



“For my eyes have
seen your salvation
that you have
prepared
in the presence
of all peoples.”

LUKE 2:30-31

Ascension Lutheran Church

“A Church for Families, a Family for Everyone”

Sunday, December 31, 2023

First Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, December 31, 2023

Welcome to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

NURSERY AVAILABLE We have an unstaffed nursery for your convenience and privacy. The nursery has audio and video so you may hear and see the worship service while attending to your child.

Holy Communion is celebrated at the 8:30 service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and at the 11:00 service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

For those wishing to commune at the Lords Table with us today:

The Lutheran practice of close Communion attempts to prevent a person from eating and drinking judgment on himself (1 Corinthians 11:23–30). Thus, attendance at the Lords Supper implies a four-level commitment to Christ. We believe that communicants must: (1) be baptized Christians; (2) accept the real presence of Christs body in the bread and His blood in the wine; (3) confess and repent of ones sins and trust that God offers complete forgiveness of those sins in this Sacrament; and (4) share oneness of faith, doctrine and practice among those who commune. Those wishing to commune with us today who have not done so previously, please see the pastor or an elder before the service begins. (*Grape juice is available for those who do not drink alcohol, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request.*)

Para aquellos que desean participar en la Santa Cena con nosotros hoy: *La práctica luterana de la comunión intenta evitar que una persona coma y beba el juicio de Dios sobre sí mismo (1 Corintios 11:23–30). Por lo tanto, la asistencia a la Cena del Señor implica un compromiso de cuatro niveles con Cristo. Creemos que los comulgantes deben: (1) ser bautizados como cristianos; (2) aceptar la presencia real del cuerpo de Cristo en el pan y Su sangre en el vino; (3) confesar y arrepentirse de sus pecados y confiar en que Dios ofrece el perdón completo de esos pecados en este Sacramento; y (4) compartir la unidad de fe, doctrina y práctica entre los que comulgan. Aquellos que desean comulgan con nosotros hoy que no lo han hecho anteriormente, por favor vean al pastor o un anciano antes de que comience el servicio. (El jugo de uva está disponible para aquellos que no beben alcohol, y hostias libres de gluten están disponibles bajo petición.)*

+ PREPARATION +

Theme: “In Every Generation”

As We Gather: How long is a generation? Keepers of statistics suggest that a generation is between twenty and thirty years and note that at the present time there are six distinct generations living in the United States. The current generations range from our oldest citizens, known as the Greatest Generation through our youngest, given the group name of Generation Z. In the account of the presentation of our Lord in the temple at Jerusalem, we see Jesus as a baby from the youngest generation and we meet Anna the prophetess, well advanced into the most elderly generation, and Simeon, who is often portrayed as an older man. The temple is the place for all generations to experience the presence and blessing of God! The psalmist exults in praise to God: “One generation shall commend Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts” (Psalm 145:4). As we worship, we continue that praise in this generation.

Prelude

Welcome

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

LSB 374

- 1 Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the Undefined,
To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
Can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
Who have found His favor.

2 Angels sang about His birth,
Wise Men sought and found Him;
Heaven's star shone brightly forth
Glory all around Him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night,
All the hills were ringing.

3 Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefined
But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth,
Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth;
Hail the King of glory!

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child, Text: Joseph Simpson Cook, 1859–1933, Text: Public domain

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Opening Scripture

Psalm 89:1, 52; 71:19, 23

- P** I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;
- C** **with my mouth I will make known Your faithfulness to all generations.**
- P** Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens.
- C** **You who have done great things, O God, who is like You?**
- P** My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to You;
- C** **my soul also, which You have redeemed.**
- P** Blessed be the LORD forever!
- C** **Amen and Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

- P** People redeemed by the Lord, let us now make confession of our sins to God, our heavenly Father.
- C** **Merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned in thought, in word, and in deed. We fall short of Your standards to love our neighbor and love You. We sincerely repent of our sins and humbly ask for the grace and forgiveness that we know to be ours in Jesus, our Savior. By the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, lead us, heavenly Father, to change what is sinful in our lives so that each day we grow in righteousness and godly living to the glory of Your holy name.**
- P** God has promised pardon, life, and salvation because of the atoning sacrifice of His beloved Son, who has replaced slavery to sin with a priceless inheritance of freedom and joy. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit. As you believe, so may it be.
- C** **Amen.**

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray.
- Gracious God of endings and beginnings, we commit to Your grace and forgiveness the year now being completed and commend to Your kindness and love the year about to begin. Please make the presence of Your Holy Spirit known in our lives, drawing us ever closer to Jesus and uniting all generations of Your faithful people in bonds of love and care, as we continue to grow in our baptismal grace. This we ask for the sake of Jesus, our Savior.
- C** **Amen.**

Sharing The Peace of the Lord

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C And also with you.

+ THE WORD +

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:10a-62:1-3 (ESV)

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
He has covered me with the robe of righteousness...

¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Galatians 4:4-7 (ESV)

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Lambs' Lesson

Pr. Jim Sprengle

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²²When the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” ²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹“Lord, now You are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to Your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen Your salvation

³¹that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to Your people Israel.”

³³And His father and His mother marveled at what was said about Him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” ³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of Him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon Him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Prayer/Love in Action Requests Gathered

“Thou Light Of Gentile Nations” tune: All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Thou Light of Gentile nations, Thou Savior from above,
Drawn by Thy Spirit’s leading, We come with joy and love
Into Thy holy temple And wait with earnest mind
As Simeon had waited his God and Lord to find.

Yea, Lord, Thy servants meet Thee In ev’ry holy place
Where Thy true Word has promised That we should see Thy face.
Today Thou still dost grant us Who gather round Thee here
In arms of faith to bear Thee As did that aged seer.

Be Thou our Joy and Brightness, Our Cheer in pain and loss,
Our Sun in darkest terror, The Glory round our cross,
A Star for sinking spirits, A Beacon in distress,
Physician, Friend, in sickness, In death our Happiness.

Let us, O Lord, be faithful Like Simeon to the end,
So that his prayer exultant may from our hearts ascend:
“O Lord, now let Thy servant depart in peace, I pray,
Since I have seen my Savior and here beheld His day.”

Sermon
“GENERATION GAP”

Pr. Jim Sprengle
Luke 2:22-40

Nunc Dimittis
“Lord, Now Lettest Thou Thy Servant”
(from “The Lutheran Hymnal”/TLH)

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace
According to Thy word,
For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people,
A light to lighten the Gentiles
And the glory of Thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Tithes and Offerings

(Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.)

Prayer Of The Church

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people, according to their need.

Eternal Lord God, in the fullness of time, You sent forth Your Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us and give us the adoption as Your sons and heirs. Hear us, Father, as we call to You in His name. Give us grace to rejoice in Christ's blessed incarnation, and grant us a glad new year. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lead Your Church, Lord, to follow the example of blessed Simeon, that all baptized Christians would embrace the Christ Child by Word and faith, and so be ready to depart whenever they are called. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Heavenly Father, from whom all fatherhood on earth is named, bless Christian families with Your promises. Give parents diligence and delight in their work, and grant Your favor on all children, that they may grow in strength and wisdom. Bless widows, orphans and broken families also with Your mercy, and give them joy in the redemption You have won for us in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Gracious Lord, receive our prayers for those who suffer from loneliness. Comfort them with the sure and certain knowledge that You will never forsake them. Give them family and friends within the household of faith with whom they can find loving companionship. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Blessed Lord, help the sick and suffering, especially those who desire our prayers...Surround them with Your love in Christ and, according to Your gracious will, heal them. Comfort those who mourn and fill their hearts with the certain hope of the resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord of all goodness, thank You for the blessings we enjoy in this life and for those being celebrated this week...Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, heavenly Father, gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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.

Closing

Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a

P To us a child is born, to us a son is given;
C **and the government shall be upon His shoulder.**

P And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
C **Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

P Sing to the Lord a new song,
C **for He has done marvelous things!**

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
C **Amen.**

“In His Temple Now Behold Him”

tune: Regent Square

1 In His temple now behold Him,
See the long-expected Lord;
Ancient prophets had foretold Him,
God has now fulfilled His word.
Now to praise Him, His redeemed
Shall break forth with one accord.

- 2 In the arms of her who bore Him,
Virgin pure, behold Him lie
While His aged saints adore Him
Ere in perfect faith they die.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Lo, the incarnate God Most High!
- 3 Jesus, by Your presentation,
When they blessed You, weak and poor,
Make us see Your great salvation,
Seal us with Your promise sure;
And present us in Your glory
To Your Father, cleansed and pure.

In His Temple Now Behold Him, Text: Henry J. Pye, c. 1825–1903, alt., Text: Public domain

Dismissal

- P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
G **Thanks be to God!**

Acknowledgments

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ANNOUNCEMENTS DECEMBER 31, 2023

† THANKS, FROM PASTOR JIM AND STAFF

We wanted to express our gratitude for the generous year end gift. Your thoughtfulness and kindness are appreciated. Your support is not only a financial blessing but also a reminder of the caring community we have. We are so blessed to serve at Ascension!

† **THE LUTHERAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION**

presents its Christmas/Epiphany Concert January 7, at 4:00 pm, at Peace Lutheran Church (2201 N Rosa Parks Way, in Portland). Sue Thompson Armentrout directs the choir, and the pianist is Karl Jurisons. A free will offering will be received. One last chance to hear beautiful seasonal music!

† **YOU CAN HELP “AVA HEALTH”, FORMERLY KNOWN AS FIRST IMAGE!**

Ascension has an opportunity to share our value of life and support mothers who want to keep their babies. The Human Care Board is organizing a donation drive for baby clothes and diapers to support Ava Health (First Image), a local organization committed to providing essential care and assistance to mothers and infants in challenging circumstances. Please donate new baby clothes and diapers by dropping them off in the pop up crib in the narthex, by Sunday, January 21, as Pr Jim will bring forward the offering and pray for God to bless those who receive the gifts. The following items are needed:

- *Diapers in the box, 0-24 months* • *Swaddles* • *Infant teethingers*
- *Girls winter clothing, 9 months & up* • *Boy/girl onesies/PJs, 9 months & up* • *Boy/girl fall & winter outfits, newborn & up*

† **PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR:**

Karla Deal, Jim Eckart, Carol Hoefler, Gina Kreps, Cindy Linnemann, Mike Fogarty, Alma Bangs, Randy Bryant's brother, Eileen Hatley, Virginia Jacob's brother (Robert), Esperanza Gutierrez' mother (Antonia), *Barbara Schrader, *Kevin McInaney, *Larry Hart, *Mike Hatley, *Lorraine Haggard, *Carolyn Barendse, *Home Bound.

† **PRAYER FOR OUR MILITARY**

Michael Williamson, Air Force, Reserve — Texas (grandson of Rebecca Williamson);

Jamie Wong-Lopez, Marines — Annapolis MD (nephew of Kevin and Merci McInaney);

Clayton Wright, Air Force — (grandson of Virginia Jacobs);

Colton Wright, Navy — (grandson of Virginia Jacobs);

Tyler Young, Navy — Deployed (nephew of Karen Arronson).

† **PRAYER NEEDS?**

Contact the church office with any requests, please e-mail: office@alcportland.org or call 503-665-8821.

ASSISTING IN SERVICE TODAY, DEC. 31, 2023

	8:30am	11:00am
Elder:	Dave Oswald	John Hazen
Acolytes:	NEEDED	NEEDED
Ushers:	Stan Chapulis NEEDED	Marcus Young NEEDED
Audio/Visual:	Stan Chapulis	J. E. Knox
PowerPoint:	Debbie Rekdahl	Rosemary Knox
Greeters:	Sheryl Maier	Celia Kreps Carrie Graham Margaret Hubbard
Readers:	Jean Dillon Jim Eckart	Peggy Hall
Altar Guild:	Both Services	Margo Bachhuber
Flowers:	Both Services	Wilma Aguilar
Counters:	Both Services	Dave and Jan Oswald
Sunday School	9:45am	Michele Sprengle and Sheryl Maier

ASSISTING IN SERVICE NEXT, SUNDAY, JAN. 7, 2024

	8:30am	11:00am
Elder:	Randy Schroeder	John Hazen
Acolytes:	NEEDED	Alex Hodges
Ushers:	Bob Rekdahl Jim Eckart Stan Chapulis NEEDED	Marcus Young Johnnie Driessner
Audio/Visual:	Laura Potter	NEEDED
PowerPoint:	Jenny Schuldheisz	Rebecca Williamson
Greeters:	Margo Bachhuber Elizabeth Alvarado	Virginia Jacobs Carrie Graham
Readers:	Randy Schroeder	J. E. Knox
Altar Guild:	Both Services	Karen Zahursky
Flowers:	Both Services	None
Counters:	Both Services	Bob and Elaina Ritchie
Sunday School	9:45am	Carrie Graham and Michele Sprengle

EVENTS THIS WEEK – SUN., DEC. 31 – SAT., JAN. 6

Sunday, Dec. 31	8:30am	Worship
New Year's Eve	9:45am	Education Hour
	11:00am	Worship
	5:00pm	Spanish Worship New Year's at Trinity Lutheran Church
	7:00pm	New Years Eve Worship
Monday, Jan. 1		Church Office Closed
Tuesday Jan. 2	6:00pm	Elder Meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 3	2:00pm	Crafting Get-Together
Thursday, Jan. 4	6:00pm	Praise Team
	7:00pm	Choir Practice
Friday, Jan. 5	6:30pm	Noche Familiar
	7:00pm	Youth Group
Saturday, Jan. 6	1:00pm	Confirmation

EVENTS NEXT WEEK – SUN., JAN. 7 – SAT., JAN. 13

Sunday, Jan. 7	8:30am	Worship w/ Communion
	9:45am	Education Hour
	11:00am	Worship
	5:00pm	Spanish Worship w. Comm. Worship
Tuesday, Jan. 9	6:00pm	Council Meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 10	2:00pm	Crafting Get-Together
	6:00pm	Praise Team
Thursday, Jan. 11	7:00pm	Choir Practice
Friday, Jan. 12	6:30pm	Noche Familiar
	7:00pm	Youth Group
Saturday, Jan. 13	1:00pm	NO Confirmation this week

† MILESTONES - SUNDAY, JAN. 31– SATURDAY, JAN. 6

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS:

Jerry Bangs	Jan. 1	Kim Driessner	Jan. 1
Lorraine Haggard	Jan. 1	Bonnie Webber	Jan. 1
Elliot Noonan	Jan. 2	Jeff Latter	Jan. 5

BIRTHDAYS:

Debbie Noonan	Jan. 2	Sheryl Maier	Jan. 5
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WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:

Cody and Danielle Brown Jan 5, 2019

Ascension Lutheran Church

1440 SE 182nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97233

Church: 503-665-8821 · Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission.”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God—the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

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