



Sunday, December 27, 2020

First Sunday of Christmas

Introduction

The psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. 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 tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

Opening Hymn....."Joy To The World"

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 heav'n and nature sing

Joy to the earth the Savior reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat repeat the sounding joy



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 wonders of His love

Joy To The World
George Frideric Handel | Isaac Watts
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Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who was in the beginning, who makes a dwelling among us, who covers us with justice and mercy.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of goodness and lovingkindness,

we confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have turned away from your invitation to new life. We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden. In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins, those we know and those known only to you, for the sake of the one who came to live among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Hear the good news of peace and salvation! God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work, but through ✚ Jesus Christ, made known to all people. With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace.

Amen.

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.

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10—62:3

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that God'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.

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

HERE ENDS THE READING.

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 beloved children.

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

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

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.

When 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 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." Now 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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then 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 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." There 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, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At 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. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to

Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The 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.

Sermon

Sermon Song....."Graves Into Gardens"

I searched the world but it couldn't fill me
Man's empty praise and treasures that fade
Are never enough
Then You came along and put me back together
And every desire is now satisfied here in Your love

Chorus

**Oh there's nothing better than You
There's nothing better than You
Lord there's nothing
Nothing is better than You**

I'm not afraid to show You my weakness
My failures and flaws
Lord You've seen them all
And You still call me friend
'Cause the God of the mountain
Is the God of the valley
And there's not a place
our mercy and grace won't find me again



Chorus

Chorus

Bridge 1

**You turn mourning to dancing
You give beauty for ashes
You turn shame into glory
You're the only one who can**

Bridge 1

Bridge 2

**You turn graves into gardens
You turn bones into armies
You turn seas into highways
You're the only one who can**

Chorus



Chorus

Bridge 2

Bridge 2

You're the only one who can
You're the only one who can

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The Apostles' 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
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

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Night and day, all creation praises you, O God. Strengthen your church across nations, denominations, and traditions. Fill us with wisdom and unify our proclamation of your forgiveness and mercy. Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

All creation is holy to you, O God. You cause the earth to bring forth its shoots and gardens to spring up. Protect hibernating animals and frozen lands that wait earnestly for longer days of awakening and growth. Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

The nations are upheld by your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send your spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the sake of the common good. Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Send the spirit of your Son into our hearts, O God. Come quickly to hearts that race with fear, hearts that break with grief, and hearts that long for wholeness (*especially Lisle, Becky, Cy, Luz, Judi, Ben, Christi, Victoria, Audrey, Vicki, Louise, Margo, Joy, Lourdes, Michelle, LauraLee, Barbara, Jennifer, Gloria, Sharon, Kathryn, Alan, Michael, JJ, Ellen, Sharon, Ann, John, Christine, Darell, Richard, Kathie, Ruth, James, Gil, Lew*). Reveal your power to heal and to save. Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Adopt us into your family, O God. Bless our elders with the peace and joy of Simeon and Anna. Strengthen those who have retired, those who work in older age, and those in need of income, food, company, or health care. Connect young and old across generations. Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For (*John, apostle and evangelist, Jim, Ethan, Evan, Jean, Thelma, Gini, Gil and Bill* and) all your saints, we give you thanks. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all your witnesses of every time and place. Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Offering Prayer

Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to the Table

The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine. Come meet Christ in this meal.

Distribution

At this time take the elements you have with you saying these words:

The Body of Christ given for you. The Blood of Christ shed for you.

Post Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Blessing

Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star,
bless you this day ✝ through the Word made flesh.

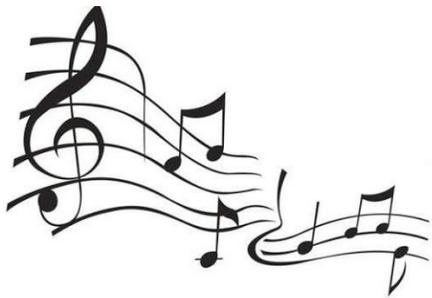
Amen.

Sending Hymn.....“My Savior Lives”

Our God will reign forever
And all the world will know His name
Ev'ryone together
Sing the song of the redeemed

Chorus

I know that my Redeemer lives
And now I stand on what He did
My Savior my Savior lives
Ev'ry day a brand new chance to say
Jesus You are the only way
My Savior my Savior lives
The King has come from Heaven
And darkness trembles at His name
Victory forever
Is the song of the redeemed



Chorus

My Savior lives
My Savior lives
My Savior lives

(REPEAT)

Chorus

Chorus

Glenn Packiam | Jon Egan

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.