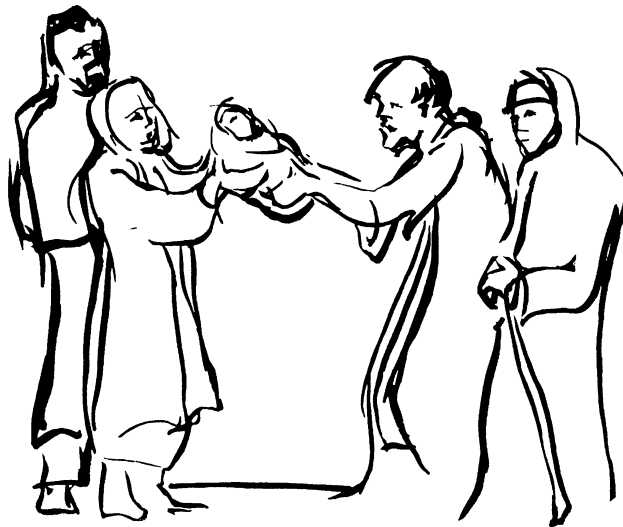


# *1st Sunday of Christmas*

*December 31, 2023*

*Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service*



1812 North Highland Avenue  
Clearwater, Florida 33755

727-446-5026

**office@GraceCLW.com**

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! The psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion, for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

## TABLE GRACE

Worship Leader: The Lord be with you.

**Congregation: And also with you.**

Worship Leader: Let us pray our Table Grace together.

**Congregation: We fold our hands. We bow our head. We thank you, God, for daily bread. Amen.**

### GATHERING SONG

### *All Are Welcome*

Verses 1 & 5

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly  
live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how  
hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and  
vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of  
*Refrain*  
Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,  
all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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5 Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

## **GREETING**

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Congregation: And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **FIRST READING**

### **Galatians 4:4-7**

Introduction to the Lesson: *Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as beloved children.*

Reader: 4 But when the right time finally came, God sent his own Son. He came as the son of a human mother and lived under the Jewish Law, 5 to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might become God's children.

6 To show that you are[a] his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries out, "Father, my Father." 7 So then, you are no longer a slave but a child. And since you are his child, God will give you all that he has for his children.

Reader: The word of the Lord. **Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL LESSON

## Luke 2:22-40

Introduction to the Gospel: *Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Luke in the 2nd chapter.

**Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.**

22 The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification, as the Law of Moses commanded. So they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, 23 as it is written in the law of the Lord: "Every first-born male is to be dedicated to the Lord." 24 They also went to offer a sacrifice of a pair of doves or two young pigeons, as required by the law of the Lord.

25 At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. He was a good, God-fearing man and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him 26 and had assured him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's promised Messiah. 27 Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the Temple. When the parents brought the child Jesus into the Temple to do for him what the Law required, 28 Simeon took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God:

29 "Now, Lord, you have kept your promise,  
and you may let your servant go in peace.

30 With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,

31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:

32 A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles  
and bring glory to your people Israel."

33 The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. 34 Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against 35 and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart."

36-37 There was a very old prophet, a widow named Anna, daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. She had been married for only seven years and was now eighty-four years old. She never left the Temple; day and night she worshiped God, fasting and praying. 38 That very same hour she arrived and gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were waiting for God to set Jerusalem free.

39 When Joseph and Mary had finished doing all that was required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown of Nazareth in Galilee. 40 The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and God's blessings were upon him.

*After the reading...*

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## TABLE TALK

### HYMN OF THE DAY

### *What Child Is This*

### *verses 1 & 2*



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?  
Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

## PRAYER TIME

Worship Leader: Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

*A brief silence.*

Prayer Leader: You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts and the witness of people who are neurodivergent, living with disability, or bearing invisible illness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. Teach us to honor the wisdom of children, the inquisitiveness of youth, the thoughtfulness of adults, and the knowledge of elders. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: Sustain all people who, like Simeon and Anna, have been waiting for salvation and wholeness. We pray for those who suffer, especially for those on our prayer list, all people who are in physical rehabilitation or addiction recovery, those experiencing complications from long COVID, those suffering from war and terror such as the people of Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, and victims of mass shootings, those suffering from natural and manmade disasters including hurricanes, blizzards, floods, fires, and chemical spills, & and these people and circumstances we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts ..... Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace. **Congregation: Amen.**

## OFFERING PRAYER

Pastor: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**Congregation: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name.

Pastor: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.



Je - sus, re - mem-ber me when you come in-to your king - dom.



Je - sus, re - mem-ber me when you come in-to your king - dom.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.



Je - sus, re - mem-ber me when you come in-to your king - dom.



Je - sus, re - mem-ber me when you come in-to your king - dom.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

**Congregation:** 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.

## TABLE BLESSING (*AFTER COMMUNION IS SERVED*)

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

## PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

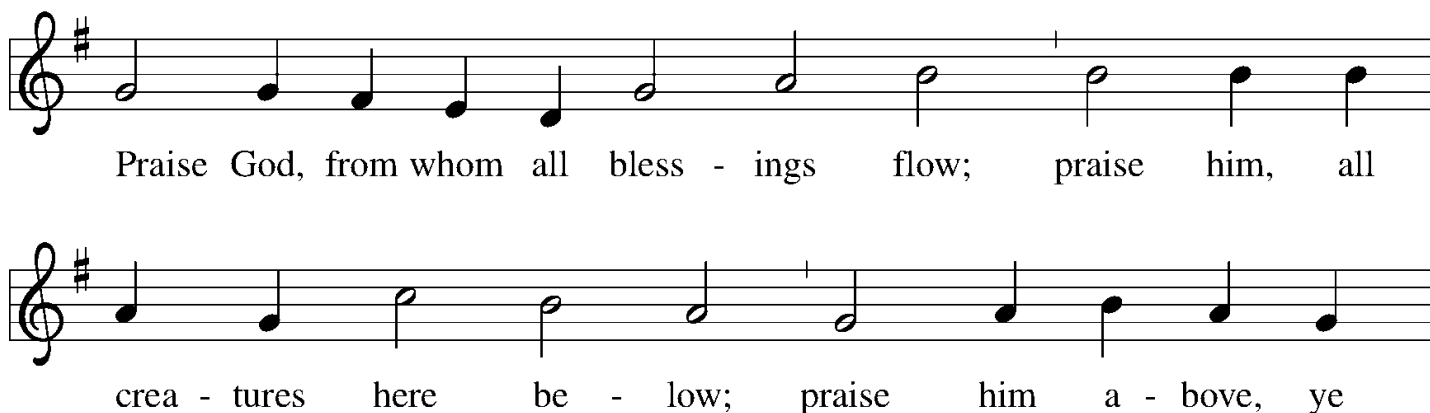
Pastor: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another. Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, help those who go to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your everlasting presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Congregation:** Amen.

## BLESSING

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

### *The Doxology*

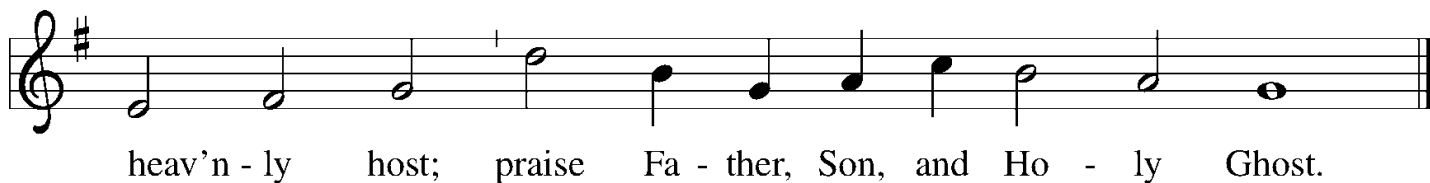


The musical notation for 'The Doxology' is presented in two staves. Both staves are in the key of D major, indicated by a sharp sign (#) on the F line of the treble clef. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the song, with lyrics 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all' written below. The second staff contains the melody for the second line, with lyrics 'creatures here below; praise him above, ye' written below. The notes are primarily quarter and eighth notes, with some rests.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all

creatures here below; praise him above, ye





Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

## DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

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