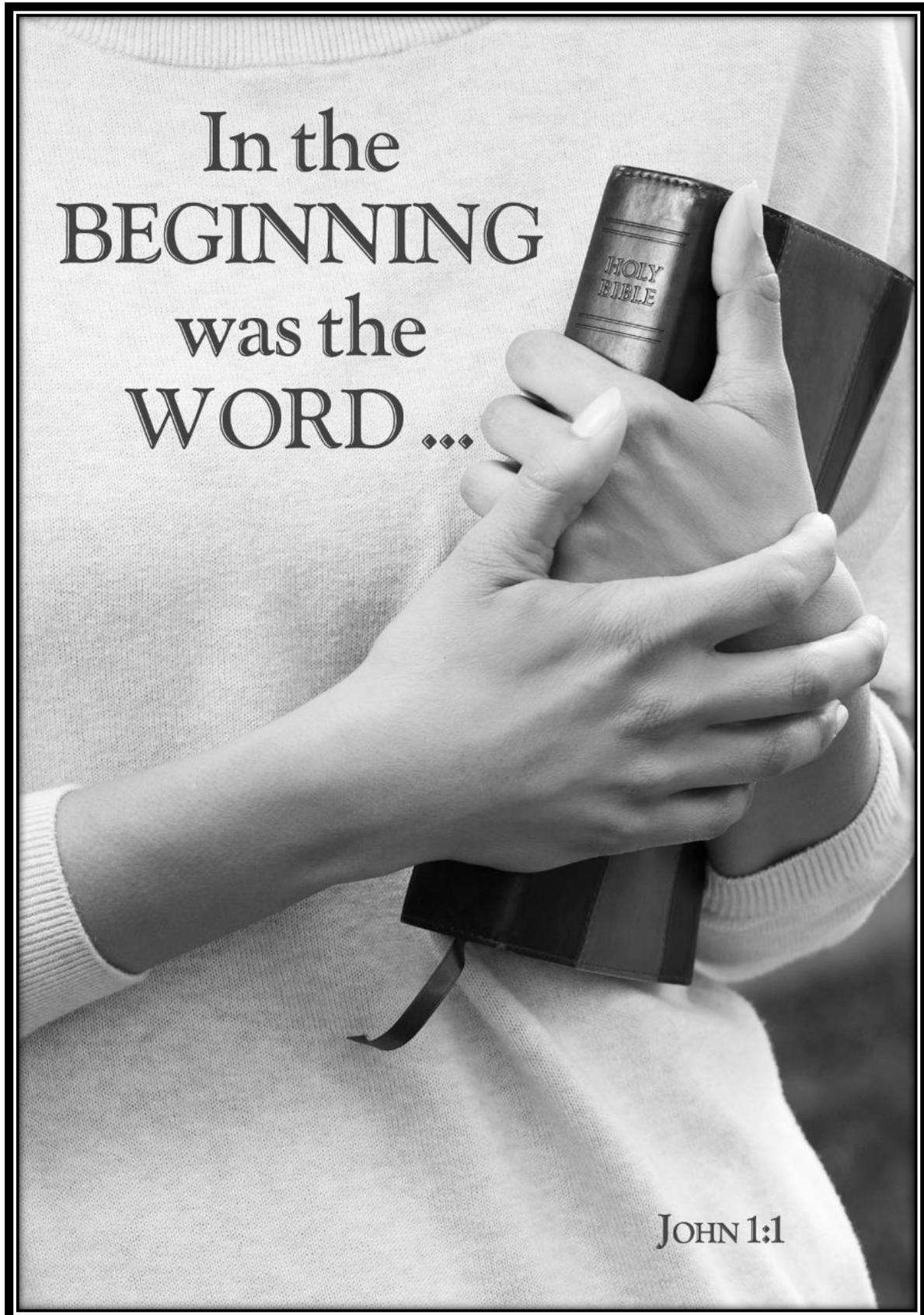


ONE IN CHRIST LUTHERAN PARISH

◆Bethany ◆Immanuel ◆Lunder ◆Silver Lake ◆Winnebago



Christmas 2

January 3, 2021



ONE IN CHRIST LUTHERAN PARISH

◆ Bethany

◆ Immanuel

◆ Lunder

◆ Silver Lake

◆ Winnebago

Ministers

Every member of the Parish

Pastors (#590-2737 – cell; email pastorbill@wctatel.net)

Bill Peters

(#590-0727 – cell; email baldwins@wctatel.net)

Randy Baldwin

web page - <http://www.wctatel.net/web/oneinchrist>

Christmas 2

January 3, 2021

TO US A CHILD IS BORN

WE WELCOME ALL who have gathered here to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus. Guests and visitors, please sign our guest register in the narthex before you leave. Let us adore the Christ Child and tell the whole world that God has come.

OUR SAVIOR AND KING

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Hymns are from the Green Hymnal.

(Stand as you are able)*

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

✠ **GATHERING** ✠

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the People of God

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

We come, praising the goodness of God

who gathers us close,

comforting the brokenhearted;

filling lives with hope and joy.

We come, singing our praise to God

who speaks the word –

who **is** the Word speaking life for us all

through the baby born in Bethlehem – Jesus Christ.

Today, our readings call us to celebrate the love and care of God who gives hope to wearied and burdened lives; who sets feet on new and level paths; who creates anew an environment to cherish and enjoy. We hear the words and might wonder if they apply to us? To me? To this faith community? Are we being called to let go of old ways and celebrate new ways of saying and doing and being? Are we being called to be the ones who help others not to stumble; to bring comfort and consolation to those in distress? Is our care for the environment evident through our simple, sacrificial lifestyle?

We confess that there have been times when we let such challenges pass us by;

when we fail to care for the welfare of others or the land itself.

Merciful God, forgive our failure to hear your words addressed to us,

and our reluctance to respond

even when we do hear them.

Renew and refresh us with the Holy Spirit,

that we may respond to the challenges of this new year

with faith and enthusiasm. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

EXPERIENCING GOD'S GRACE – THE GOOD NEWS

Hear the good news: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven through his sacrificial love – evidence of the riches of his grace that he lavished on us.

Thanks be to God!

OPENING SONG

“What Child Is This”

*What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!*

*Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!*

*So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!*

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

***APOSTOLIC GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

***SHARING THE PEACE**

***KYRIE**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

✠ **MEAL** ✠

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

Please pick up the Communion elements off the table in the narthex if you did not as you entered the sanctuary.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

PREFACE

PREFACE RESPONSE

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

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. Hosanna in the highest.

SONG OF HUMILITY AND HOPE *“Lamb of God”*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.*

THE LORD’S PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION - *We will consume the elements during the Words of Institution as instructed.*

COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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

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.

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 31:7-14

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.

⁷Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
“Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel.”

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.”

¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

NEW TESTAMENT 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Alleluia”

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

***GOSPEL READING**

John 1:[1-9] 10-18

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.

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

[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.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

Pastor Bill Peters

SONG OF THE DAY

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

*It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.*

*And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!*

*For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.*

***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 truly 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 with the Father and the Son is worshiped and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic 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.

***PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY**

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

...Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

SENDING SONG

“Joy to the World”

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.*

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

THE DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Proclaim his birth!
Thanks be to God.

✠ **THANKSGIVING** ✠

God invites us to respond to His grace

OFFERING

Please place your gifts in box, send them to the parish office, or use [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) (electronic giving).

Postlude



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Truth beyond the Facts

There are many questions today about facts. Who do we trust to give us the facts? What sources and individuals are reliable? Social media can be a great tool for sharing, but it has also become a means of spreading misinformation, false beliefs, and bad advice. Many people today are suspicious of what some claim to be the facts.

Even if we have the right facts, we might not have something more important: the truth. Facts can be a partial representation of the truth. Facts might tell us that it is sunny and warm this morning, but the weather forecast might say thunderstorms are coming in the afternoon. The latter statement is truth. Truth is the larger reality that smaller facts don't capture, and sometimes contradict.

John tells us that Jesus is God's Word, full of grace and truth. In Jesus we get the full truth of God, not merely the facts. What are the facts we might see? We are all sinful and have strayed from God's just and loving ways. The world is a mess. Left to our own ways, we are surely lost. These are the facts, as if we woke up to a dangerous thunderstorm but don't know what the weather forecast is after that. Jesus is the fuller truth that in spite of the stormy mess of the world and our individual lives, God's grace is a gift to us in Christ. There is a blue sky and a safe calm that is ours through divine love.

Some of us live with messages that tell us we are not the right kind of person to receive God's grace because of our past mistakes, or ethnicity, or gender identity, or level of education, or poverty. The truth of Jesus Christ tells us we are children of God. "From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16). This is the truth that gives us life.