

***Bethel  
Lutheran  
Church***



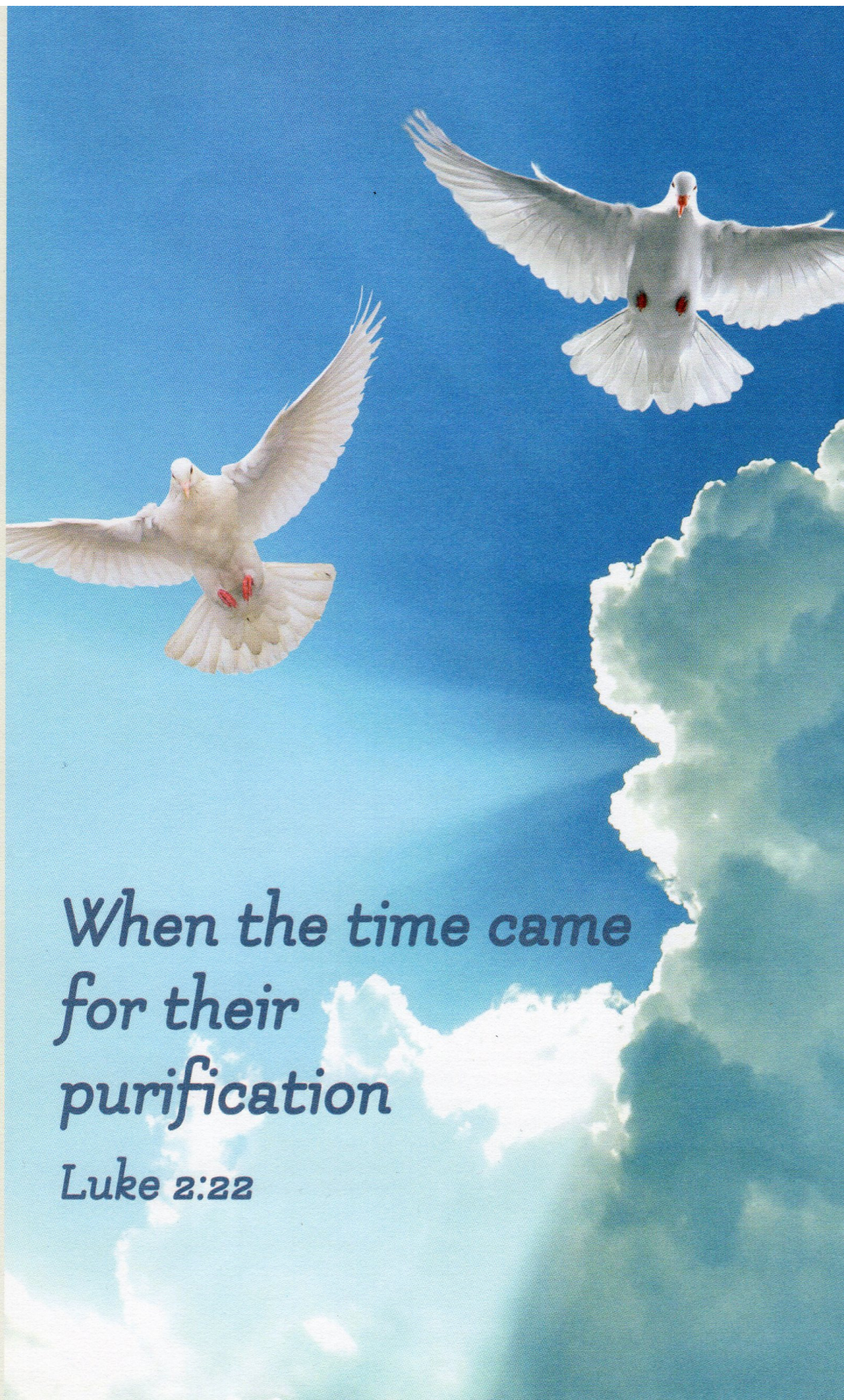
***Worship Times***

*Sunday School  
11:30 A.M.*

*Divine Worship  
1:00 P.M.*

*Rev. Ulmer  
Marshall Jr.,  
Pastor*

***When the time came  
for their  
purification  
Luke 2:22***





# FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Promises Kept

Give Love as a Gift

December 30, 2018



## AS WE GATHER

Simeon and Anna rejoiced when Mary and Joseph brought week-old Jesus to the temple. He was physical proof that God was keeping His promises made centuries ago. Firstborn males had to be consecrated to God because He had spared them at the time of the exodus. In our Psalm today, God promises redemption for His people, and in Christ we are His chosen people, holy and dearly loved, as Paul writes in the Epistle. Today is the Sunday after Christmas, and we focus on how we exhibit love, forgiveness, and peace, thanking God for His promises kept.

Love came down at Christmas. Jesus was God's gift for us all. He'd been promised across the centuries, and in love the Father gave the Son for us. What a gift! God's love means redemption for His people. And what a gift for us to give to one another and everyone we meet! How we do that is spelled out in today's Epistle. Simeon sang the Nunc Dimittis, "Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace," when he held love incarnate, the baby Jesus. Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs in one another's ears is a way of giving God's gift of love. In our personal lives it also means bearing with each other, forgiving, and letting peace rule in our hearts. We've received God's love in Jesus; each day is an opportunity to give it as a gift to the people around us!

## PREPARATION

**PRAISE WORSHIP – Minister Terry Dale**

## INVOCATION

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the X Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** Amen.

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

**People:** Heavenly Father, although You have called us as Your own people, dearly loved, we confess that we have failed to forgive one another as You have forgiven us. We have neglected to reflect Your love at home, school, and work. We have let discord and conflict drown out the peace that You have given us in Christ. We have failed to thank You for Your great love in our private prayers and with our outward words and actions. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, and guide us by Your Holy Spirit so that our lives may reflect the love with which You surround us by grace each day.

Pastor: Rejoice! By God's love, He gives us forgiveness as a gift for the sake of His Son, whose birth we celebrate. The Holy Spirit clothes us with the very compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience the Father expects. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the X Son and of the Holy Spirit. Freely have you received God's love; freely give it as a gift to all you meet.

**People:** Amen!

## WORD

**HYMN** "From Heaven Above To Earth I Come" TLH 85 Sts.1 & 3

1. "From heaven above to earth I come to bear good news to every home; glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

3. "This is the Christ, our God and Lord, who in all need shall aid afford; He will Himself your Savior be from all your sins to set you free.

## KYRIE

Pastor: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace from above, for the overflowing love of God, and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, for the Church of God as it loves and forgives in Christ's name, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs let us pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, loving Lord.

**People: Amen.**

## **HYMN OF PRAIS** “From Heaven Above To Earth I Come” TLH 85 Sts.14 & 15

14. My heart for very joy doth leap, my lips no more can silence keep; I, too, must sing with joyful tongue that sweetest ancient cradle-song:

15. Glory to God in highest heaven, Who unto us His Son hath given! While angels sing with pious mirth a glad new year to all the earth.

## **SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, Your love knows no bounds, and so You sent Your Son that we might be Your children.

**People: Enliven our faith so that we may give the gift of Your love to all whom we meet; help us to love them, forgive them, and sing Your praises with them;**

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING Exodus 13:1–3a, 11–15**

(Every firstborn Israelite male must be redeemed, remembering the exodus.)

13:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

13:2 Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

13:3 And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

13:11 And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaan-ites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee,

13:12 That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD's.

13:13 And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

13:14 And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage:

13:15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **BETHEL COMBINED CHOIR**

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

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

**People: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.**

Leader: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,

**People: Mighty God,**

Leader: Everlasting Father,

**People: Prince of Peace.**

Leader: Sing to the Lord a new song,

**People: for He has done marvelous things!**

### **EPISTLE     Colossians 3:12–17**

("Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.")

3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

3:14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **VERSE** *Luke 2:30, 32*

Pastor: Alleluia. My eyes have seen Your salvation;

**People: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel. Alleluia.**

### **HOLY GOSPEL** *Luke 2:22–40*

(Simeon and Anna praise God when they see the baby Jesus in the temple.)

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

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

**2:22** And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

**2:23** (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

**2:24** And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

**2:25** And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

**2:26** And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

**2:27** And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

**2:28** Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

**2:29** Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

**2:30** For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

**2:31** Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

**2:32** A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

**2:33** And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

**2:34** And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

**2:35** (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

**2:36** And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

**2:37** And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

**2:38** And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

**2:39** And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

**2:40** And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

## THE GATHERING OF TITHES AND OFFERING

### OFFERTORY HYMN

#### “Joy To The World” TLH 87

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room and heaven and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy.
3. 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.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love.

#### “ Hark The Herald Angels Sing” TLH 94

1. Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King; peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with the angelic host proclaim. "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"

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2. Christ, by highest heaven adored. Christ, the everlasting Lord, late in time behold Him come, offspring of a virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate Deity! Pleased as Man with man to dwell; Jesus, our Immanuel! Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"
3. Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings. Mild He leaves His throne on high, born that man no more may die; born to raise the sons of earth; born to give them second birth. Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"
4. Come, Desire of nations, come, fix in us Thy humble home; oh, to all Thyself impart, formed in each believing heart! Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King; peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"

## **BETHEL COMBINED CHOIR**

## **THE CHILDREN MESSAGE**

## **SERMON**

## **INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP**



Leader: Put on meekness:

**People: Protect and guide those who serve in law enforcement at home and armed forces deployed so that they make appropriate decisions at all times.**

Leader: Put on patience:

**People: Open doors of opportunity for the spread of the Gospel here and around the world. Give patience to clergy and lay leaders alike as they proclaim the news of Your Son's birth. Make them aware of Your gracious presence to bless their efforts.**

Leader: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Heavenly Father, we remember before You those who are not at peace because of illness, conflict, loss, and sadness, [*including . . .*]. In Your great love,

**People: restore health, resolve conflict, console, and bring renewal of joy as fits Your gracious plans for them.**

Leader: Into Your hands, loving Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

Leader: Paul wrote, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts," and Jesus said, "If your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us share God's peace with one another, saying, "Peace be with you."

## **LORD'S PRAYER**      *Matthew 6:9–13*

**6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.**

**6:10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

**6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.**

**6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

**6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

**HYMN****“Go Tell It on the Mountain” TFBF 52**

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. [Refrain]

2 The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior’s birth. [Refrain]

3 Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born; and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

**DISMISSAL**

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve our loving Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

