

# The Greatest Gift

HOPE HAS  
ARRIVED





# Second Sunday after Christmas

January 2 and 3, 2021

**Today's focus:** There are two great miracles in Christmas: the one that God has become man for us and for our salvation, and that he in grace reveals the first miracle even to me and blesses me with all its benefits.

**Leading worship:** Pastor Thomas Nicholson (Resurrection Lutheran Church, Aurora)



**Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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[www.gsdg.org](http://www.gsdg.org)

**It is the mission of**



**Good Shepherd**

**to**

Seek the Lost  
Feed the Flock and  
Serve our Savior



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is part of a group of nearly 1,300 churches called the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or WELS. The WELS is a worldwide church with congregations serving in all fifty of the United States, as well as in Mexico and Canada. The WELS also serves over 26 foreign countries through world mission work. We are united in faith and teaching with the other churches of the WELS as well as the members of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, consisting of 21 confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world.

# We Come into the Presence of God

*Please stand*

## **Invocation**

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## **Confession and Absolution**

M: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

**Opening Hymn: #41, verses 1-3 “Let All Together Praise Our God”**

1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God Be - fore his  
2 He leaves his heav'n - ly Fa - ther's throne, Is born an  
3 He veils in flesh his pow'r di - vine A ser - vant's

high - est throne; To - day he o - pens heav'n a - gain And  
in - fant small, And in a man - ger, poor and lone, Lies  
form to take; In want and low - li - ness must die Who

gives us his own Son, And gives us his own Son.  
in a hum - ble stall, Lies in a hum - ble stall.  
heav'n and earth did make, Who heav'n and earth did make.

Text: Nikolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561, abr.; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.  
Tune: LOBT GOTT, IHR CHRISTEN (86 866) Nikolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561.

*Be seated*



# We Listen

**First Reading:** Isaiah 45:20-25

<sup>20</sup>“Gather together and come;  
assemble, you fugitives from the nations.  
Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood,  
who pray to gods that cannot save.  
<sup>21</sup>Declare what is to be, present it—  
let them take counsel together.  
Who foretold this long ago,  
who declared it from the distant past?  
Was it not I, the LORD?  
And there is no God apart from me,  
a righteous God and a Savior;  
there is none but me.  
<sup>22</sup>“Turn to me and be saved,  
all you ends of the earth;  
for I am God, and there is no other.  
<sup>23</sup>By myself I have sworn,  
my mouth has uttered in all integrity  
a word that will not be revoked:  
Before me every knee will bow;  
by me every tongue will swear.  
<sup>24</sup>They will say of me, ‘In the LORD alone  
are deliverance and strength.’”  
All who have raged against him  
will come to him and be put to shame.  
<sup>25</sup>But all the descendants of Israel  
will find deliverance in the LORD  
and will make their boast in him.

**Psalm 111** (*Spoken responsively; no musical accompaniment.*)

M: Great are the works of the LORD;

C: **they are pondered by all who delight in them.**

M: Glorious and majestic are his deeds,

C: **and his righteousness endures forever.**

M: He has caused his wonders to be remembered;

C: **the LORD is gracious and compassionate.**

M: The works of his hands are faithful and just;

C: **all his precepts are trustworthy.**

M: He provided redemption for his people;

C: **he ordained his covenant forever.**

M: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;

C: **all who follow his precepts have good understanding.**

M: Sing to the LORD a new song,

C: **for he has done marvelous things.**

**Second Reading:** Colossians 3:12-17

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup>And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

<sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

<sup>17</sup>And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

*Please stand*

## **The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,  
and became fully human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the Lord, the giver of life,**

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,**

**who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,**

**who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead**

**and the life of the world to come. Amen.**



**Gospel:** Luke 2:25-40

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.

<sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

<sup>29</sup>"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

<sup>30</sup>For my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup>The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

<sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, <sup>35</sup>so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. <sup>38</sup>Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

*Be seated*

**Hymn of the Day:** #41, verses 4-6 “Let All Together Praise Our God”

**A wondrous change which he does make:  
He takes our flesh and blood,  
And he conceals for sinners' sake  
His majesty as God,  
His majesty as God.**

**He serves that I a lord may be—  
A great exchange indeed!  
Could Jesus' love do more for me  
To help me in my need,  
To help me in my need?**

**For us he opens wide the door  
Of paradise today.  
The angel guards the gate no more;  
To God our thanks we pay,  
To God our thanks we pay.**

**Sermon**

## **We Respond**

**Offering** *(In an effort to maintain a safe social distance, please place your offerings in the provided plate when exiting the sanctuary.)*

*If you are a guest in our church, please do not feel obligated to participate in the offering. We do not want you to think that God or our congregation is soliciting funds from you. You enrich us simply by being here.)*

**Prayer of the Church**

- M:** Lord of heaven and earth, you made all things beautiful. You have provided green forests and refreshing streams. You have arranged the orderly procession of day and night for our work and rest.
- C:** **Thank you for the mountains and the prairies, the roaring sea, and the gentle breeze.**

M: Thank you for roofs that shelter us, for clothing that protects us, and for food and drink. Thank you for our work, for projects that are done well, and for the approval of supervisors and teachers. Thank you for all who serve at night to make our days more pleasant.

**C: Thank you for associates at work, for their encouragement and praise, and for the joys of human friendships.**

M: Thank you for our cities and our countrysides, for farms and factories, for streets and highways, and for all of life that flows so swiftly before us.

**C: Thank you for children at play, their boundless energy, and their shouts of joy and laughter.**

M: Thank you for the morning greetings we receive, and for all the smiles that come from faces loved by you.

**C: Thank you for Christian parents, for their affection and their care.**

M: Hear us, Lord, as we give thanks for personal blessings.

*Silent prayer*

M: Thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ, for his coming to us in Word and sacraments, for his giving and forgiving, and for listening to our prayers. Receive our gifts and offerings as our sacrifice of praise.

**C: Lead us in thankful living today and always. Amen.**

### Lord's Prayer

**C: 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.**

# The Sacrament *(Spoken responsively; no musical accompaniment.)*

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

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

C: **It is good and right so to do.**

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock till he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

C: **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts:  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

## Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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

C: **Amen.**

## **O Christ, Lamb of God**

**C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us and grant us your peace. Amen.**

**Distribution** *(After the distribution, you are invited to dispose of the cups and return to your seats.)*

*Please stand*

## **Song of Simeon**

**C: Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace according to your Word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.**

## **Thanksgiving**

**M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;**

**C: and his mercy endures forever.**

**M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**C: Amen.**

## **Blessing**

**M: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.**

**C: Amen.**

## Closing Hymn: #6 "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"



1 Come, O long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, Born to set your peo - ple free;  
2 Born your peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and yet a king,



From our sins and fears re - lease us By your death on Cal - va - ry.  
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now your gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's Strength and Con - so - la - tion, Hope to all the earth im - part,  
By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear De - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.  
By your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to your glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt.  
Tune: ST. HILARY (87 87 D) Unknown.

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## Serving in Worship

**Pastor:** Jon Bergemann  
**Organist:** Joan Richmond

### Live Stream Team

Sun	8:00 am	Kristen Reynolds & Bob Reichert
	10:30am	Greg Busse

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