

Good morning beloved, and Happy New Year!

*“And a voice came from Heaven, ‘You are My Beloved Son, with You I am well pleased.’” Mark 1:11*

Brothers and sisters, imagine with me for a moment what that must have been like; that glorious moment when our Lord Jesus Christ came up out of the waters of the Jordan River at His baptism, (a baptism not for His own sins mind you—for our Lord had no sin. But a baptism into our sins, so that our baptism would be into his death and resurrection for our forgiveness) the heavens tearing open and the Holy Spirit descending upon Him in the form of a dove, as the Father’s voice spoke from heaven, *“...with You I am well pleased.”*

A defining moment in history to be sure, when the Triune God revealed Himself in time for all to see and hear! Don’t you wish you could’ve been there? I sure do! But you know what? Hope Lutheran Church of Linda Vista, you and I are here now friends, at this defining moment in our history. And, on this first Sunday of 2024, the same Triune God that was there then is here with us now!

We have ahead of us a year of change. One that is sure to be a year of challenges and growing pains –nothing new to us, right? Given the history of our last couple of years, it’s kind of par for the course (I couldn’t resist!).

Yes, dearly beloved, our Triune God is with us today and will be with us each and every Sunday throughout the year ahead and beyond.

He will speak to us through His Word, forgive and comfort us through His Body and Blood.

He will inhabit our praises and continue to faithfully guide us.

So, let us continue to love Him by serving one another and the world around us.

And as baptized people of God, He will see His Son’s image reflected in our hearts and He is sure to be well pleased!

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

*Mike Luna*

