

January 3, 2021

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Seeing Salvation

Today's gospel gives us a glimpse into the world of two people not depicted on Christmas cards nor commemorated by carols. They are rarely, if ever, portrayed in pageants. And yet the story of Simeon and Anna, recorded in the Gospel of Luke, is a significant and beautiful scene that adds a rich layer to the unfolding Christmas story and to salvation history.

When Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to Jerusalem to present him in the temple, their family attracted the attention of two elderly worshipers. Anna, a widow, was similarly devout. As a prophet she had been schooled to expect the coming Messiah and worshiped in the temple continuously with fasting and prayer. So schooled, guided by the Holy Spirit, it is not surprising that Simeon and Anna recognized Jesus for who he was.

Taking the infant Jesus in his arms, Simeon praised God and gave thanks for the gift of seeing the promised Messiah with his own eyes. The Savior of the nations was born. God had taken human form.

The grace of God expands from the arms of Mary to the world beyond. The glory of the Lord is made real in ways that we, too, can see and touch. Here, this day, we gather with others in whom we see Christ's face. This day we behold Christ in word and meal. We depart from this place ready to meet Christ in our homes, workplaces, and communities. Like Anna, we give thanks for the salvation that has been prepared for us.

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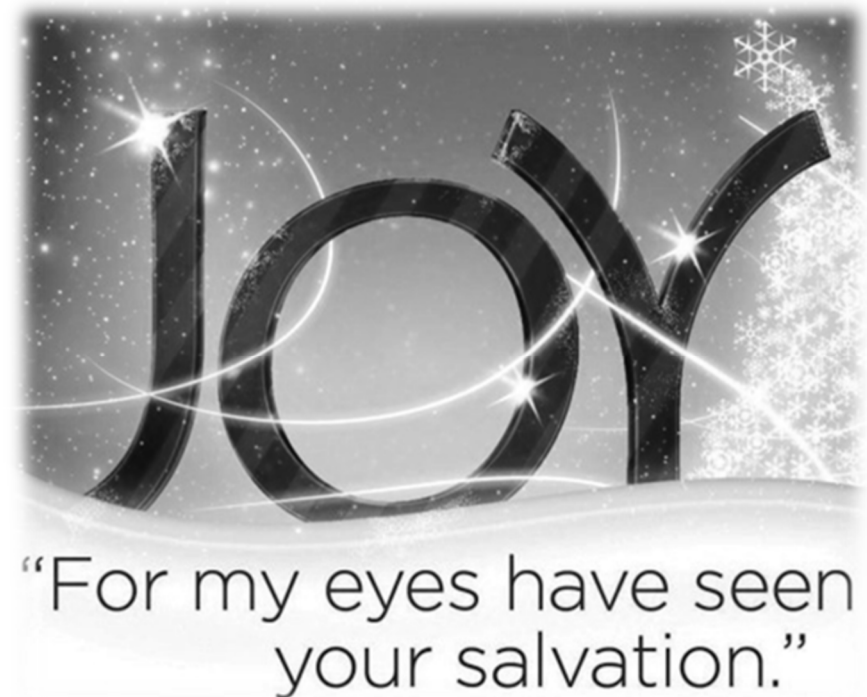
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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Annette Slater - Music Director

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Organist

Toni Wilbarger - Secretary



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

January 3, 2021

(Please stand)

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 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,
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.

The Offering *(As you exit, please place your offering in the wooden church in the Narthex if you have not already done so.)*

Musical Offertory

Dr. Pattin

Offering Prayer

P: Generous God, you have given us life, this community, and the treasures you entrust to us. Move in our hearts, that we might use your gifts to bring hope and blessing wherever we go, through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Pastoral Prayer *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: Hear us, Lord.

C: Your mercy is great.

The Lord's Prayer *(prayed by all)*

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;

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude

Dr. Pattin

Ringling of the Bell

Opening Song "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (v. 1, 3, 4) No. 279
(sung by Toni)

Invocation

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity (+) one God, Love from the beginning,
Word made flesh, Breath of heaven.

C: Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Let us confess our sinfulness before God and one another, trusting
in God's endless mercy and love.

(silence is kept for reflection)

P: Merciful God, we confess that we are not perfect. We have said
and done things we regret. We have tried to earn your redeeming
grace, while denying it to others. We have resisted your call to be
your voice in the world. Forgive us, loving God. Give us your
righteousness, the strength to put aside our failures, and the
courage to try again.

C: Amen.

P: Dear people of God, hear the good news: Christ the Savior is born!
You are loved and forgiven in the name of (+) Jesus, who has
come among us. You are freed from proving that you deserve to be
loved, because God's love is given to you as the most precious gift
of all. Rejoice in this love and share it with the world.

C: Amen.

CHRISTMAS ACCLAMATION

"Love Has Come" #292 (v. 1 & 3) (sung by Toni)

Love has come— a light in the darkness!

Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;

hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!

Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love has come and never will leave us!

Love is life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us.

Love is the peace our hearts are seeking,

Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.

Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Prayer of the Day

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Announcements

PSALM: Psalm 147:13-21

Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:13)

Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion;

**¹⁴for he has strengthened the bars of your gates;
he has blessed your children within you.**

¹⁵He has established peace on your borders;
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

**¹⁶He sends out his command to the earth,
and his word runs very swiftly.**

¹⁷He gives snow like wool;
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

**¹⁸He scatters his hail like bread crumbs;
who can stand against his cold?**

¹⁹He sends forth his word and melts them;
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

**²⁰He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.**

²¹He has not done so to any other nation;
to them he has not revealed his judgments. Hallelujah!

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Alleluia Verse "Joy to the World" No. 267, v. 1 & 4 (sung by Toni)

*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.*

*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.*

Gospel Acclamation

P: The Gospel according to St. Luke Chapter 2.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40

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 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 worshipped 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.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON
Sermon Hymn

"What Child is This"

Pastor Rayl
No. 296
(sung by Toni)