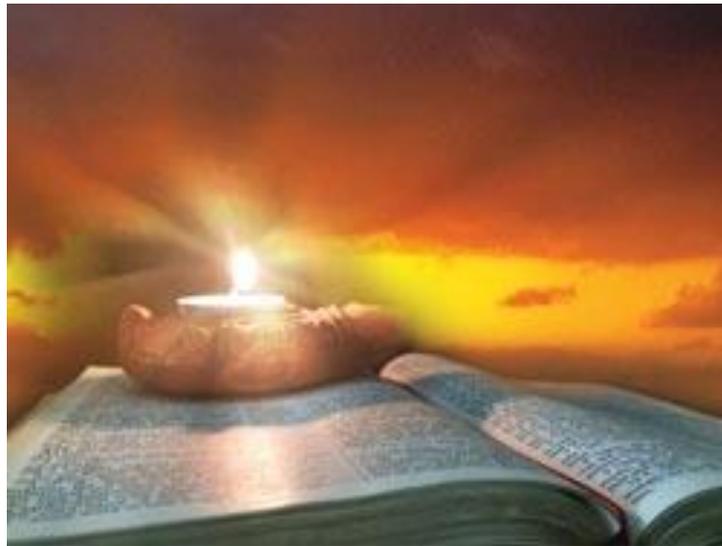


St. Mark's Lutheran Church
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Sunday, January 3, 2021
Second Sunday of Christmas
10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

In the name of God: Father, Son ✠ and Holy Spirit.

Amen

We pray this Hymn for a New Year. #793 ~ “*Be Thou My Vision*” (vs. 1-2)

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
Thou my best thought by day and by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.*

*Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my soul’s shelter and thou my high tow’r,
Raise thou me heav’n-ward, O Pow’r of my pow’r.*

O Lord God, as we stand at the beginning of this new year, indeed, be thou our vision and our best thought, be thou our wisdom and true word, be thou the shelter of each soul worshiping you this day and forevermore until you raise us heavenward O power of our power.

Lord, we each have our hopes and expectations for the year that is ahead of us—but You alone know what it holds for us, and only You can give us the strength and the wisdom we will need to meet its challenges. Help us to humbly put our hands into Your hand, and to trust You and to seek Your will for our lives during 2021. Where we failed to love you and our neighbor in 2020, we ask your forgiveness and mercy. When life’s uncertainties come to in the days ahead, assure us of the certainty of Your unchanging love and grace. When life’s inevitable disappointments and heartaches come, help us to turn to You for the stability and comfort we will need. And in the midst of temptations and the pull of our stubborn self-will, help us not to lose our way but to have the courage to do what is right in Your sight. As you open our eyes to the sorrows and injustices of our hurting world, and help us to respond with compassion and sacrifice to those who are in need.

Thank you Lord God for the promise and hope of this new year, and we look forward to it with expectancy and faith in the name of our Lord and Savior, who by His death and resurrection has given us hope both for this world and the world to come.

Amen

HYMN 793 ~ “*Be Thou My Vision*” (continues) vs. 3-4

*Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:
Thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.*

*Light of my soul, after victory won,
May I reach heaven’s joy, O heaven’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.*

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935, alt.; tr, Mary E. Bryne, 1880-1931. Music: Irish traditional.



OFFERING Let us pray. Thank you generous God for “making all things new” (Rev. 21:5). Thank you for all that you’ve allowed into our lives this past year, the good along with the hard things, which have reminded us how much we need you and rely on your presence filling us every single day. We pray for your Spirit to lead us each step of this New Year. Now we offer to You these first fruits, these gifts and offerings from what you have first given us. Receive these gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh from us even as You shine your light in us, through us, over us, that we may make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes.

To You O God be glory and honor, in this New Year, and forever. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:7-9

Thus 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." See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.
Here ends the reading.

PSALM 147:12-19

¹²Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion,

¹³who has strengthened the bars of your gates
and has blessed your children within you.

¹⁴God has established peace on your borders
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵God sends out a command to the earth,
a Word that runs very swiftly.

¹⁶God gives snow like wool,
scattering frost like ashes, and hail like bread crumbs.

¹⁷Who can stand against God's cold?

¹⁸**The Lord sends forth the Word and melts them;**
the wind blows,
and the waters flow.

¹⁹God declares the Word to Jacob,
statutes and judgments to Israel. Hallelujah!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE ~ Pastor Vern

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ~ HYMN 295 ~ "*Of the Father's Love Begotten*" vs. 1-2

*Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending, he,
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.*

*Oh, that birth forever blessed, when the virgin full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's redeemer, first revealed his sacred face,
Evermore and evermore.*

GOSPEL: John 1:1-18

The Holy Gospel according to John, the first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In 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. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "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 indeed 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 has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord!
Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON ~ Pastor Dave

HYMN 295 ~ "Of the Father's Love Begotten" (continued) vs. 3-5

*This is he whom seers of old time chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word;
Now He shines, the long-expected; let creation praise its Lord.
Evermore and evermore.*

*Let the heights of heav'n adore him; angel hosts, hos praises to 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.*

*Christ, to thee, with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory and dominion, and eternal victory
Evermore and evermore. Amen.*

Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348-413; tr. Composite. Music: Plainsong mode V, 13th cent.

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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.

Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth. Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gathering God, You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor. Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance, from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, lakes to mountains, deserts to rainforests. Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of grace and glory, You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority. Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities. Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comforting God, You bring consolation to those who weep. Embrace those who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated. Accompany those living with chronic and invisible illness. Sustain the weak and weary. Refresh those who labor under the weight of pain or sickness (*especially Bobby, Ed, Martin, Dan, Brenda, Sandie, Gail, Judy, Sarah & Charleston*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Omnipresent God, as we journey into the year of our Lord, Two thousand and Twenty-one, You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for all the years gone by, joyful, painful, or challenging, and for all the years ahead. Today we are mindful of those who have died in faith, the martyrs, our ancestors, relatives, wives and husbands, parents and children. With all the saints who have gone before us, and in the fullness of all time, gather us all together in your mercy. 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 who has taught us to pray:

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

HYMN 632 ~ "*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*" vs. 1-3

*O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:*

*Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.*

*Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.*

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt. Music: William Croft, 1678-1727

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 you today, this year, and evermore and evermore, † through the Word made flesh.

Amen.

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.