

Sunday, December 31, 2017

First Sunday of Christmas



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Church Secretary: Mary Braun & Jenny Schuett

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will LIVE and SERVE through FAITH

we will ACT with LOVE and KINDNESS

we will GIVE hope and SUPPORT to all.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.

Please notify usher if you would like assistance

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INTRODUCTION

In the psalm all the natural world praises God, including all humanity, male and female, young and old. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion, for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we speak of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: "In His Temple Now Behold Him" #417 ELW
(Verses: 1, 2 & 4 - Please stand on the last verse)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh, the Power of the Most High, ✝
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Silence is kept for reflection

Gracious God,

in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our failure to welcome this light. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ the Lord.

Amen.

I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. Your sins are forgiven in ✝ Jesus' name.

Amen.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

Please be seated

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10--62:3

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that the Lord's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm: Psalm 148

The splendor of the LORD is over earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens, old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴**The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. Hallelujah!**

Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7

Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as sons and daughters.

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please stand

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

Glory to you, O Lord

Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see

death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

Please be seated

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY:

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

#294 ELW

(Verses 1-3)

Please stand

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Drawn near to God as children and heirs of Christ's promise, we pray for all people of God, for our nation and our world, and for those in need.

A brief silence.

For the faith communities of this *city/town/village* and for faith communities throughout the world. Help us to see ourselves in our neighbors, especially those who differ from us, and draw us together in common service to those who are hungry, poor, and oppressed. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the well-being of the earth as we begin another year entrusted with its care. Give us lively imaginations to see ways to conserve its limited resources, harness its renewable energies, and conform ourselves to its natural goodness. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For peace among nations, for peace in our homes, and for peace in our hearts. Urge us to cry out at injustice and inequality among your people until vindication comes and righteousness prevails. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those who wait in the shadow of death, for those who are ill, for those who struggle to see the future, and for all who lack even their basic needs. Transform our love toward them with the vision of eyes that have seen the salvation of God. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those who cannot see, for those who cannot hear, for those who have varied use of their limbs, and for those able to exercise all the senses. Help us to appreciate the fullness of God's gift of life in our varied abilities, and to celebrate the diversity that reveals a more complete image of the one who makes us all family. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for those who have gone before us in this year and now rest in you (*especially*). Led by Mary and Joseph, Anna and Simeon, let us live in your praise until the day we depart in your peace. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Into your outstretched arms, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

OFFERING

Ushers will begin passing the offering plate. Please rise as the ushers bring the offering to the altar.

Offering Prayer

God with us:

You came as a baby to a manger. You slept on straw and greeted shepherds. You come again in bread and wine. Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things. And then, through these gifts, help us to bless the lives of others in the strength of your holy name.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING

May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always. Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN:

“O God our Help in Ages Past”

#632 ELW

(Verses 1-4)

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

Peace to God's people on earth!

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

Visitors! It has been great having you join us for worship! Please come again.

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK

Music: Digital Hymnal

Greeters: Lee & Barb Forrester

Ushers: George & Kathy Larson

Lectors: George Smith

Hospitality Hosts:

Thank you for your service!

Response to God's Word Last Week

Attendance: Dec 24th - 9:00am: 58 3:30pm: 119, 5:30pm: 82

Dec 25th - 10:00am: 45

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA**January 1 through January 7, 2018**

Monday	1/1	New Years Day	
		1:00 pm	Double Deck Pinochle
		7:00 pm	AA/Alanon
Tuesday	1/2	10:00-12:00	Pastor Text Study
Wednesday	1/3	8:00 am	Women's Bible Study
		9:30 am	Stitchers
		6:00 pm	Confirmation Classes
		6:00 pm	Praise Team
Thursday	1/4	8:00 am	ROMEOS
		10:00 am	Christmas Tree Take Down
		12:30 pm	Funtimers
Friday	1/5	10:00 am	Bone Builders
		10:00 am	4H
Saturday	1/6	1:00-4:00 pm	Foot Care
Sunday	1/7	9:00 am	Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ATTENDANCE REGISTRY Please sign and pass the attendance registry which you will find in the pew. Information will be gathered for Evangelism.

NEW SMALL GROUP is coming to Bethesda!! We will develop goals (you choose how many and what areas) around the following: *Faith *Food *Fitness *Focus *Friends! It is designed around The Daniel Plan! There will be preparing and eating of food, good food, involved!! Anyone can participate! Young or old! Single or hitched! Near or far! Guy or gal! Look for more information in the next month or contact Mary at: mmvuke@yahoo.com; especially if you are a snowbird who might be interested in trying "remote attendance". Happy Holidays!

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS during coffee hour in January. Topics include: January 7- Feed My Starving Children, January 14- Nursing Home Outreach, January 21- Veggie Stand, and January 28 - Sunday Coffee Servers. There will be a special table set aside for those who showed an interest for these specific topics on the Time & Talent sheets. Others are welcome to participate in the discussion and or find out more about these programs.