

2nd Sunday of Christmas – January 3, 2021

Prelude Music

Welcome & Announcements

Good morning, welcome to worship on this 2nd Sunday of Christmas and the 10th day of Christmas – 10 Lords-a-Leapin' is what you should give your true love today. I'm glad you can join us on Facebook, YouTube or reading this worship at your home.

Thank you for continuing to support the mission of FE w/ your gifts. They keep the mission and ministry of our church going in these very different times.

We are celebrating Online Holy Communion today. Please have your bread and wine ready.

Stew's Stories: *"But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God."* - John 1:12-13 We begin 2021 with the sure and certain knowledge that Jesus Christ has given us power and new birth as children of God. Our world is still filled with uncertainty, suffering, and fear, but none of these things can undo the hope and promise we have in Christ.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: 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.

L: 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.

L: 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.**

Hymn: #289 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Call to Worship – Psalm 147:12-20

L: The grace and peace of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, be with you all.

C: And also with you.

L: Jerusalem, give glory! Praise God with song, O Zion!

C: For the Lord strengthens your gates, guarding your children within.

L: The Lord fills your land with peace, giving you golden wheat.

C: God speaks to the earth, the word speeds forth.

L: The Lord sends heavy snow and scatters frost like ashes.

C: The Lord hurls chunks of hail. Who can stand such cold?

L: God speaks, the ice melts; God breathes, the streams flow.

C: God speaks the word to Jacob; laws and decrees to Israel.

L: God has not done this for others, they do not receive this wisdom. Hallelujah!

Prayer of the Day

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

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gifts of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷Thus says the Lord: "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
'Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel.'

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
on a straight path where they will not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.'

¹¹For the Lord has ransomed Jacob,
and redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,

and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in dance,
and young men and old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty," says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes are known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we are chosen as God's children and promised eternal salvation.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵God destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In Jesus we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹God made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and on earth. ¹¹In Christ we also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so we, who were first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: John 1:1-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵John testified to him, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'" ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who makes God known.

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Song

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn: #295 "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Prayers of Intercession

For the prayers, I will end each petition with the words: *Hear us, O God.* Your response is: ***Your mercy is great.***

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

Brief silence.

Redeeming God, you gather your people from all parts of the earth. Keep your church from stumbling, sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness and praise your glory. Bless our bishops, Elizabeth and Anne; Pr. Jack & Maanoane Parish; and missionary, Pr. Alex. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring together heaven and earth. All creation declares your splendor. Hold this earth in balance, from coastlands to forests, farmlands to wetlands, deserts to mountains. Help us live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations and hearts of people serving in authority. Protect people in harm's way and all who risk danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring comfort to all who weep. Embrace people who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated; those living with chronic, invisible illness; people who are weak and weary, *especially Liz; Jim; Dolores; Delbert; Kathy; Marion, Janey; Mary; Dave; Kay; Kathi; Natalie; Gary; Ron; Bruce; and all those with Covid-19. We pray for hospital personnel, medical researchers, doctors and nurses, especially Deb; Holli; Joy; Kara; Taylor; Lilly; Olivia; Todd; Reese; Pat; and Bonnie.* Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You come in the beauty of darkness and light. Bring justice to places divided by oppression. May we speak holy words of peace and truth. Help us honor your image in one another. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, now hear the prayers of your people. *(Brief silence.)*

You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for saints who have died in faith. In the fullness of time, gather us all in your mercy. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly with grace upon grace as we lift our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Offering Prayer

Let us pray: Loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you bless us with your gifts, may what we return to you be blessing for others. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Words of Institution

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 in 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 in remembrance of me.

Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by God's Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:

**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.**

Friends, the bread of God comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. We meet Jesus in this meal.

The Body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Dan plays

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

Prayer after Communion

L: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that in this bread and cup of Christ, you give us food for our journey. As you led the magi by a star and brought the holy family home again, guide us on the way unfolding before us. Wherever we go, may our lives proclaim Good News of Great Joy in Jesus. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: #298 "The Bells of Christmas"

Benediction

May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. Share the Light of Christ. **Thanks be to God!**

Call to Worship from Ministrymatters.com. Used with permission. Scripture readings and liturgy from Sundays and Seasons.com Copyright 2011 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #42253. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Church of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.