

GATHERING

✠ *The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.* ✠

PRELUDE

*Of the Father's Love Begotten
The First Noel*

Emily Mason Porter
Frederick Frahm

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

INVOCATION *(please stand)*

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh,
the Power of the Most High, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Gathered in the name of Christ, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

Silence for reflection.

Gracious God,
in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our sin against you in thought, word, and deed by what we have done and by what we have left undone. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may trust the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ, the Word made flesh.
Amen.

People of God, I bring you good news of great joy: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord! For his sake God forgives you all your sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** *(please be seated)*

GATHERING HYMN

Of the Father's Love Begotten

ELW#295

(vs 1, 3, 4, 5)

Hymn is sung by the cantor(s); congregation is invited to listen and follow along.

- 1 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.
- 3 This is he whom seers in 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.
- 4 Let the heights of heav'n adore him;
angel hosts, his praises 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.

5 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.

GREETING

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. The light no darkness can overcome.

May the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

✠ *God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.* ✠

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:7-14

The Message

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gifts of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷ Oh yes, GOD says so:

"Shout for joy at the top of your lungs for Jacob!

Announce the good news to the number-one nation!

Raise cheers! Sing praises. Say,

'GOD has saved his people,
saved the core of Israel.'

⁸ "Watch what comes next:

"I'll bring my people back

from the north country

And gather them up from the ends of the earth,

gather those who've gone blind

And those who are lame and limping,

gather pregnant women,

Even the mothers whose birth pangs have started,

bring them all back, a huge crowd!

⁹ "Watch them come! They'll come weeping for joy

as I take their hands and lead them,

Lead them to fresh flowing brooks,

lead them along smooth, uncluttered paths.

Yes, it's because I'm Israel's Father

and Ephraim's my firstborn son!

¹⁰⁻¹⁴ "Hear this, nations! GOD's Message!

Broadcast this all over the world!

Tell them, 'The One who scattered Israel

will gather them together again.

From now on he'll keep a careful eye on them,

like a shepherd with his flock.'

I, GOD, will pay a stiff ransom price for Jacob;

I'll free him from the grip of the Babylonian bully.

The people will climb up Zion's slopes shouting with joy,

their faces beaming because of GOD's bounty—

Grain and wine and oil,
 flocks of sheep, herds of cattle.
 Their lives will be like a well-watered garden,
 never again left to dry up.
 Young women will dance and be happy,
 young men and old men will join in.
 I'll convert their weeping into laughter,
 lavishing comfort, invading their grief with joy.
 I'll make sure that their priests get three square meals a day
 and that my people have more than enough.'" God's Decree.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM *Psalm 147:12-20*

Psalm is sung by the cantor(s); congregation is invited to listen and follow along.

Refrain: O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!

1) O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord!
 O Sion, praise your God!
 He has strengthened the bars of your gates;
 He has blessed your children within you. *Refrain*

2) He established peace on your borders;
 He gives you your fill of finest wheat.
 He sends out his word to the earth,
 And swiftly runs his command. *Refrain*

3) He reveals his word to Jacob;
 To Israel, his decrees and judgments.
 He has not dealt thus with other nations;
 He has not taught them his judgments. *Refrain*

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *(please stand)*

*Acclamation is sung by the cantor(s);
 congregation is invited to listen and follow along.*



The holy gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL *John 1:1-18*
John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

¹In 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. *(please be seated)*

SERMON Pastor Tim Sersen

HYMN OF THE DAY ***Let All Together Praise Our God*** **ELW#287**
(vs. 1, 2, 5, 6)
Hymn is sung by the cantor(s); congregation is invited to listen and follow along.

- 1
- Let all together praise our God
before the highest throne;
today God opens heav'n again
and sends the only Son,
and sends the only Son.
- 2
- From God's right hand the Son descends,
is born an infant small,
and lies in poverty, his bed
a manger in a stall,
a manger in a stall.

5 A wonderful exchange you make:
you take our flesh and blood,
and in return give us to share
the shining realm of God,
the shining realm of God.

6 Unlock the door again today
that leads to paradise;
the angel bars the way no more.
To God let praises rise,
to God let praises rise!

APOSTLES' CREED *(please stand)*

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.** *(please be seated)*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Dwelling in the good news of God with us, let us boldly pray for the church,
the world, and all in need.

Prayer response: Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Trusting in the presence of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, we commend all
for whom we pray, dwelling in the light and hope of Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

*Offering will not be taken during worship; a basket is available in
the back of the sanctuary to drop off today's offering. As we
continue to worship through the gift of radio and internet, we
encourage you to consider giving a gift online at
zionlutheranaberdeen.org/giving or by mail as you are able. If you
would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online.*



OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you
have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and
dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake
of him who gave himself for us—Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S SUPPER

✠ *God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.* ✠

GREAT THANKSGIVING *(please stand)*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray in confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

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. *(please be seated)*

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine.

Come, for Christ meets you in this meal.

BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

(please stand)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always.

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen. *(please be seated)*

SENDING HYMN

The Bells of Christmas

ELW#298

(vs. 1, 2, 4, 5)

Hymn is sung by the cantor(s); congregation is invited to listen and follow along.

1 The bells of Christmas chime once more;
the heav'nly guest is at the door.
He comes to earthly dwellings still
with new year gifts of peace, good will.

2 This world, though wide and far outspread,
could scarcely find for you a bed.
Your cradle was a manger stall,
no pearl nor silk nor kingly hall.

- 4
- Oh, join with me, in gladness sing,
to keep our Christmas with our king,
until our song, from loving souls,
like rushing mighty water rolls!
- 5
- O patriarchs' Joy, O prophets' Song,
O Dayspring bright, awaited long,
O Son of Man, incarnate Word,
great David's Son, great David's Lord:

SENDING WORDS
Glory to God in the highest!
Peace to God's people on earth!

Go in peace. Share the good news of Jesus Christ.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

In the Bleak Midwinter

Valerie Shields

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Zion Lutheran Church

Rooted in Faith ✕ Growing in Spirit ✕ Reaching Out to Those in Need

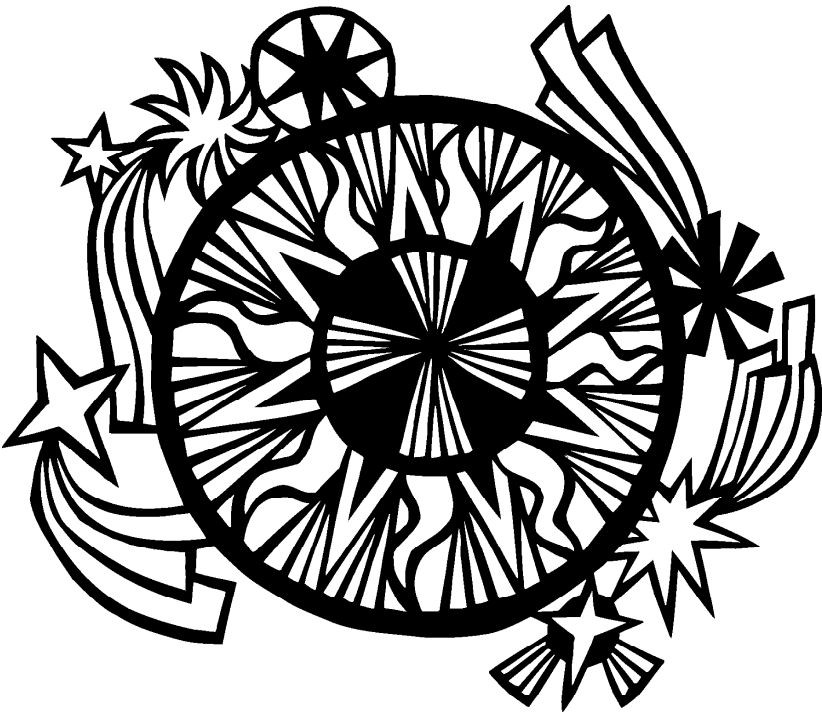
Erin Heidelberger, Pastor
Tim Sersen, Visitation Pastor

1732 S Main Street
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605-225-6755

January 3, 2021

8:30 AM

Second Sunday of Christmas



Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.