

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, December 4, 2022

Praise the LORD, O my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Psalm 103:1

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 97 (p. 820)

The LORD reigns, let the earth be glad;

let the distant shores rejoice.

Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

Fire goes before him and consumes his foes on every side.

His lightning lights up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory.

**All who worship images are put to shame, those who boast in idols—
worship him, all you gods!**

Zion hears and rejoices and the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments, O LORD.

For you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

Let those who love the LORD hate evil,

for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Light is shed upon the righteous and joy on the upright in heart.

Rejoice in the LORD, you who are righteous, and praise his holy name.

* *Congregation is requested to stand, if able.*

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrow's load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon, blotting out each dark misdeed;
All that well deserved his anger he no more will see or heed.
She hath suffered many a day, now her griefs have passed away;
God will change her pining sadness into ever-springing gladness.

For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
Bidding all men to repentance, since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked, make the rougher places plain;
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad;
And all flesh shall see the token, that his word is never broken. Amen.

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion, blot out our transgressions. Wash away our iniquity and cleanse us from our sins.

All: For we know our transgressions, and our sins are always before us. Against you, you only, have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

Leader: Surely we were sinful at birth, sinful from the time we were conceived. Cleanse us, and we will be clean; wash us, and we will be whiter than snow. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and grant us steadfast obedience.

All: We praise you for the assurance we have of forgiveness through the blood of our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

Micah 7:18-19

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Exodus 20:1-17; Romans 13:8-10

Congregational Response

(also printed on the last page of the bulletin)

Savior of the Nations, Come

Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here thy home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.

Not of flesh and blood the Son,
Offspring of the Holy One;
Born of Mary ever blest,
God in flesh is manifest.

Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child
Of the virgin undefiled!
Though by all the world disowned,
Still to be in heav'n enthroned.

From the Father forth he came
And returneth to the same,
Captive leading death and hell,
High the song of triumph swell!

Thou, the Father's only Son,
Hast o'er sin the vict'ry won.
Boundless shall thy kingdom be;
When shall we its glories see?

Praise to God the Father sing,
Praise to God the Son, our King,
Praise to God the Spirit be
Ever and eternally. Amen.

Confession of Faith

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 16. *Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?*

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his descendants, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

Q. 17. *Into what estate did the Fall bring mankind?*

A. The Fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Q. 18. *What is the sinfulness of that estate into which man fell?*

A. The sinfulness of that estate into which man fell consists of: the guilt of Adam's first sin, the lack of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin, together with all actual transgressions that proceed from it.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Stewardship

Doxology*

Hymn 731

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Lord's Prayer*

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

Second Reading*

Luke 1:57-80

Congregational Response

Hymn 201

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

Sermon

Pastor Ben Muresan

“Benedictus”
Luke 1:57-80

GOD’S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*

(sung to the tune of “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”)

Song of Zechariah

Blest be God, the Lord of Israel; he has come to set us free!
And a horn of full salvation he has raised from David’s seed.
God has visited his people to redeem them as foretold
In the promise he had spoken thro’ his prophets from of old.

God has come in might to save us from the hatred of our foes.
From their cruel hand he frees us, and his tender mercy shows
Mercy promised in his cov’nant to our fathers whom he chose.
He will keep his oath to Abr’am to release us from our woes.

God has sworn to grant deliv’rance and restore us to our place:
Serving boldly in his presence, just and holy all our days.
You, my child, will be his Prophet, called and sent by God Most High.
You must go before the Lord now to prepare his ways aright.

Bring the knowledge of salvation to God’s people in their sin.
Preach that God is tenderhearted, and by him are sins forgiv’n.
His great mercy, like the sunrise, brightly shines in deepest night,
Guiding those who sit in darkness to the way of peace and light. Amen.

Benediction*

Congregational Benediction Response*

(Sung to STUTTGART [Hymn 5])

Honor, glory, might, and merit,
Be to God and God alone!
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
One in Three and Three in One. Amen.

HOME WORSHIP GUIDE

The daily reading schedule follows the One Year Bible Reading Plan.

Monday, December 5

Scripture: Hosea 1:1 - 3:5; 1 John 5:1-21; Psalm 124:1-8; Proverbs 29:5-8

Catechism: The Westminster Confession of Faith: Chapter 4

Pray for: Our federal, state, and local government leaders.

Tuesday, December 6

Scripture: Hosea 4:1 - 5:15; 2 John 1:1-13; Psalm 125:1-5; Proverbs 29:9-11

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 45

Pray for: Our military, police, fire, and medical personnel.

Wednesday, December 7

Scripture: Hosea 6:1 - 9:17; 3 John 1:1-15; Psalm 126:1-6; Proverbs 29:12-14

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 46

Pray for: Our covenant children and Christian military chaplains.
The churches in Kiribati and persecuted Christians.

Thursday, December 8

Scripture: Hosea 10:1 - 14:9; Jude 1:1-25; Psalm 127:1-5; Proverbs 29:15-17

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 47

Pray for: Our Elders, Deacons, Women's Ministry, & the PCA.
Our pregnant moms.

Friday, December 9

Scripture: Joel 1:1 - 3:21; Revelation 1:1-20; Psalm 128:1-6; Proverbs 29:18

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 48

Pray for: Our members who have ongoing health care needs.

Saturday, December 10

Scripture: Amos 1:1 - 3:15; Revelation 2:1-17; Psalm 129:1-8; Proverbs 29:19-20

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 49

Pray for: The preaching and for our Sunday School teachers.

Sunday, December 11

Scripture: Amos 4:1 - 6:14; Revelation 2:18 - 3:6; Psalm 130:1-8; Proverbs 29:21-22

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 50

Pray for: Our worship this morning.

MISSIONS CORNER

Pray for our missionaries. Their prayer requests are sent out through the Prayer Chain and their newsletters are published in Grace Notes as they become available.

Ray & Michele Call | Presbyterian Church in Belize

followtruth99@gmail.com

Karl & Sun Dahlfred | OMF International in Thailand

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LORD'S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

Waiting can be difficult. We have to wait in lines, wait in traffic, wait for others. All this waiting can try our patience. It also leads to a sense of satisfaction when our wait is over and we finally get to the front of the line, or traffic eases, or the people we have been waiting for finally arrive.

This is, in a sense, the reason why Zechariah greatly rejoiced when he was enabled to speak. He rejoiced because for over 400 years, the people of Israel had not heard from God. They were waiting in hope that God would fulfill his promise of sending a Savior to redeem his people from their sins. And now the wait was over. God had spoken once again to his people through angels, explaining that the fullness of time had come, and that the Savior would soon be born. Zechariah's family had a significant role to play in the Savior's ministry. The wait was over, and Zechariah rejoiced through his song of praise. Philip Ryken, in his commentary on Luke, writes:

Zechariah understood the staggering implications of what the angel had promised, or else, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Zechariah spoke better than he knew. His son [John] would be the forerunner to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. And if his son was the forerunner, then salvation was on its way. At stake in the birth of these two babies was nothing less than the salvation of the world.

We have an even clearer picture than Zechariah of how God used John's ministry to prepare the way for the Lord Jesus, and then how the Lord Jesus lived, died, rose again, and ascended into heaven for our salvation. We are now waiting for his return, but as we wait, we do so with patience, hope, and joy, assured that he will return just as he promised.

1. For review, read Mary's song from Luke 1:46-56. What were some of the reasons why she magnified the Lord? What are some reasons that you have in your own life for magnifying the Lord?
2. Read Luke 1:5-25 and 57-66. Why was Zechariah left unable to speak until after his son was born? What was God teaching Zechariah, and what can you learn from this?
3. What is the significance of the word "visited" in Luke 1:68? What does this reveal about the incarnation and the identity of Jesus as both man and God?
4. Why is Jesus described as a "horn of salvation" by Zechariah in Luke 1:69? What does this teach you about the salvation that Christ secured?
5. How might you serve the Lord "without fear, in holiness and righteousness" all of your days (Luke 1:74-75)?

Savior of the Nations, Come



1. Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, vir - gin's Son, make here thy home!
 2. Not of flesh and blood the Son, off - spring of the Ho - ly One;
 3. Won - drous birth! O won - drous Child of the vir - gin un - de - filed!
 4. From the Fa - ther forth he came and re - turn - eth to the same,



- Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
 born of Ma - ry ev - er blest, God in flesh is man - i - fest.
 Though by all the world dis - owned, still to be in heav'n en - throned.
 cap - tive lead - ing death and hell, high the song of tri - umph swell!



5. Thou, the Father's only Son,
 hast o'er sin the vict'ry won.
 Boundless shall thy kingdom be;
 when shall we its glories see?

6. Praise to God the Father sing,
 Praise to God the Son, our King,
 Praise to God the Spirit be
 ever and eternally.

Ambrose of Milan, 340–397
 Tr. Martin Luther, 1524
 Tr. William M. Reynolds, 1860; alt.

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND 7.7.7.7.
 Adapted from *Geistliches Gesangbüchlein*, Wittenberg, 1524