



First Sunday After Christmas Day
Year B
December 27, 2020

Key Scripture - Luke 2:25

“Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.”

Theme - My Light, My Love, My Joy



Welcome and Announcements

At this time Trinity will not be gathering in person for worship. Services will be recorded and posted on our Facebook page, which you can access through our website and will be aired on Cogeco YouTV. Our building will also be closed during this lockdown time.

Trinity is Welcoming, Open, Inclusive and Accessible.

- Trinity is an Affirming Congregation

Congregational Notes



SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS



We are grateful for the Town of Smiths Falls and Lanark County. Take Away Meals are subsidized through the generosity of the Community Grant Program and COVID-19 emergency funds.

Two Guys for Lunch are active partners with us in this community service.

Brown Bags and Blessings can continue in the New Year through the kindness of our community and individual benefactors.

Thank you for your prayers, they have been answered. We will continue to seek support during the lockdown so we can all be safer and care for one another until this present crisis is behind us.

We pray that all members of our community will have a way to remain connected and caring in whatever circumstance we find ourselves.

Please consider Pre-Authorized Payments (PAR) as a consistent way to support the congregation

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Smiths Falls is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples dating back countless generations. We are grateful for our neighbours and recognize the opportunity to exercise the Ministry of Reconciliation

Introit MV 14 "Where Two or Three are Gathered"

Where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there, I am there

Call to Worship

This has been a strange year,
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were different in many ways.
We're a bit weary now.
And so we come together knowing we need this time,
This holy time to just be,
Recognising the one thing that has not changed—
God with us, Emmanuel.
Come let us worship together.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light this candle reminding us that
Christ is present here
And the Spirit moves within us.
Let us give thanks to God,
in memory and in hope,
Hallelujah!

Opening Prayer Voices United 80 used with permission Gail Ramshaw 1988 adapted

O God, our hope, our peace, and our rest:
With the appearance of you Son
You have brought us into your new creation.
Form us into your people, and order our lives in you, through Christ,
our light, our love, our joy.
Amen

Hymn 60 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels:

Refrain -

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,*

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

God of God, light of light,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb,
very God, begotten, not created:

Refrain -

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God in the highest:

Refrain -

See, how the shepherds summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;

Refrain -

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

Refrain -

Learning with Children

Traditions:

Spider Web Legend

Children's Prayer

Scripture **Isaiah 61: 10-62:3**

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,

and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

The Vindication and Salvation of Zion

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Psalm 148 (VU871)

Refrain

*Let the whole creation cry,
"Glory be to God on high."*

Praise God from the heavens; give praise in the heights!
Give praise, all you angels; praise God, all you hosts!

**Praise God, sun and moon; give praise, stars and lights!
Praise God, farthest heavens,
and all waters beyond heaven!**

Refrain

***Let the whole creation cry,
“Glory be to God on high.”***

Let all things praise the Holy One at whose command
they were created,
who established them for all time,
setting bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise God from the earth,
great sea creatures and ocean depths,
lightning and hail, snow and frost,
gales that obey God's decree,

all mountains and hills, all fruit trees and cedars,
wild animals and cattle, creatures winged and earth-bound,

sovereigns who rule earth and its people,
all who govern and judge this world,
young men and women alike,
old people and children together!

Refrain

***Let the whole creation cry,
“Glory be to God on high.”***

Let all things praise the name of God,
the name above every other,
whose splendour covers heaven and earth.

You give strength to your people,
songs of praise to your faithful,
to Israel, the people dear to your heart.

Refrain

***Let the whole creation cry,
“Glory be to God on high.”***

Luke 2: 22-40 NSRV

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

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 firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated 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; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

God bless our understanding of this reading.

Meditation 55 "In the Bleak Mid-winter"

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

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As you led Simeon to embrace the infant Jesus, guide us, Holy Spirit, by your gracious light that we might welcome your Word.
Amen,

Reflection **“My Light, My Love, My joy”**

My Light, My Love, My Joy!

Done like dinner—that is how some folks are feeling about Christmas as 2020 draws to a close. The tree is down and decorations packed away in boxes and totes—gone for this year (if they ever saw the light of day); the only things that remain are some turkey leftovers and crumbs from the Covid-19 baking people have been doing.

Some of you, if you are like me; you just want to rest in the stable with the baby. I want to look deep into that baby’s eyes and be filled with wonder. I want my heart to be filled with hope, peace, joy and love that Advent promises and I long for.

I want to be right there, immersed in the Christmas story, imagining the sweetness and strength of a baby’s hand wrapped around my finger, pulling me into the story that is as real today as it was over 2000 years ago.

I want to put my arm around Mary's shoulders and let her rest against me. I want to be able to impart some grandmotherly wisdom to this new mom.

Wouldn't you like to lean into her, so her courage, her strength; her faith melds with yours, especially this year.

I want to shake Joseph's hand and say, "Thank you. Thank you for listening, thank you for following your dreams, thank you, for your love of family." I want to feel the warmth of his hand in mine. I want to feel those calluses and know that this is someone who works with their hands, hard work, skilled work, and to know that he not only builds physical things, but also builds character.

I want to sit with my ears attune to the songs of angel choirs and, yes, I want to sit with the shepherds and hear the wonders they have to tell.

On this first Sunday of Christmas that is where I want to stay. The Christmas story gives me a place where I will feel safe and warm and filled with the light, love and joy that this season is meant to bring.

But we are scooped along by time and we find ourselves climbing large stone steps and walking into the Temple in Jerusalem.

Oh, we could talk about the exegetical perspective of the story. To quote the Dean of the Faculty and Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Andover Newton Theological school in Massachusetts, William R Hoarzag II, Luke introduces the reader to John the Baptist and Jesus, he parallels the material, presenting it in alternating segments and the presentation in the temple concludes this. Or ... "Luke provides a glimpse of the greater divine purpose that Jesus will fulfill . . . that "both parents are attuned to divine revelation, whether it comes through an angel or the

Torah” (the Law of Moses—the Law of the Lord). We might discuss how “Simeon and Anna see in the birth of the child the beginning of a new order that will shake the foundations of the powers that be.” (page 167 Feasting on the Word Year B V1)

Yes, we could talk about all of that and would be wise to do so, and yes, most certainly, we know that once Christmas day is over the work of Christmas has begun and that we are called to do that work. We know as Christians that it is our honour to care for our neighbour. That is why we follow the restrictions placed upon us during these times of a global Covid pandemic.

Yes, all of that is wise and useful and the wonder of the season also allows us to journey along with this family—walk beside them in the awe.

This was not the first time Mary and Joseph were at the Temple, but maybe they are like me, and I suspect I am not alone, that there are sacred places—buildings in this case, where we are in awe every time we enter the space. Over and over again our eyes are wide. We stare hardly aware of what is happening around us. Is this what happened to Mary and Joseph, is this how Simeon was able to swoop in and scoop up the baby Jesus into his arms so easily?

Maybe, maybe his actions were as amazing as his words were. Certainly, we all know people who gravitate to babies, people who pluck babies out of highchairs, tote chairs, mother’s arms as they ask permission to do so, not waiting for a reply. They desperately need to hold a baby. Was this Simeon’s need too? He took the baby in his arms and praised God. Isn’t that what we do too? Every new life brings new hope for a better world for tomorrow? Even through the shadows and the dangers.

Anna knew and she wasn't afraid to let everyone within hearing know about this blessing from God.

If I were there, I pray I would draw near, reach out for the baby like Simeon, be amazed at the prophetic words being spoken as Mary and Joseph were, hear Anna's words of praise, and find the marvel and the hope.

This is the wonder of scripture—over and over again we can visit these stories.

When we seek to find the awe in the mystery we will find it and we will once again be amazed.

Maybe that is all that is required of us in this moment, to reach out for salvation, to take Jesus in our arms, praise God and not be afraid of foreboding words. As we hold that baby in our arms, we can hope that Jesus clings to us as we cling to him, and that he never lets us go, our light, our love, our joy. Amen

Hymn 38 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain -

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly
song?

Refrain -

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Refrain -

See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.

Refrain -

We Respond to God's Word

**Offering Ourselves
For The Work And Witness Of The Church**

Invitation to Offering source unknown

We know the prophet's words to be true,
because God's lavish love and mercy touches us,
And we are lifted up and carried in our needs.

In joyful praise we offer to God a portion of all we have received.

Offering Prayer

In this season of giving, we are thankful for the gift of the baby Jesus.
And so we offer our humble gifts for the work of your church;
bless us and guide us for their use. **Amen**

Hymn MV 157 "I Am A Child Of God"

I am a child of God, I am a glimpse of God's new creation.
I am a child of God, I am a child of God.

I am an endless prayer, I am a yearning for contemplation,
I am an endless prayer, I am an endless prayer.

I am an angry voice, I am compassion and consternation,
I am an angry voice, I am an angry voice.

I am a cry for peace, I am commitment and dedication,
I am a cry for peace, I am a cry for peace.

I am a song of joy, I am the moment of jubilation,
I am a song of joy, I am a song of joy.

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God of steadfast love,
We thank you in this joyful time of Christmas

For all your goodness: even when we are apart from our families and
friends

We thank you
For shelter and comfort;
The company of the faithful as we worship together;
And for your love, which shines as light in the shadows.
For this and so much more, we offer our thanks and praise.

God of mercy

In this holy season, there are people in need of tender mercies:
We pray for those who are ill and for those who are recovering,
for those whose sadness is made heavier
by the memories of Christmases past or by some
present pain.

We pray for those who do not have enough:

Enough food, enough money, enough companionship, enough hope.

Because there is not yet peace on earth, we pray for those in harm's way.

Protect them from war, violence, and cruel oppressions...

God of hope,

Fill us with hope as we wait and pray for your will to be done here on earth.

Give us the spirit to work for justice and peace

And the courage to follow you into every place.

We thank you for dreamers and visionaries

Who respond with imagination and joy

To what you are doing in the church and in the world,

We remember them. . .

As a New Year dawns, we know that all our time is in your hand.

We entrust ourselves and those we love to your care.

In Christ's name we pray together to Our Creator, Our Mother, Our Father, who art in heaven . . . Amen

The Lord's Prayer

We Depart to Serve with Joy

Hymn 96 "Will You Come and See the Light?" vss 1, 2, 3

Will you come and see the light from the stable door?

It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.

It will be your guiding star, it will show you who you are.

Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Will you step into the light that can free the slave?
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.
By the pyramids of greed there's a longing to be freed.
Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.
When the truth is cut and bruised, and the innocent abused,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

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Go into the world to love and to serve.

May God go with us in peace
Jesus uphold us in love
And the Holy Spirit guide us in truth.

This day and forevermore.
Amen

Choral Amen

Postlude "In dulci jubilo" (Robert Lucas de Pearsall)