
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

December 30, 2018

AS WE GATHER...Simeon and Anna rejoiced when Mary and Joseph brought week-old Jesus to the temple. He was physical proof that God was keeping His promises made centuries ago. Firstborn males had to be consecrated to God because He had spared them at the time of the exodus. Today is the Sunday after Christmas, and we focus on how we exhibit love, forgiveness, and peace, thanking God for His promises kept.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING BLESSING

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

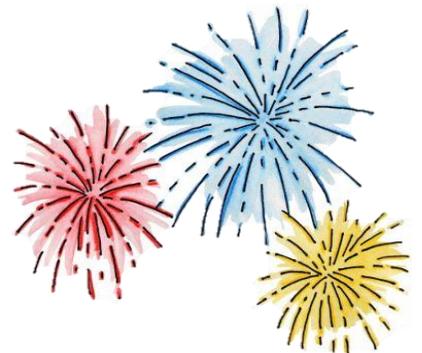
P: If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

C: and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Silence for reflection

P: Before we join in our Christmas celebration, we clear the way by confessing our sins and hearing once again God's gracious words of forgiveness.....

C: We admit that we are sinners, Lord...we sin in our thoughts, words and actions, by things we have done and let undone. We especially recognize our fear of the future...wanting to know and control our future...rather than trusting you for what is to come. Forgive us when we forget your promises for our future...and make clear to the eyes of our hearts that our future is in your loving hands.



SONG OF CONFESSION: “White As Snow” (twice through)

White as snow, white as snow,
Though my sins were as scarlet
Lord, I know, Lord I know
That I’m clean and forgiven,
Through the power of your blood,
Through the wonder of your love,
Through faith in you, I know that I can be
White as snow.

P: God knows our fears, our failures to trust him for the future, and in Christ assures us of his forgiveness. I therefore, in Christ’s stead, announce the free and full forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen!

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Exodus 13:1-3, 11-15

Every firstborn Israelite male must be redeemed, remembering the exodus.

The Lord said to Moses, “Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.” Then Moses said to the people, “Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the Lord brought you out from this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

“When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, you shall set apart to the Lord all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your animals that are males shall be the Lord's. Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. And when in time to come your son asks you, ‘What does

this mean?’ you shall say to him, ‘By a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the Lord killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all the males that first open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40

Simeon and Anna praise God when they see the baby Jesus.

And 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 male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said 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, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,

according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation

that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory to your people Israel.”

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN: "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High" (twice through)

Lord, I lift your name on high,
Lord, I love to sing your praises,
I'm so glad you're in my life,
I'm so glad you came to save us.
You came from heaven to earth to show the way,
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay,
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky,
Lord, I lift your name on high.

SERMON

CONFESSING OUR FAITH

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

And born of the virgin Mary.

He 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,

And is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

The holy Christian Church,

The communion of saints,

The forgiveness of sins,

The resurrection of the body

And the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERINGS GATHERED

We give our offerings as a sign of our lives given to the Lord in humble service.

OFFERTORY

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

After each petition the response is:

P: Lord in your mercy

C: **Hear our prayer.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Jesus Loves Me”

1. Jesus loves me -
this I know, For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong -
They are weak, but He is strong.
Refrain Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.
2. Jesus loves me –
loves me still, Though I'm very weak and ill;
That I might from sin be free,
Bled and died upon the tree. **Refrain**
3. Jesus loves me –
He who died, Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in! **Refrain**
4. Jesus loves me –
He will stay Close beside me all the way,
Though hast bled and died for me,
I will henceforth live for the. **Refrain**

“Freely, Freely”

God forgave my sin in Jesus’ name,
I’ve been born again in Jesus’ name;
And in Jesus’ name I come to you
To share His love as He told me to.
He said, “Freely, freely you have received:
Freely, freely give.
Go in my name, and because you believe,
Others will know that I live.”

All pow’r is giv’n in Jesus’ name,
In earth and heav’n in Jesus’ name
And in Jesus’ name I come to you
To share His pow’r as He told me to.
He said, “Freely, freely you have received:
Freely, freely give.
Go in my name, and because you believe,
Others will know that I live.”

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”

**Refrain Just a closer walk with Thee
 Grant it Jesus, if you please;
 Daily walking close to Thee
 Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.**

1. I am weak but Thou art strong
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I’ll be satisfied as long
As I walk, dear Lord, close to Thee. **(Refrain)**
2. Thru this world of toil and snares,
If I falter, Lord, who cares?
Who with me my burden shares?
None but Thee, dear Lord, none but Thee. **(Refrain)**
3. When my feeble life is o’er,
Time for me will be no more;
On that bright eternal shore
I will walk, dear Lord, close to Thee. **(Refrain)**

BENEDICTION

CLOSING SONG: “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

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 for ever more.
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 his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!