

Sunday, December 30, 2018
First Sunday of Christmas

PRELUDE

“Christmas Medley”

Joseph Martin

***GATHERING SONG**

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

ELW 288

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

***GREETING**

☞ *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.

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE**

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

ELW 276

Infant holy, infant lowly,
for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, angels singing,

**bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child is Lord of all!**

**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story,
tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

- ☞ *Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God,*
☞ **and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Sweet Little Jesus Boy”
David Newman, soloist

Robert MacGimsey

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

Having dedicated her son Samuel to God’s service, Hannah visits him every year when she and her husband, Elkanah, come to the Lord’s house to offer sacrifices. God grants Hannah more children, and Samuel himself gains favor in the sight of all.

¹⁸Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “May the LORD repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the LORD”; and then they would return to their home.

²⁶Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and with the people.

Reflection

What is Samuel doing in this text? The context indicate he is living at the shrine at Shiloh. The text says he was wearing a linen ephod, which is a garment sort of like an apron that those who were priests wore. When did he see his parents? (verse 19) As to why Samuel was living away from his mother as a boy, see 1 Samuel 1:19-28. What does the writer of 1 Samuel say about Samuel? (verse 26)

The first Noel the angel did say
 was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
 in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
 on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
 Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
 Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
 shining in the east beyond them far;
 and to the earth it gave great light,
 and so it continued both day and night.
 Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
 Born is the King of Israel.

Psalm 148

- ¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD | from the heavens;
 praise God | in the heights.
- ²**Praise the LORD, | all you angels;
 sing praise, all you | hosts of heaven.**
- ³Praise the LORD, | sun and moon;
 sing praise, all you | shining stars.
- ⁴**Praise the LORD, heav- | en of heavens,
 and you waters a- | bove the heavens.**
- ⁵Let them praise the name | of the LORD,
 who commanded, and they | were created,
- ⁶**who made them stand fast forev- | er and ever,
 giving them a law that shall not | pass away.**
- ⁷Praise the LORD | from the earth,
 you sea monsters | and all deeps;
- ⁸**fire and hail, | snow and fog,
 tempestuous wind, do- | ing God's will;**
- ⁹mountains | and all hills,
 fruit trees | and all cedars;
- ¹⁰**wild beasts | and all cattle,
 creeping things and | flying birds;**
- ¹¹sovereigns of the earth | and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers | of the world;
- ¹²**young | men and maidens,
 old and | young together.**
- ¹³Let them praise the name | of the LORD,
 whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over | earth and heaven.
- ¹⁴**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!**

Reflection

We are still celebrating Christmas. What does this psalm remind us about praising God? Verse 2 is a reminder of the story of the birth of Jesus in Luke 2:13-14. As a Christmas spiritual discipline, perhaps you could read this psalm every day this week.

SECOND READING

Colossians 3:12-17

Just as newly baptized Christians in the early church were clothed with white robes upon arising from the baptismal waters, so all who have received God's gift of life in Jesus Christ are covered with the character of Christ.

¹²As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Reflection

This text is another reminder of how we celebrate Christmas throughout our lives. Who are we, as the baptized of Christ? (verse 12) What does it mean to "clothe yourselves" with the behaviors and attitudes listed? Does this mean we will always get along and agree with everyone? (verse 13) When we have differences, what does the writer of Colossians remind us to do? What gives us harmony? (verse 14) As I reflect on this verse, I see that we are not called to unity, but harmony. What do you think this means? To what are we all called? (verse 15) What does this lead to? What does it mean to you to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"? How do we do that? Luther reminds us to read, meditate on, and inwardly digest the Word of God. Who are our teachers in this word? How do we let the word shine through us? What are your favorite psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs? How do you use them to express your trust and faith in God? (verse 17)

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

"Angels We Have Heard On High" refrain only

ELW 289

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

***GOSPEL**

Luke 2:41-52

Jesus grew up in a family that went to the Passover festival each year. It was in this environment of faithful adherence to the law that Jesus grew into spiritual maturity and an understanding of his identity and mission.

⁴¹Now every year [Jesus'] parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

⁴⁴Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to

look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." ⁴⁹He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

⁵²And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

Reflection

Sarah is preaching on this text in her internship congregation. She told me about this by telling me that she was wrestling with the problems of an adolescent boy who ran away from home, his parents couldn't find him, and when they did find him he was annoyed with them for worrying about him! "And his name was Jesus!" she said. I think probably Luke was familiar with the story of the boy Samuel that we read in our first text today. (Although Samuel's parents didn't have any trouble finding him.) When Jesus' parents finally found him, where was he and what was he doing? (verses 41-46) What does this suggest about questioning the Scriptures? (Misty calls these things I write "Reflections," but what they really are is questions about the texts, and even more, questions that the texts ask of me!) What did Mary and Joseph think about what Jesus told them he was doing? (verses 48-50) Even though they didn't understand him, the story says that Mary "treasured all the things in her heart." (verse 51) Verse 52 reminds me of verse 26 in our first text for today. I would paraphrase it, "As Jesus got older, he got wiser, and people respected and loved him. And so did God!" One of the things I believe about our congregation (and aspire to for us!) is that we can be a place and a people where anyone can come and ask hard questions and argue faithfully about what we believe. What do you think?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

"Sing With Angels"

Rev. Roger Lenander

SONG OF THE DAY

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

ELW 270

**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 hosts 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'n-born 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*

***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!

***PRAYER SONG**

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" refrain only

ELW 283

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,

Christ the Lord!

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Dwelling in the presence of God with us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all in any need.

A brief silence.

God of wisdom, open our ears to hear your grace through the words and deeds of children. Inspire the youngest and oldest in our midst to learn from one another with humility and patience. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of creation, praise to you for hills and mountains, fruit trees and forests, animals wild and tame, sea monsters, birds, and reptiles. Spark delight in our hearts for all that you have made. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of hope, call us to peace and bind us together in perfect unity. Make wars to cease. Guide the leaders of the nations in your way of wisdom, compassion, and tolerance. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of healing, mend the broken hearts of those who suffer this day. Treasure everyone who struggles with addiction, loneliness, hunger, unemployment, mental illness, or sickness *especially Doris, Jeff, Trina, Linda, Elaine, Jim, Dorothy, Lisa and her baby Lara*, and for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (pause for 10 seconds). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of life, draw us into the body of Christ and make us grow in faith and hope. Fill us with hearts of thanksgiving made visible in our words and actions for the sake of the whole world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of delight, fill us with songs of praise and hope even in the midst of despair and death. Strengthen our faith until the day we will be gathered around your throne singing in eternal praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Trusting in the presence of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, we commend all for whom we pray, dwelling in the light and hope of Christ, our Savior.

Amen!

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

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

G **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

“Jesus, What a Wonderful Child”

ELW 297

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.
Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild;
new life, new hope the child will bring.
Listen to the angels sing:
"Glory, glory, glory," let the heavens ring!

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P *Holy God,*

C **your beauty shines forth from the manger and your love flows from the cross. As you gather us around these signs of your love come among us, warm us to extend your care among the hungry and all in need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!**

***DIALOGUE**

P *The Lord be with you.*

C **And also with you.**

P *Lift up your hearts.*

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

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

***PREFACE**

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
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, HOLY**

“Of the Father's Love Begotten” vs. 4

ELW 295

Let the heights of heav'n adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
pow'rs, dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:*

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

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 for the 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 for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C **Christ has died.**

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

P *With this bread and cup*

we remember your Word dwelling among us,

full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P *Holy God, we long for your Spirit.*

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C **Come, Holy Spirit.**

P *All praise and glory are yours,*

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever.

☞ Amen!

***LORD'S PRAYER**

ℙ *Gathered together as one, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

☞ **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen!**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

ℙ *Come to the table where Christ meets you. Eat, rejoice, and be glad!*

***BLESSING**

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

☞ Amen!

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

ℙ *Holy One,*

☞ **in Jesus we behold the light of the world come near. As you have come among us now, send us out in joy, hastening to share the good news of your love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit dwelling among us now and forever. Amen!**

***BENEDICTION**

ℙ *God the Creator who delights in you,
Jesus the Savior who is born for you,
and the lifegiving Spirit who shines on you,
✠ bless you and keep you in hope and peace.*

☞ Amen!

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

***DISMISSAL**

P *Go in peace. Share the joy of Christ.*

G **Thanks be to God!**