

**SERVICE OF THE WORD**  
**Christmas 1**  
**27 December 2020**

**GATHERING**

**GATHERING SONG**            **ELW #289**    *Angels We Have Heard on High*

1        Angels we have heard on high,  
          sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
          and the mountains in reply,  
          echoing their joyous strains.

*Refrain:*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo;*  
*gloria in excelsis Deo.*

2        Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
          Why your joyous strains prolong?  
          What the gladsome tidings be  
          which inspire your heavenly song? [*Refrain*]

3        Come to Bethlehem and see  
          him whose birth the angels sing;  
          come, adore on bended knee  
          Christ the Lord, the newborn King. [*Refrain*]

**GREETING**

**P:**     The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C:**     **And also with you.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**P:**     Praise the Lord!

**C:**     **Praise God from the heavens!**

**P:**     Young men and women alike,

**C:**     **old and young together!**

**P:**     Let us praise the name of the Lord,

**C:**     **whose name alone is exalted above heaven and earth.**

**ALL: Alleluia!**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray. Saving God, the prophet Anna and righteous Simeon sang your praise and proclaimed Jesus, our Lord to all who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem. Let us who seek redemption in this day prepare our hearts, that we may believe the good news of Jesus, receive the light of salvation and live according to your word. In Jesus' name we pray.

**C:** **Amen**

## **WORD**

### **FIRST READING**

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. 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.

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. 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. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

### **SECOND READING**

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

Galatians 4:4-7

### **GOSPEL**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 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 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed--and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

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, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. 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.

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

Luke 2:22-40

## SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY

### ELW #293 *That Boy-Child of Mary*

#### *Refrain:*

*That boy-child of Mary was born in a stable,  
a manger his cradle in Bethlehem.*

- 1     What shall we call him, child of the manger?  
      What name is given in Bethlehem? [*Refrain*]
- 2     His name is Jesus, God ever with us,  
      God given for us in Bethlehem. [*Refrain*]
- 3     How can he save us, how can he help us,  
      born here among us in Bethlehem? [*Refrain*]

- 4 Gift of the Father, to human mother,  
makes him our brother in Bethlehem. [*Refrain*]
- 5 One with the Father, he is our Savior,  
heaven-sent helper in Bethlehem. [*Refrain*]
- 6 Gladly we praise him, love and adore him,  
give ourselves to him in Bethlehem. [*Refrain*]

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The nations are upheld by your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send your spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the sake of the common good. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For (John, apostle and evangelist, and) all your saints, we give you thanks. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all your witnesses of every time and place. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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.**

## **PEACE**

**P: The peace of Christ be with you always.**

**C: And also with you.**

## **THANKSGIVING**

### **OFFERING**

**P: Let us pray.**

Holy God,  
everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, wonderful Counselor,  
at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world,  
and throughout the ages, you proclaim newness of life.  
For your wondrous Word, we thank you, O God.

**C: We thank you, O God.**

**P:** In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh,  
to shine in our world's darkness,  
to speak peace to all peoples,  
and to welcome us as members of your family.  
For your loving Word, we adore you, O God.

**C: We adore you, O God.**

**P:** Grant us now the gift of your Spirit,  
that held, nourished, and protected by your Word,  
we may live as your children,  
bearing your goodness throughout the world.  
For your powerful Word, we praise you, O God.

**C: We praise you, O God.**

**P:** All glory to you, holy God,  
now and forever. Amen.

**C: Amen.**

**P:** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

### **SENDING**

#### **CHARGE**

**P:** Rejoice always.  
Pray without ceasing.  
Witness to the light of Christ  
so that all may believe through him.

#### **BLESSING**

*The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.*

**P:** Almighty God,  
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,  
proclaimed joy through the angels,  
sent the shepherds with good news,  
and led the magi by a star,  
bless us this day + through the Word made flesh.

**C:** Amen.

#### **SENDING SONG**

**ELW #299** *Cold December Flies Away*

1 Cold December flies away  
at the rose-red splendor.  
April's crowning glory breaks  
while the whole world wonders  
at the holy unseen pow'r  
of the tree which bears the flow'r.  
On the blessed tree  
blooms the reddest flow'r.  
On the tree blooms the rose

here in love's own garden,  
full and strong in glory.

2 In the hopeless time of sin  
shadows deep had fallen.  
All the world lay under death.  
Eyes were closed in sleeping.  
But, when all seemed lost in night,  
came the sun whose golden light  
brings unending joy,  
brings the endless joy  
of our hope, highest hope,  
of our hope's bright dawning,  
Son belov'd of heaven.

3 Now the bud has come to bloom,  
and the world awakens.  
In the lily's purest flow'r  
dwells a wondrous fragrance.  
And it spreads to all the earth  
from the moment of its birth;  
and its beauty lives.  
In the flow'r it lives,  
in the flow'r, and it spreads  
in its heav'nly brightness  
sweet perfume delightful.

Text: Catalonian carol; tr. Howard Hawhee, b. 1953

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#### **DISMISSAL**

*The assisting minister may send the assembly into mission.*

**A: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.**

**C: Thanks be to God.**

#### **Readings for this week:**

Monday: Psalm 148

Tuesday: Isaiah 49:5-15

Wednesday: 2 Peter 3:8-13

Thursday: 1 Kings 3:5-14

Friday: Luke 2:15-21

Saturday: James 3:13-18

Sunday Christmas 2: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; and  
John 1:10-18