

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Seeing Our Salvation

No Longer a Slave

December 27, 2020



AS WE GATHER

The Gospel for the First Sunday after Christmas takes us to the temple in Jerusalem, where Jesus is brought by Mary and Joseph. In presenting Him there, they are affirming that He is dedicated to God as a firstborn son. But He is much more than a son—He is the Son. In her classic hymn text, German hymnist Elisabeth Cruciger celebrates His coming as she writes, “The only Son from heaven, foretold by ancient seers, By God the Father given, in human form appears. No sphere His light confining, no star so brightly shining As He, our Morning Star” (*LSB* 402:1). Jesus is the One in whom we see our salvation, whose light guides our way through life, and whose presence enlightens our world. With joy, we worship Him! The Epistle for the First Sunday after Christmas brings a one-sentence summary of the Christmas message as Paul writes it to the Christians of Galatia. “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son” (Galatians 4:4). God knew the exact right time for His beloved Son to come to earth, this sin-filled world. God had a plan for salvation that was carried out faithfully and completely by Jesus. In the days after Christmas, we have the opportunity to reflect on the importance of the Christmas message. We have received the greatest of all gifts. Through Jesus Christ, we are heirs of God and have an eternal inheritance!

✂ PREPARATION ✂

PRAYERS OF PREPARATION:

Dear God, we thank You that You are Emmanuel, God with us. We pray that not only in this season but in all seasons, we will always remember that you are with us. We pray that we will always remain faithful to You and dwell in the house of the Lord forever and that Your goodness and love will follow us. As we gather before You on this first Sunday after Christmas, let your favor always rest upon us and be a shield of protection around us. May we always be truly thankful for all the sacrifices that You have made for us. We pray that we will never forget the true reason for this season. Let our focus not be about the temporal gifts but the eternal gift given by you Lord. Lord help us to tell others of your wonderful deeds that they may also know you. Amen.

WELCOME:

WELCOME TO GOD'S HOUSE.... Praise the Christ-child, the newborn Prince of Peace! Praise to the God who has come to us in the flesh! Praise to the Spirit who calls us together to serve! May Christ's rule be strengthened in your heart through the power of the Gospel. We are so glad that you are here! We pray that today's service will be a blessing to you. May you sense God's nearness and be encouraged as you Worship and praise with us this afternoon! Our goal today is to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Anytime our door is open, you are welcome to join in praising our savior. Come, let us worship God!

SELECTION

Minister Terry Dale

INVOCATION

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

OPENING SENTENCES *Luke 2:30, 32; Psalm 71:19, 23*

Pastor: Alleluia! My eyes have seen Your salvation,
People: **a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel. Alleluia!**

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.**

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 against You in thought, word, and deed. We have left undone those things we ought to have done; we have done those things we ought not to have**

done. We have not lived our lives fully in the freedom won for us by our Lord. We have not always shared the bounty You have given us as stewards of Your creation. We sincerely repent of our sins and humbly ask Your grace and forgiveness in Jesus, our Savior. By the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, lead us to change what is sinful in our lives 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 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.**

✠ WORD ✠

HYMN“Joy to the World” Sts. TLH 1 & 4

1 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 nature sing.

4 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 of His love.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Gracious God, through our Lord Jesus Christ You have taken the slavery under which we were held captive to sin and Satan and

have given us new life. By the power of the Holy Spirit at work in us, keep us ever connected to Christ to live out each day in our baptismal grace as we await the joy of life in Your eternal presence. This we ask for the sake of Jesus, our Savior.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 61:10–62:3* (Nations will acknowledge the Chosen One of the Lord.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SELECTION **Minister Terry Dale**

EPISTLE *Galatians 4:4–7* (At the right time, God sent His Son into the world.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

People: To us a child is born, to us a son is given;

Women: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.

Men: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

People: Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:22–40* (Jesus is presented in the temple by Mary and Joseph.)

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

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

(The Gospel is read.)

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

SELECTION

Minister Terry Dale

SERMON

SELECTION

Minister Terry Dale

(We Bring Our Tithes and Offering To The Lord)

CATECHISM *The Third Article*

Leader: Through the working of the Holy Spirit, we can call God our “Abba”—our Father. The Spirit directs our praying and intercedes for us. Today we confess the words of the Apostles’ Creed regarding the work of the Holy Spirit and also speak the words from Luther’s Small Catechism regarding the work of the Spirit through the Church, of which each of us is a special part.

People: **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.**

Leader: What does this mean?

People: **I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Leader: Gathered as God's people and as heirs of an eternal inheritance, let us pray for the whole Church and for all who bear the name of Jesus Christ, who is our Light and our Salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: As we remember St. John, Apostle and Evangelist, we pray for the Church, asking that through her the joyous news of salvation be proclaimed as the Holy Spirit directs. Give us faith to acknowledge and rejoice in the fellowship that we share in Christ with people here and in every place, that we may see in each sister and brother in Christ a reflection of Your glory. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord of all, watch over our nation and grant Your divine favor to all who bear office in our land, especially [(USA) the president and Congress of the United States, the governor and legislature of this [state/commonwealth], and to all those who make, administer, and judge our laws.] [(British Commonwealth) [Her] Majesty, the [Queen], the governor general, the prime minister and the parliament, the government of this province, and all who have authority over us.] Help them to serve all those in their care according to Your holy will, that we may live in peace and safety. Save us from pestilence and plague, for unseasonable weather, and the dangers that are ever-present in our lives. Grant us Your blessing as one calendar year closes and another begins. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: Give a special measure of blessing to those with special needs. Especially we remember the sick, the shut-in, those dealing with depression, those who sorrow, and others known to us who at this time are in need of prayer. Help us to be people who bless, encourage, and strengthen all those in our circles of relationship and beyond. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: Sovereign Lord, we remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served You in Your Church on earth, who now rest from their labors, [*especially . . .*]. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven. Bless the communion we share on earth as we await the Supper of the Lamb in His kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, heavenly Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

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 of God's 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 and keep you and give you peace.

People: Amen.

HYMN“Let Us All with Gladsome Voice” TLH 97

1. Let us all with gladsome voice praise the God of heaven, Who, to bid our hearts rejoice, His own Son hath given.
2. To this vale of tears He comes, here to serve in sadness, that with Him in heaven's fair homes we may reign in gladness.
3. We are rich, for He was poor; Is not this a wonder? Therefore praise God evermore Here on earth and yonder.
4. O Lord Christ, our Savior dear, be Thou ever near us. Grant us now a glad new year. Amen, Jesus, hear us!

For a
child
is born to us
a son is given to us
AND THE GOVERNMENT
WILL REST ON HIS SHOULDERS

THESE WILL BE HIS ROYAL TITLES

Wonderful
Counselor
Mighty God

EVERLASTING FATHER
PRINCE OF PEACE