home, why don't you consider joining us? Please speak to Pastor Parrish after the service and enjoy a special gift for visiting with us today!

1 Now sing we, now rejoice,
Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth
Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth
The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art!
Thou my Savior art!

2 Come from on high to me;
I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit,
O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit,
Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee!
Draw me unto Thee!

3 Now through His Son doth shine
The Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us
Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us
A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there!
May we praise Him there!

4 Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there!
Oh, that we were there!

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
People: **Amen.**

Pastor: I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;
People: **with my mouth I will make known Your faithfulness to all generations.**

Pastor: Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens.
People: **You who have done great things, O God, who is like You?**

Pastor: My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to You;
People: **my soul also, which You have redeemed.**

Pastor: Blessed be the LORD forever!
People: **Amen and Amen.**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray:
O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Every day in the life of the Church brings opportunities for praise and celebration. We have so many reasons to celebrate, including the presentation of the Savior at the temple as well as the closing of another year of our Lord while we reflect on the continuing blessings experienced by each generation.

The last day of the calendar year brings us an opportunity to reflect on the changes in life that have come our way since last January. We have been gladdened at the birth of children and observed passages such as marriages, first jobs, and new homes. God has been a constant presence,

blessing the generations with His everlasting love. Using words of faith penned by English hymn writer Isaac Watts as a paraphrase of Psalm 90, we proclaim God's faithfulness in ages past and for years to come.

HYMN

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

LSB 733

- 1 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:
- 2 Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.
- 3 Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.
- 4 A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.
- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the opening day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last
And our eternal home!

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her vindication shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch.

²The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. ³You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The Epistle Reading

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "*Abba, Father.*" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:22-40

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sermon Hymn

Let All Together Praise our God

LSB 389

- 1 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.

- 2 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.

- 3 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.

- 4 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.
- 5 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.
- 6 He is the key and He the door
 To blessèd paradise;
The angel bars the way no more.
 To God our praises rise,
 To God our praises rise.
- 7 Your grace in lowliness revealed,
 Lord Jesus, we adore
And praise to God the Father yield
 And Spirit evermore;
 We praise You evermore.

**Sermon
Offering**

A Perfect Gift For Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Prayers

Pastor: Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us.

Pastor: God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend [*name(s)*] and all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: And lastly, O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

Confession and Absolution

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

People: 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.

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

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

The Words of Our Lord

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

pg 209

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C Amen.

Agnus Dei

pg 210

C O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Distribution Hymn Of The Father's Love Begotten

LSB 384

1 Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.

- 2 Oh, that birth forever blessèd,
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face
Evermore and evermore.
- 3 This is He whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.
- 4 O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him;
Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.
- 5 Christ, to Thee, with God the Father,
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore. Amen.

Post-Communion Collect

Pastor: Let us pray.
O Almighty God, ruler of all things, we bless You for having joined us to Christ through this blessed Meal. Grant that the Holy Spirit graciously intercede for us and direct our ways that we do the good works intended for us to do and, faithfully waiting for Your return in glory, joyfully continue our earthly pilgrimage until we are gathered into Your heavenly kingdom to share in Your blessings for all eternity. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

Benediction

Pastor: Go out into the world in peace, have courage, hold to what is good, return no person evil for evil, strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, help the suffering, honor all people, love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. The almighty God—the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit—bless you.

People: Amen.

Closing Hymn Angels From the Realms of Glory LSB 367

1. Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth:
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth.

Refrain:

Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

2. Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines His Infant Light. [Refrain]

3. Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star. [Refrain]

4. Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear. [Refrain]

5. All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son.
Evermore your voices raising
To the eternal Three in One. [Refrain]