



Simeon & Anna See Jesus

December 27, 2020

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
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Church: (510) 793-6285

December 27, 2020
Christmas 1
Ministers: The People of Holy Trinity
Web Site: holytrinityfremont.org

GATHERING . . . WORD . . . SENDING

[Click here for a video of the service.](#)

PRELUDE . . . *“What Child Is This?”*

WELCOME

SINGING BOWL

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Glory to God in the highest!

All: And hope to every discouraged heart.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

All: And peace to every conflicted soul.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

All: And joy to every downcast spirit.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

All: And love to everyone. Let us sing praises to our God. Let us offer this light against the darkness.

PRAYER OF YEARNING FOR THE CLOSING OF 2020 AND THE BEGINNING OF 2021

All may make the sign of the cross.

P: Gracious God, we would like to be among those who saw the coming of the Christ Child, those who dropped all that they were doing and traveled to worship the coming of God's love into this world.

All: We would like to be those who cared for God in infant vulnerability; who tickled and cuddled and comforted the growing child, that he might know love and safety.

P: And yet, merciful God, we must recognize all the times we are more like Herod.

All: Whenever we, in our actions or in our inactions, find our own need for control more compelling than the needs of others for health and safety.

P: Whenever we cling to the security of our privilege, rather than standing up for the rights of the oppressed.

All: Whenever we are complicit in the harming of innocents for the sake of profit, or power, or because we fear to know, and to change, the injustices of this world.

P: Loving God, we confess our sins against you and one another, and pray that you will fill us with your light,

All: that we may live our lives as true disciples in your name, without counting the cost.

P: In the name of Christ, the one who showed us the way, we pray.

All: Amen.

Silence for Reflection

P: God's light is present in this world. Present in the Christ child, born to lead us out of darkness. Present in the star, in all that guides us to love.

All: God's light is in the world, and the darkness did not overcome it.

P: God's grace is in the world, and our mis-steps will not overcome it.

All: We are loved, we are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen.

HYMN . . . “Once in Royal David’s City”

GREETING

P: With hearts open wide and thanksgivings carried like a king's gift, we journey to the stable. Amazing God, tender child, we offer you our words, brimming with joy.

All: We offer our hands, ready to lift those who have fallen, and ready to preserve and create beauty.

P: We offer our hearts, persistent in loving and faithful in caring.

All: Amazing God, tender child, we thank you for this season of star and song. Amen.

LITANY

L: The Prophet Isaiah said: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

All: O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

L: The Priest Zechariah said before John's birth: By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

All: O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

L: The Evangelist John said: What has come into being in him was life and the life is the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

All: O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

L: God is with us. God is coming into our lives in a new way. The birth of the Christ-child is the renewal of hope; a reminder that Christ will come again. Keep watch for the light; it is drawing near.

All: O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: God of holy mystery, it was no heavenly stranger that came to save us.

All: It was no happy accident that freed us from captivity.

L: It was no careless gesture that showed us the ways of life and death.

All: You are our light and our salvation. You alone are worthy of our worship and praise.

L: In this season of Christmas, remind us once more of what you offer: a love born of endless searching, a connection born of deep longing, a future born of selfless sacrifice.

All: Be with us now, for we are your people and you are our God. Amen.

HYMN . . . *“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”*

POEM . . . *“Hush” - Pastor Tim*

HYMN . . . *“The First Noel”*

GATHERING . . . WORD . . . SENDING

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORD

Reader: Don't be afraid! Look! Listen!

All: God brings us good news, wonderful news for all people in the words of Christmas.

READING . . . *Luke 2:22-40*

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 (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 worshiped 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 favor of God was upon him.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Reader: There was song in the air when the angels announced
Christ's birth.

All: Is there a song in our hearts?

Reader: May it be so, O God.

All: May it be so.

CHILDREN'S TIME . . . *Pastor Tim*

HYMN . . . “*In the Bleak Midwinter*”

POEM . . . “*In the Midst of It All*” - *Pastor Tim*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

L: What greater gift could we receive than the gift of God's own child;

All: **a child who is our light and our salvation.**

L: We, who have received so much,

All: **are called to join the shepherds in sharing our joy;**

L: we are challenged to join the magi, in offering our gifts to the Christ child.

All: **Come! Let us give out of our abundance.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY PRAYER

L: Holy God, your beauty shines forth from the manger and your love flows from the cross.

All: **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.**

THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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

All: **Your mercy is great.**

L: 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.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: 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. Reveal your power to heal and to save. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: 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.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: Hear now the prayers of our hearts said silently or aloud.

Here other prayers may be offered.

L: Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

All: 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.

GATHERING . . . WORD . . . SENDING

HYMN . . . “Let Our Gladness Have No End”

A CHRISTMAS AFFIRMATION

P: We believe in God, the creator and giver of life,

All: who brought all creation to birth, who parents us,

P: protecting, nurturing,

All: and cherishing us.

P: We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby,

All: embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

P: We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth,

All: always drawing us on to be born anew, encouraging, exhorting, comforting,

P: nourishing our growth

All: and inspiring our living.

P: We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God, through Christ.

All: Hunted at birth and humiliated at death,

P: Christ entered our fearful darkness

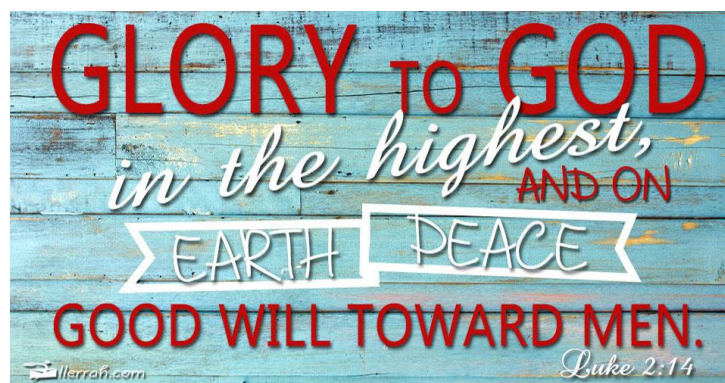
All: so that we might enter his glorious light and share the life of his resurrection.

P: And we believe that each person is a glimpse of the face of God,

All: a sign of the life to come,

P: and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together.

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Amen.



SENDING

P: May this eternal truth be always on our hearts – that the God who breathed this world into being,

All: placed stars into the heavens, and designed a butterfly's wing,

P: is the God who entrusted the infant Jesus to the care of ordinary people;

All: became vulnerable that we might know how strong is the wonder of Love.

P: A mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp.

All: A mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore.

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, for we have seen the salvation of our God.

All: We go with joy, for Christ has clothed us with love.

L: Go in hope, for the Spirit shows us our glorious inheritance in the Lord.

All: We go with God.

POSTLUDE . . . “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

SINGING BOWL

Pastor: Tim Huff

Lay Liturgist: Keith Hillesland

Reader: Rachel Huff

Music: Leilani Camara

Video Editing: Carmen Blair

Web and Social Media: Keith Hillesland and Kathy Miedema