

WELCOMING WORD *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.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

C: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

L: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;

C: his glory is above earth and heaven. Praise the LORD!

OPENING HYMN #60 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! **Refrain**

Hail the heav'nborn Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, Born to give us second birth. **Refrain**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: God of goodness and lovingkindness,

C: 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.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

INVOCATION

P: 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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Almighty God,

C: 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 LESSON: Isaiah 61:10--62:3 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.

SECOND LESSON: Galatians 4:4-7 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.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40 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.

MESSAGE Bishop Joy Mortinsen-Wiebe

HYMN #52 *Your Little Ones Dear Lord*

Your little ones, dear Lord, are we, and come your lowly bed to see;
Enlighten ev'ry soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.

With songs we hasten you to greet, and kiss the ground before your feet.
Oh, blessed hour, oh, sweetest night that gave you birth, our soul's delight.

Oh, draw us wholly to you, Lord, and to us all your grace accord;
True faith and love to us impart, that we may hold you in our heart.

Until at last we too proclaim, with all your saints, your glorious name;
In paradise our songs renew, and praise you as the angels do.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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.

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

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P: 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,

C: hear our prayer.

P: 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,

C: hear our prayer.

P: 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*). Reveal your power to heal and to save. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: 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,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For 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,

C: hear our prayer.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

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. 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.

BENEDICTION *May the blessing of God our creator, the love of Jesus Christ our redeemer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit the comforter, surround you and sustain you until we gather again*

CLOSING HYMN: #62 The Bells of Christmas (vs. 1-4)

The bells of Christmas chime once more; the heav'nly guest is at the door.
He comes to earthly dwellings still with new year gifts of peace, goodwill.

This world, though wide and far outspread, Could scarcely find for you a bed.
Your cradle was a manger stall, No pearl nor silk nor kingly hall.

Now let us go with quiet mind, the swaddled babe with shepherds find,
To gaze on him who gladdens them, the lovliest flow'r of Jesse's stem.

Oh, join with me, in gladness sing, to keep our Christmas with our king,
Until our song, from loving souls, like rushing mighty water rolls!



IT IS WITH SADNESS that we announce the death of **Pastor Bill Redman** on December 18. Bill served as senior pastor at ELC from 1974 until 1995. If you would like to send condolences to Phyllis, her address is 301 S. Yellowstone Dr. Apt. 206, Madison, WI 53705-4378

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Devon Schlegel (father of Dawn Haag)
Norbert Haag (brother of Virgil Haag)
Allen Olson (father of Ingrid Frank)
Delores Bryant
Nick Sydow (friend of Connie Curran's sons)
Brian Marshall (friend of Kim Kelliher)
Jeannie U'Ren
Mike Olson (Wendy Rasmussen's brother)
Irene Bruflat
Connie Fausett (sister of Diane Twiton & Jean Bower)
Harlan Oimoen
Grace Aavang
Dianne Haskins (friend of Char Smith)

Ginger Quaderer (Diane Mueller's cousin)
Richard Schuhler (friend of Ron & Bonny Kellogg)
Agnes Robertson (friend of Holly Thompson)
Makenzee Smith
Brock Howe
Mary Krantz
Ruth Ann Nemet
Sally Gaard (friend of Margie Kahl)
Laurie Duden (Brenda Martin's aunt)
Bill Steinhauer
Peter Toniazzo
Shirley Thompson
Glenn Thronson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BUCKY BOOKS - ONLINE ONLY - Bucky Books can still be available for online orders, through our link below till mid January. Please share the link with family and friends. Books are shipped directly to your home. Books sell for \$35 each. Profits help our youth with future summer programming. Thank you for continued support.

*** ORDER ONLINE AT: <https://www.buckybook.com/evangelical-lutheran-church-mt-horeb>

SUNDAY SCHOOL on ZOOM- We will have a break from our ZOOM times on December 27 & January 3rd. We will resume our online time on January 10th at 9:00 AM.

ELC 'COFFEE TIME' on ZOOM - Join us on Wednesdays at 10 AM each week to catch up with our church family. Time to connect and see each other! Zoom link is emailed each week. If you need the link, contact Pastor John, Tamara or Brenda.

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE - There will be no confirmation online classes on Dec 23 and Dec 30th. 7th & 8th graders will resume with classes on Zoom on Jan 6th at 7 pm.

ELC: VOLUNTEERS PLEASE SIGN UP TO HELP AT THE CLOTHES CLOSET LATER IN THE MONTH Members of ELC staff the Clothes Closet the last week in December and the entire month of January. If you might be able to help, click on the sign-up link on the elcmthoreb.org website under the "Serve" tab. Precautions like wearing masks and limiting the number of shoppers and volunteers in the facility are in place to keep both patrons and workers safe. If you would like more info, call or email Kate Hook (katehook63@gmail.com or 608-327-9944



DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 27, 2020

SHARE: What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding

Monday, Psalm 148, Praise for God's Glory

Tuesday, Isaiah 49:5-15, The Servant's Mission

Wednesday, 2 Peter 3:8-13, The Promise of the Lord's Coming

Thursday, John 8:12-19, Jesus the Light of the World

Friday, Galatians 4:4-7, Not Slaves, but Heirs

Saturday, James 3:13-18, Two Kinds of Wisdom

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: *"²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;" Luke 2:28-29 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 have you sensed the fulfillment of God's promises in your life?
- What brings you peace in this season of life?
- How can you proclaim that promise in the presence of others?

PRAY: 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.

BLESS: May you find the peace of God's promise this day. Amen!