



## INTRODUCTION

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

## PRELUDE



+ GATHERING +

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor (P) Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who sends the word with angels, who is made flesh among all peoples, and who breathes peace on all the earth.

Congregation (C) Amen.

P In Christ, we are bold to name our sin and cry out for peace.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Holy God,

C we confess our sin before you. We replace compassion with competition. We seek what is mighty while ignoring the meek. We are quick to anger but slow to forgive. We have not put on love in harmony with you. Wrap us in the grace of your powerful Word. Swaddle our hearts with your peace, that all we do, in word or deed, may reflect your love born among us.  
Amen.

P I bring you good news of great joy for all people: God has come among us in the child born of Mary, Christ the Lord. ✝ In Christ your sins are forgiven and you are clothed in peace.

C Amen.

*The assembly is seated.*

**GATHERING HYMN**      270      *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (vs. 1 & 2)*

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled;"  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
*Refrain*  
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1727-1791, 4th  
Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847, arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1913

**GREETING**

**P**      The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C**      And also with you.

## HYMN OF PRAISE



☐ Glo-ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



☐ Lord God, heav-en - ly king, al-might- y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



☐ Glo-ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

## CHILDREN'S SERMON



+ WORD +

### FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:7-14

*God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.*

<sup>7</sup>Thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." <sup>8</sup>See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.

<sup>9</sup>With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

<sup>10</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock." <sup>11</sup>For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. <sup>12</sup>They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

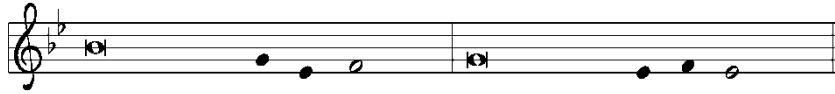
<sup>13</sup>Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. <sup>14</sup>I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

Reader            The word of the Lord.

**C**                    **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 147:12-20**

*We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader <sup>12</sup>Worship the LORD, | O Jerusalem;  
praise your | God, O Zion,

**C** <sup>13</sup>who has strengthened the bars | of your gates  
and has blessed your chil- | dren within you.

L <sup>14</sup>God has established peace | on your borders  
and satisfies you with the | finest wheat.

**C** <sup>15</sup>God sends out a command | to the earth,  
a word that runs | very swiftly.

L <sup>16</sup>God gives | snow like wool,  
scattering | frost like ashes.

**C** <sup>17</sup>God scatters | hail like bread crumbs.  
Who can stand a- | gainst God's cold?

L <sup>18</sup>The LORD sends forth the | word and melts them;  
the wind blows, and the | waters flow.

**C** <sup>19</sup>God declares the | word to Jacob,  
statutes and judg- | ments to Israel.

L <sup>20</sup>The LORD has not done so to any | other nation;  
they do not know God's judgments. | Hallelujah!

*Spoken after the psalm is sung:*

**C** **Amen.**

## SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:3-14

*In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.*

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup>just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup>He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup>that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Reader            The word of the Lord.

**C                    Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## GOSPEL:    John 1:[1-9] 10-18

*John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.*

P The holy gospel according to John, the first chapter.

**C Glory to you, O Lord.**

[<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P The gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON** *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*





1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -  
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,  
 3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with  
 4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his  
 5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,  
 full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,  
 one ac - cord, whom the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,  
 prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him  
 Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that  
 bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -  
 prom - ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -  
 and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be  
 and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,  
 deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,  
 pect - ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord  
 si - lent, ev - ry voice in con - cert ring  
 min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



ev - er - more and ev - er - more,  
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more,  
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more,  
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more,  
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more!

A - men.

## NICENE CREED

A Let us confess our faith.

C 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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends: Merciful God,*

*Congregational response: receive our prayer.*

## PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

*We greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

**SOLO** "In The Bleak Midwinter". Text by Christina Rossetti, music by Gustav Holst, sung by Isabel Barton

**OFFERING HYMN** 296 *What Child Is This (vs. 1 & 3)*

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es-tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?  
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.

Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?  
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.  
 The King of kings sal - va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.

This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing;  
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## + SENDING +

**BLESSING** *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.

C **Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**SENDING HYMN**            288    *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (vs. 1 & 2)*

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!


ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man-ger now.  
 He has o - pened heav-en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

- A We believe out loud that God's mission for us is:
- C **to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.**
- P Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

+ + +

*Sundays and Seasons v.20200805.1416  
Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved*



**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS ARE DEDICATED  
TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND  
BEST WISHES FOR LINDA ESHLEMAN'S  
39TH BIRTHDAY.**

<u>Calendar for January 02 - 09</u>				
Jan.	02	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship, Second Sunday of Christmas
	05	Wed.	noon	Bible study (online)
	09	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship, Baptism of Our Lord Sunday

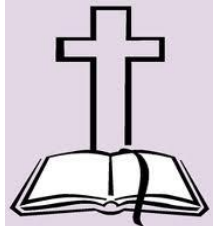
**Next Sunday's Readings, Baptism of Our Lord:**

[Isaiah 43:1-7](#)

[Psalm 29](#)

[Acts 8:14-17](#)

[Luke 3:15-17, 21-22](#)



## SERVING TABLE

Serving	December 26	January 2
<b>Presiding</b>	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
<b>Preaching</b>	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Colleen Holdcraft	Jennifer Dritt
<b>Cup Minister</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Lector</b>		Ron Hartung
<b>Cantors</b>	Martin Guttenplan Cassandra White	
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Judi Duffy Linda Eshleman	Jan Harrison Andrea Notley
<b>Counters</b>	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer
<b>Announcements</b>	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom

## PRAYER REQUESTS

***New concerns:*** Becky Button (cousin of Audrey Post), in critical condition after a car accident; Gladys Kane, recovering from surgery; Isaac (son of Terri Schmitt) for healing (both physical and emotional).

***For the sick:*** Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor), being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White).

***In treatment for cancer:*** Stephanie Barber; Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Chris Dickman (synod council member), child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl).

***For health and protection:*** For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personnel, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc.); for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those “unaccounted for”.

***For prisoners:*** Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

***Other concerns:*** Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

***Church concerns:*** St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council, all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

***World concerns:*** For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2022:** Offering envelopes for next year are available for pick-up in the Fellowship hall.

**FLOWER CHART FOR 2022:** Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you would like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service and signing up for the 2022 Flower Chart located in the narthex. The cost is \$35, and you can place that in the offering plate.

**RSVP FOR NEXT WEEK:** Remember to use the Sign-up Genius to reserve your spot for worship service (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c45a4a62ea7fbc16-sunday>). The deadline is noon on the Friday before worship. The calendar has dates available throughout the summer.