

# FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Seeing Our Salvation

December 27, 2020



## AS WE GATHER

The Gospel for the First Sunday after Christmas takes us to the temple in Jerusalem, where Jesus is brought by Mary and Joseph. In presenting Him there, they are affirming that He is dedicated to God as a firstborn son. But He is much more than a son—He is the Son. In her classic hymn text, German hymnist Elisabeth Cruciger celebrates His coming as she writes, “The only Son from heaven, foretold by ancient seers, By God the Father given, In human form appears. No sphere His light confining, No star so brightly shining As He, our Morning Star” (*LSB* 402:1). Jesus is the One in whom we see our salvation, whose light guides our way through life, and whose presence enlightens our world. With joy, we worship Him!

## ✘ PREPARATION ✘

## INVOCATION

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the ✘ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
People: Amen.

## OPENING SENTENCES *Luke 2:30, 32; Psalm 71:19, 23*

Leader: Alleluia! My eyes have seen Your salvation,  
People: **a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel. Alleluia!**

Leader: Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens.

**People:** You who have done great things, O God, who is like You?  
**Leader:** My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to You;  
**People:** my soul also, which You have redeemed.

**HYMN**

“Joy to the World”

#387

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

**Leader:** People redeemed by the Lord, let us now make confession of our sins to God, our heavenly Father.

**People:** **Merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We repent of having sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. We have left undone those things we ought to have done; we have done those things we ought not to have done. We have not lived our lives fully in the freedom won for us by our Lord. We have not always shared the bounty You have given us as stewards of Your creation. We sincerely repent of our sins and humbly ask Your grace and forgiveness in Jesus, our Savior. By the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, lead us to change what is sinful in our lives that each day we grow in righteousness and godly living to the glory of Your holy name.**

**Leader:** God has promised pardon, life, and salvation because of the atoning sacrifice of His beloved Son, who has replaced slavery to sin with a priceless inheritance of freedom and joy. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. As you believe, so may it be.

**People:** **Amen.**

**✠ WORD ✠**

**HYMN**

“Go Tell It On the Mountain”

#388

## **SALUTATION**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Leader: Let us pray.

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 Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## **CELEBRATION OF THE DAY**

Leader: The days immediately following the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus on Christmas Day have been utilized by the Church as a time for special commemorations. December 26 is the Festival of St. Stephen, the first martyr, and December 27 is the Festival of St. John, one of the best known of the disciples. Known as “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” John plays a prominent part in the years of Jesus’ earthly ministry and is one of the most active of the apostles in the time after our Lord’s ascension, when the Christian Church had its beginnings. He is honored for his contributions to the New Testament, including the Gospel according to St. John, three Epistles, and the Book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible. John is commemorated in artwork, in literature, and in song. Together we sing stanzas 1 and 8 of the hymn “By All Your Saints in Warfare.”

Leader: The son of a successful fishing businessman and a caring mother, John was in the inner circle of the disciples of Jesus. From the cross, Jesus entrusted His mother, Mary, to the care of John because He knew she would be cared for in a kindly way. Tradition suggests that Mary lived with John for some fifteen years after the time of Jesus' ascension. Through the words of John's writing, we hear Jesus confidently affirm who He was and is, and why He had come to earth. "I am the bread of life; I am the resurrection and the life," He says (John 6:35; 11:25). Those words, recorded and shared by John, have inspired all generations of Christian people. We join in the unending chorus of thanks and praise as we sing stanza 3 of "By All Your Saints in Warfare."

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Isaiah 61:10–62:3*  
(Nations will acknowledge the Chosen One of the Lord.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *Galatians 4:4–7*  
(At the right time, God sent His Son into the world.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

People: **To us a child is born, to us a son is given;**

Women: *and the government shall be upon His shoulder.*

Men: *And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

**People:**      **Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things!**

**HOLY GOSPEL**      *Luke 2:22–40*

(Jesus is presented in the temple by Mary and Joseph.)

**Leader:**      The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter

**People:**      **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

**Leader:**      This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:**      **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**      “O Come All Ye Faithful”      #379 vs 1,2,3

**SERMON**      “Lucky Lowly”      **Pastor Pete**

**CREED**      *Apostles’ Creed*      *found in back of hymnal*

**OFFERING & PRAYER**

(Members and Visitors: We would appreciate it if you would please take this time to fill out and pass the “Who’s In The Pew” folders, located at the center aisle end of each pew.)

**Leader:**      Gracious God, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, symbols of your gracious love.

**People:**      **Receive them for the sake of Him who offered Himself for us, Jesus Christ, our brother and Lord.**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**Leader:**      Gathered as God’s people and as heirs of an eternal inheritance, let us pray for the whole Church and for all who bear the name of

Jesus Christ, who is our Light and our Salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Leader: As we remember St. John, Apostle and Evangelist, we pray for the Church, asking that through her the joyous news of salvation be proclaimed as the Holy Spirit directs. Give us faith to acknowledge and rejoice in the fellowship that we share in Christ with people here and in every place, that we may see in each sister and brother in Christ a reflection of Your glory. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord of all, watch over our nation and grant Your divine favor to all who bear office in our land, especially the president and Congress of the United States, the governor and legislature of this state, and to all those who make, administer, and judge our laws. Help them to serve all those in their care according to Your holy will, that we may live in peace and safety.

Save us from pestilence and plague, for unseasonable weather, and the dangers that are ever-present in our lives. Grant us Your blessing as one calendar year closes and another begins. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Give a special measure of blessing to those with special needs. Especially we remember the sick, the shut-in, those dealing with depression, those who sorrow, and others known to us who at this time are in need of prayer. Help us to be people who bless, encourage, and strengthen all those in our circles of relationship and beyond. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Sovereign Lord, we remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served You in Your Church on earth, who now rest from their labors. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven. Bless the communion we share on earth as we await the Supper of the Lamb in His kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Leader: All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, heavenly Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever.

**People: Amen.**

Leader: We sing our Lord's Prayer:

"Lord's Prayer"

*HFG 440*

**Our Father, which 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.**

## **PAX DOMINI**

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.  
*Numbers 6:24–26*

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN** "God Loves Me Dearly"

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