



*God's love, Our service.*

# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

## Sunday, December 31, 2023

### First Sunday of Christmas

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#### 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.

#### WELCOME/ANNOUCEMENTS

The December Noisy Offering collection will go to Project 10- 20 for the homeless, chosen by our 5th/6th grade class.



## Confession and Forgiveness

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,  
the Word made flesh,  
our life and our salvation.

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of life,

**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.**

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.

**Amen.**

## PROCESSIONAL HYMN ELW 275, vs. 1 & 4

### Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1 Angels, from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
once you sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.

4 All creation, join in praising  
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,  
evermore your voices raising  
to the eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4

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### Greeting pg. 98

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.**

### KYRIE pg. 98

### HYMN OF PRAISE pg. 101

### 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.*

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>62:1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup>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.

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

The Word of The Lord.

**Thanks Be to God.**

### **Psalm: Psalm 148**

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

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise God in the heights.

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

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

<sup>4</sup>**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens.**

<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they were created,

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

<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you sea monsters and all deeps;

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

<sup>9</sup>mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars;  
<sup>10</sup>**wild beasts and all cattle,  
creeping things and flying birds;**  
<sup>11</sup>sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers of the world;  
<sup>12</sup>**young men and maidens,  
old and young together.**  
<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.  
<sup>14</sup>**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 beloved children.*

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

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** page 102

*Holy Gospel, according to Luke, the 2nd Chapter.*

**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.*

<sup>22</sup>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 <sup>23</sup>

(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”),<sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”



<sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. <sup>27</sup>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,

<sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup>And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>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 <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

<sup>36</sup>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, <sup>37</sup>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. <sup>38</sup>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.

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

**CHILDREN’S SERMON** Pastor Barbara Jones

**SERMON** Pastor Barbara Jones

## HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 269

### Once in Royal David's City

- 1 Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ, her little child.
- 2 He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and meek and lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.
- 3 And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child so dear and gentle  
is our Lord in heav'n above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.
- 4 Not in that poor lowly stable,  
with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high;  
there his children gather round,  
bright like stars, with glory crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895

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### 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,  
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**

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.

**Your mercy is great.**

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.

**Your mercy is great.**

Give hope and stamina to leaders who work tirelessly for the sake of the most vulnerable. We pray especially for organizations working on behalf of children to provide basic needs, to protect from abuse and neglect, to address trauma, and to rescue from trafficking. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Sustain all people who, like Simeon and Anna, have been waiting for salvation and wholeness (*especially*). We pray especially for anyone living with cancer or chronic illness, all people who are in physical rehabilitation or addiction recovery, and those experiencing complications from long COVID. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. Teach us to honor the wisdom of children, the inquisitiveness of youth, the thoughtfulness of adults, and the knowledge of elders. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for all the beloved who lived with expectation and departed this life in peace (*especially*). Sustain us in joy until we join them around your throne. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

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

**Amen.**



## **PEACE**

In Jesus Christ, God has made his peace with us.  
The peace of the Lord be with you always,

**And also with you**

Let us share God's peace with one another.

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also 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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, .....

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

**Holy, Holy** pg. 108

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Glory to God in the highest!

Come to the table of peace.

## **COMMUNION**

**COMMUNION SONG** pg. 112



## COMMUNION HYMN ELW 296

### What Child Is This

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary!
- 2 Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce him through,  
the cross be borne for me, for you;  
hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

- 3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
the virgin sings her lullaby;  
joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

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

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.  
**Amen.**

### SENDING

As we depart your house Eternal God, your love is steadfast.  
A sure guardian, a rock of defense and comfort to all.  
Grant us courage to face the future and to share your message;  
Through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

## BLESSING

God bless you and keep you,  
✝ Jesus grant you grace and truth,  
and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

## RECESSIONAL HYMN ELW 545

### Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

- 1 Lord, dismiss us with your blessing,  
fill our hearts with joy and peace;  
let us each, your love possessing,  
triumph in redeeming grace.  
Oh, refresh us; oh, refresh us,  
trav'ling through this wilderness.
- 2 Thanks we give and adoration  
for your gospel's joyful sound.  
May the fruits of your salvation  
in our hearts and lives abound.

Ever faithful, ever faithful  
to your truth may we be found.

- 3 Savior, when your love shall call us  
from our struggling pilgrim way,  
let no fear of death appall us,  
glad your summons to obey.  
May we ever, may we ever  
reign with you in endless day.

Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1740-1817, sts. 1-2, alt.; Godfrey  
Thring, 1823-1903, st. 3, alt.

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## DISMISSAL

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



## PRAYER REQUESTS & CONDOLENCES

Contact Janet Anderson at 913.638-9331 to add names to the prayer chain or to join the prayer chain.

Please contact the church office to make changes to this list.

### **St. Mark's members:**

Beverly Norager,  
Henry Moore,  
Janet Nichols,  
Sheila Mutschelknaus,  
Barbara Strampe,  
Ruth Ann Hackler,  
Chuck Vandenberg,  
Susan & Bill Roberts,  
George McElroy,  
Janet Schmidt,  
Phyllis Dettmer,

### **Family & friends:**

Tami Beck, friend of Joni Benz,  
Steve Wells, friend of Mark Schmideskamp,  
Family of Beverly Norager,  
Sheryl Thompson, family of Linda & Pete Cagle's son,  
Doris Holger, Aunt of Linda Cagle,  
Scott Miller, son-in-law of Jane & Mike Scherrer,  
Family of Judy Wendt, Jeannine Matthew's  
sister-in-law,  
Sydney, daughter of Tom & Nancy Bryer,  
Harry Cagle, brother of Pete Cagle,  
Deb & family, sister of Nancy Bryer,  
Timothy Anderson, son of Don & Janet Anderson,  
Janice, sister of Jenny Wheeler,  
Trae Allen, nephew of friend of Susan Fetsch,  
Dr. Owens, friend of Kathy Hinkle,  
Mike and Susan Becker, friends of St. Mark's,  
Sheryl Aldersen, friend of Dale Albers,  
Elizabeth Applebaum, friend of Kathy Hinkle  
Charles, brother of Joe VanKempen,  
Scott, son-in-law of Jane & Mike Scherrer,  
Hugo B Gibson, friend of Pete Cagle,  
Kai son Davis, friend of Pete Cagle,  
Cameron Leckliter, neighbor of Ginny Schwartzbeck,  
Alyssa, niece-in-law of Mike and Jane Scherrer,  
Tim Sullivan, friend of the VanKempens,  
Stan, friend of Pete Cagle,  
Chris, brother of Pete Cagle,  
Joetta Eagle & family, friends of Linda Bayer,  
Kara Campbell, niece of Pete Cagle,

Bill Benne, friend of Joyce and Louis Johnson,  
Lynn, Dennis & Sharon Thee, relatives of Barbara  
Strampe,  
Candy, sister of Tom Bryer,  
Craig Aldag, Uncle of Ali Luin,  
Manuel & family, friend of Jenny Wheeler's grandson,  
Donna McCarthy, friend of Ginny Schwartzbeck,  
Andrew, friend of the Scherrers,  
Jenny Mack, Niece of Jenny Wheeler,  
Chris, Brother of Pete Cagle,  
Amber Smith, friend of Pete Cagle,  
Family of Kathy, cousin of Barb Nail,  
Gary Stepenson, Uncle of Jason Howe,  
Rowan Espey, family of Barbara Strampe,  
Peggy Hinkle, Step-Mother of Kathy Hinkle,  
Tim Eiter, Father of Todd Eiter,  
Rebeka Gillette, friend of Janet Nichols,  
Jackie Warriner, Sister-in-law of Linda Goodheart,  
Don Thun, Father of Matt Thun,  
Katherine Gile, sister of Anne Gardner,  
Matt Warriner, Great Nephew of Linda Goodheart,  
Joanne, Amy Fisher's sister,  
Neil Warriner, Linda Goodheart's brother,  
Donna Poppe, friend of St. Marks,  
Rosemary Williams & her sons Wayne & Wade Beck,  
Brooke Harris, friend of Gretchen Goodheart Stewart,  
Bruce Dawson, friend of the Goodhearts,  
Kirk Wheeler, cousin of Verna McMullin,  
All People affected by natural disasters

### **Those in the Military:**

A.J. Simons, nephew of Stan and Karen Thompson,