

First Sunday of Christmas

December 31, 2023

Portions of Liturgy reprinted from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress,
Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress License #14040-ELW
Portions also from *Sundays & Seasons 2024*

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.

Jays & Concerns

Prelude

Confession and Forgiveness

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, †one God, the word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

C. Amen

P. Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P. God of life,

C. you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.

P. Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

C. Amen.

Gathering Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW 283

A. Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. And also with you.

Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

Canticle of Praise

Assisting minister



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

Prayer of the Day

A. Let us pray

C. **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

Back of Bulletin

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.

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.

L. Word of God. Word of life.

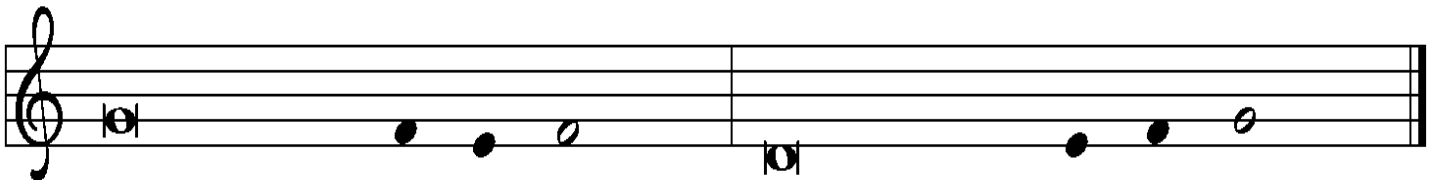
C. **Thanks be to God**

Psalmody

Psalm 148

(tone 6)

chanted responsively



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

**Praise the LORD, ¹ all you angels;
sing praise, all you ¹ hosts of heaven.**

Praise the LORD, ¹ sun and moon;
sing praise, all you ¹ shining stars.

**Praise the LORD, heav- ¹ en of heavens,
and you waters a- ¹ bove the heavens.**

Let them praise the name ¹ of the LORD,
who commanded, and they ¹ were created,

who made them stand fast fore-¹er and ever,
giving them a law which shall not¹ pass away.
 Praise the LORD¹ from the earth,
 you sea monsters¹ and all deeps;
fire and hail,¹ snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, do-¹ing God's will;
 mountains¹ and all hills,
 fruit trees¹ and all cedars;
wild beasts¹ and all cattle,
creeping things and¹ flying birds;
 sovereigns of the earth¹ and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers¹ of the world;
young¹ men and maidens,
old and¹ young together.
 Let them praise the name¹ of the LORD,
 whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over¹ earth and heaven.
The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all¹ faithful servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD.¹ Hallelujah!



“The Gift of Adoption”

Galatians 4:4-7

Second Reading

Galatians 4:4-7

Back of Bulletin

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.

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.

L. Word of God. Word of life.

C. Thanks be to God



Gospel Acclamation



P. The holy gospel according to Saint Luke, the second chapter.

C. **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.

P. The gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

Pastor John Petry

Hymn of the Day

Once in Royal David's City

ELW 269

The Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the Virgin Mary,
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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

A large, stylized graphic featuring a bold, black cross on the left. To the right of the cross, the word "Believe" is written in a large, elegant, cursive script. The cross and the text are both in black, creating a strong visual impact.

Prayers of Intercession

- A. Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts and the witness of people who are neurodivergent, living with disability, or bearing invisible illness. Hear us, O God.

- C. **Your mercy is great.**

- A. Your praise is sung throughout creation in all times and seasons. As the new year turns, ground us in your changeless and sustaining love. Keep us attentive to the rhythms of the cosmos and inspire us to live in harmony with all the earth. Hear us, O God.

- C. **Your mercy is great.**

Other prayers

- P. Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

- C. **Amen.**

The Peace

- A. Jesus said: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. May His peace be with you always.

- C. **And also with you.**

The Offering

Anthem

Los Tres Santos Reyes/The Three Holy Magi

Choir

Puerto Rican folk song, translated and arranged by Abe Cáceres

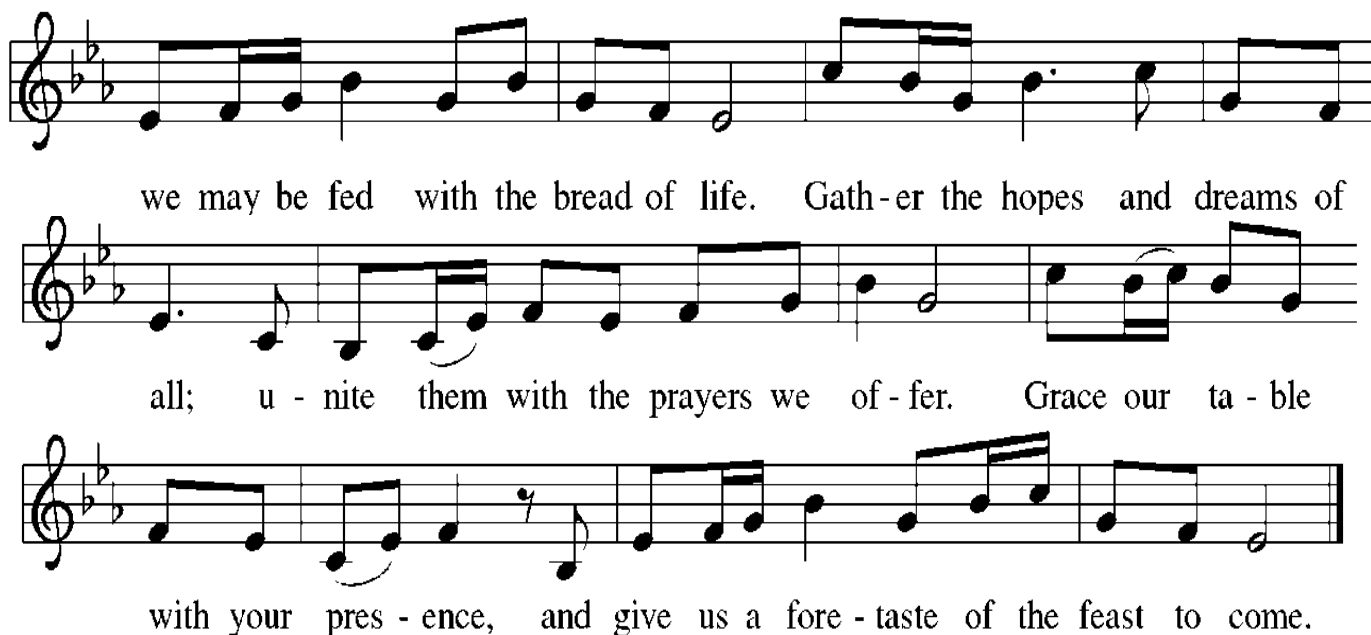
Let the Vineyards...



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that



we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

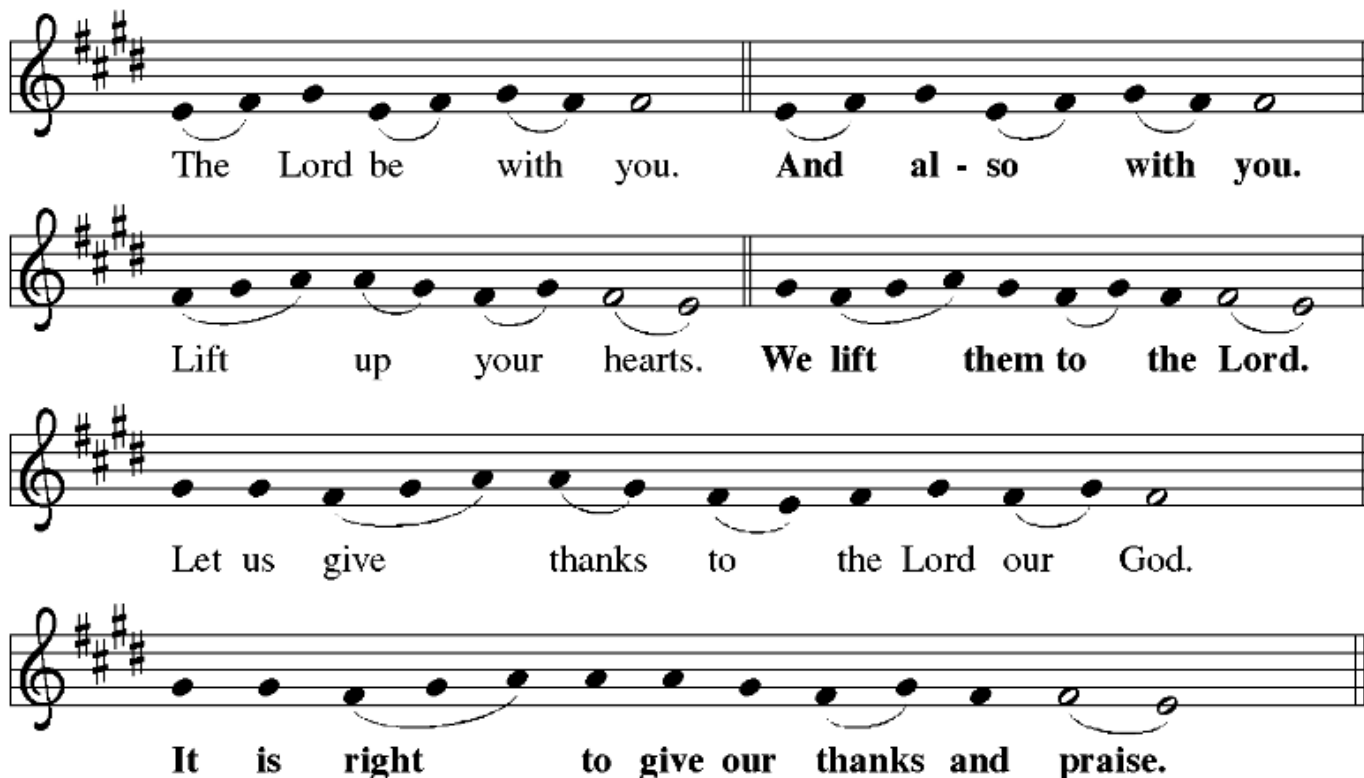
Offertory Prayer

A. God of abundance,

C. receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

Amen

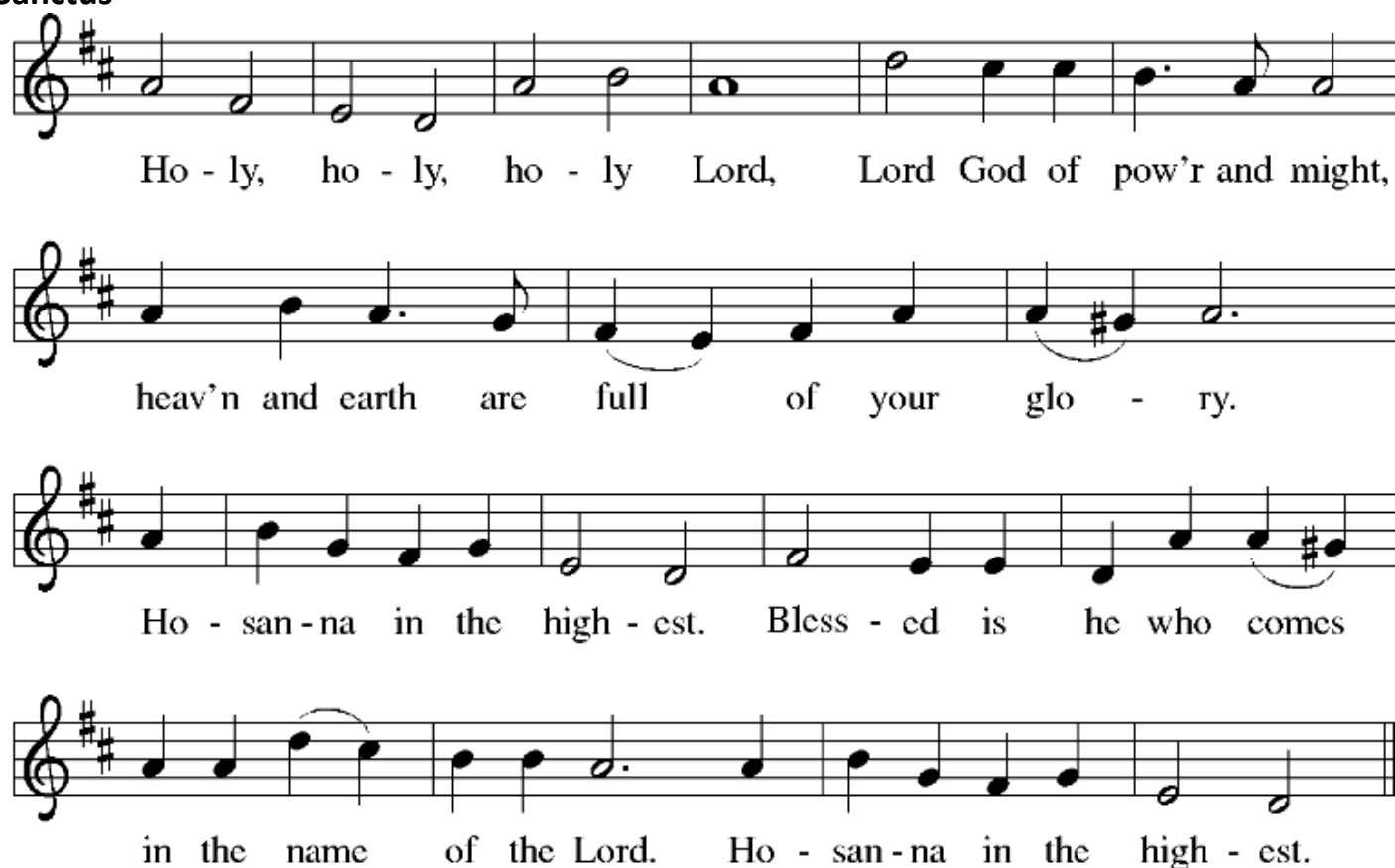
The Great Thanksgiving



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary...

Sanctus



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Eucharistic Prayer

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 Communion

- P.** There is a place for you at the banquet.
Come and feast at Jesus' table.
Everyone is invited, no exceptions.
- C. Amen.**



Hymn

Give Me Jesus, vv. 1 & 5

ELW 770

Communion Hymns

What Child is This

ELW 296

Angels We Have Heard on High

ELW 289

Post Communion Blessing

- P.** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
- C. Amen**

Post Communion Prayer

- A.** God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C. Amen.**

Blessing

- P.** God bless you and keep you, ✙ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.
- Amen.**

Sending Hymn

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

ELW 270

Dismissal

- A.** Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
- C. Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Christ the savior
is born.



Candles in the sanctuary this month are provided by Matt & Larissa Himmeger, in Loving Memory of Earl Himmeger and Val Borysiewicz.

Important Dates and INFORMATION



January 7th

January 14th

Meet & Greet

with Pastor Wolfgang Herz-Lane



Congregational Meeting

*To Vote on the Call
& the Terms of the Call
for our New Pastor*



January 21st

January 28th

