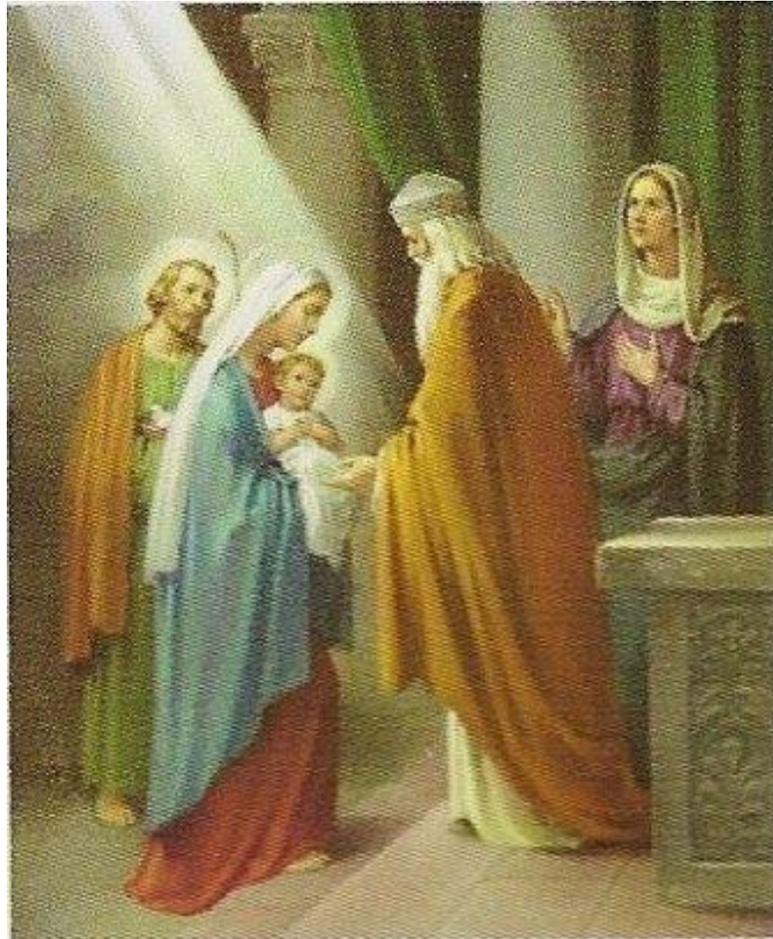


# **ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**25 N. ADAMS STREET, YORK, PA 17404**

**PHONE: 717-854-7198**



## *First Sunday Christmas*

*Presentation of Jesus at the Temple*

**December 27, 2020**



*WELCOME to St. James Lutheran Church! May you know God's grace, peace, joy, and love as we hear the Holy Scriptures read, hear the Word of God preached, and worship together this morning (via Live Stream or You Tube) in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.*

*St. James Congregational Council and the people of St. James*

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**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Christmas**

=====

**December 27, 2020**

**Congregation reads bolded text.**

*INTRODUCTION:*

*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.*

**Prelude:**

Lobt Gott, ihr Christen, allzugleich, BWV 732      Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who was in the beginning,  
who makes a dwelling among us,  
who covers us with justice and mercy. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of goodness and lovingkindness,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you  
and our neighbors.**  
**We have turned away from your invitation to new life.**  
**We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden.**  
**In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins,  
those we know and those known only to you,  
for the sake of the one who came to live among us,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Hear the good news of peace and salvation!  
God forgives us all our sins,  
not through our own work,  
but through † Jesus Christ, made known to all people.  
With all who come to the manger,  
rejoice in this amazing gift of grace. **Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN

*Words for meditation and following along.*

### Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (ELW 288)

IN DULCI JUBILO

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice<br>with heart and soul and voice;<br>give ye heed to what we say:<br>Jesus Christ is born today;<br>ox and ass before him bow,<br>and he is in the manger now.<br>Christ is born today!<br>Christ is born today! | He has opened heaven's door,<br>and we are blest forevermore.<br>Christ was born for this!<br>Christ was born for this!                                                                                                                                              |
| 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice<br>with heart and soul and voice;<br>now ye hear of endless bliss:<br>Jesus Christ was born for this!                                                                                                            | 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice<br>with heart and soul and voice;<br>now ye need not fear the grave;<br>Jesus Christ was born to save!<br>Calls you one and calls you all<br>to gain the everlasting hall.<br>Christ was born to save!<br>Christ was born to save! |

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866

## THE 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.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

## SCRIPTURE

### First Reading: Isaiah 61:10--62:3

*To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that God's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.*

<sup>10</sup>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.

<sup>11</sup>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.

<sup>62:1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup>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.

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

### **Psalm: Psalm 148**

*The splendor of the LORD is over earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)*

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the LORD | from the heavens;  
praise God | in the heights.

<sup>2</sup>Praise the LORD, | all you angels; sing praise, all you | hosts of heaven.

<sup>3</sup>Praise the LORD, | sun and moon; sing praise, all you | shining stars.

<sup>4</sup>Praise the LORD, heav- | en of heavens, and you waters a- | bove the heavens.

<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name | of the LORD, who commanded, and they | were  
created, <sup>6</sup>who made them stand fast forev- | er and ever,  
giving them a law that shall not | pass away.

<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD | from the earth, you sea monsters | and all deeps;

<sup>8</sup>fire and hail, | snow and fog, tempestuous wind, do- | ing God's will;

<sup>9</sup>mountains | and all hills, fruit trees | and all cedars;

<sup>10</sup>wild beasts | and all cattle, creeping things and | flying birds;

<sup>11</sup>sovereigns of the earth | and all peoples, princes and all rulers | of the world;

<sup>12</sup>young | men and maidens, old and | young together.

<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name | of the LORD,

whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over | earth and heaven.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all | faithful  
servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. | Hallelujah!

### **Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7**

*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.*

<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent

the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

+ [P] The Holy Gospel according to St. John **[C] Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **Gospel: Luke 2:22-40**

*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.*

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>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, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

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

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

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

<sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>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 <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup>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, <sup>37</sup>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. <sup>38</sup>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.

<sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

[P] The Gospel of the Lord. **[C] Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **MEDITATION**

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Words for meditation and following along.*

### **Let All Together Praise Our God (ELW 287)**

LOBT GOTT, IHR CHRISTEN

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 Let all together praise our God<br/>before the highest throne;<br/>today God opens heav'n again<br/>and sends the only Son,<br/>and sends the only Son.</p> <p>2 From God's right hand the Son<br/>descends,<br/>is born an infant small,<br/>and lies in poverty, his bed<br/>a manger in a stall,<br/>a manger in a stall.</p> <p>3 O tender Child, you veil in flesh<br/>the splendor of your might;<br/>a servant's garb now wraps the<br/>one<br/>who clothed the sky with light,<br/>who clothed the sky with light.</p> | <p>4 Your mother feeds you tenderly,<br/>sings you a lullaby,<br/>while angels, hailing David's heir,<br/>your glory magnify,<br/>your glory magnify.</p> <p>5 A wonderful exchange you make:<br/>you take our flesh and blood,<br/>and in return give us to share<br/>the shining realm of God,<br/>the shining realm of God.</p> <p>6 Unlock the door again today<br/>that leads to paradise;<br/>the angel bars the way no more.<br/>To God let praises rise,<br/>to God let praises rise!</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Text: Nikolaus Herman, 1480-1561; tr.  
hymnal version  
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### **THE APOSTLES' CREED (livestream only)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

## **Prayers of Intercession**

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

*A brief silence.*

Night and day, all creation praises you, O God. Strengthen your church across nations, denominations, and traditions. Fill us with wisdom and unify our proclamation of your forgiveness and mercy. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

All creation is holy to you, O God. You cause the earth to bring forth its shoots and gardens to spring up. Protect hibernating animals and frozen lands that wait earnestly for longer days of awakening and growth. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

The nations are upheld by your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send your spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the sake of the common good. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Send the spirit of your Son into our hearts, O God. Come quickly to hearts that race with fear, hearts that break with grief, and hearts that long for wholeness (*especially*). Reveal your power to heal and to save. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Adopt us into your family, O God. Bless our elders with the peace and joy of Simeon and Anna. Strengthen those who have retired, those who work in older age, and those in need of income, food, company, or health care. Connect young and old across generations. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For (*John, apostle and evangelist, and*) all your saints, we give you thanks. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all your witnesses of every time and place. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

## **SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

*We invite you to share Christ's peace with each other and text it out to friends!*

**LORD’S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

**SENDING HYMN**

*Words for meditation and following along.*

**O Lord, Now Let Your Servant (ELW 313)**

KUORTANE

1 O Lord, now let your servant  
depart in heav'nly peace,  
for I have seen the glory  
of your redeeming grace:  
a light to lead the nations  
unto your holy hill,  
the glory of your people,  
your chosen Israel.

2 Then grant that I may follow  
your gleam, O glorious Light,  
till earthly shadows scatter,  
and faith is changed to sight;  
till raptured saints shall gather  
upon that shining shore,  
where Christ, the blessed daystar,  
shall light them evermore.

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886-1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis  
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**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude:** In Dulci Jubilo, BWV 729

Bach

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Assisting Minister / Lay Reader: Deb Meckley

# CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, December 27, 2020

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WELCOME & THANK YOU to Pastor Larry McConnell for leading us in worship today. Also, THANK YOU TO John Widmann for providing music for our worship services.

**PASTORAL EMERGENCIES:** If you or a family member should experience an emergency and in need of pastoral care during this transition time here at St. James, we are asking that you please contact the church office (717-854-7198.) If no answer at the office you may leave a message, Pat B, working from home, checks for messages every 2-3 hours. If you need a more rapid response, and overnight & weekends, please call council president, Rod Drawbaugh, (717-880-8728). Another option is to send an email to **secretary@stjamesyork.org** - e-mails are also checked frequently at home.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES will be live streamed until further notice. We are following Synod and CDC guidelines.

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Brothers & Sisters,

Unfortunately, because of the increasing number of new covid-19 cases and the rising numbers of deaths in York County, due to the virus, and not to mention the Governor's most recent restrictions,

I think the prudent decision is to delay the January 3rd reorganization of the Adult Discussion Class until the spring of 2021. At least this way, if there is no change in the pandemic status, there may be a possibility to meet outside. This decision has weighed on my heart for quite a while. I considered the risk vs. the reward and quite simply this turned out to be a "no brainer" due to the age group of this class. Please stay safe. Please wear a mask. Please social distance. Please stay isolated if possible. Judy and I will indeed see you in the spring. *Happy Holidays!! Sincerely, Mike Cooper*

**Breakfast Blessings** has been doing takeout meals and continues to hand out personal hygiene items during COVID times. Thank you to all for your donations to our Christmas project. *Breakfast Blessings Committee*

**FROM SOCIAL MINISTRY COMM.** We will continue to collect food for the West York Bulldog Pantry throughout the Advent & Christmas seasons and thereafter. To help fill the pantry the following non-perishable items are needed: canned fruit, soup, vegetables, cereal and cereal bars, pasta & sauce, peanut butter & jelly, toilet paper and paper towels. **PLEASE NOTE:** Church will be open on Monday AND Friday mornings, 9:00-11:00 a.m., for pantry donations to be dropped off. If hours are not convenient, please contact Pat Mummert (717-792-0161) or Norma Smith (717-845-7362) to make other arrangements. (Please do not take donations to the school.) Thank you to everyone for your donations.

**REMINDER from Stewardship Committee** – Deb Meckley, Chair  
The Central PA Blood Bank and the American Red Cross are in dire need of blood. If anyone would like to donate, Apple Hill Medical Center on Monument Rd in York will accept your donation by APPOINTMENT ONLY-call (717)741-8307. Please give the church's number 1098 when you donate.

**A SPECIAL ADVENT OFFERING ENVELOPE** was included in your October, November, December envelope packet. Please use the envelope for your Advent Offering and watch the Sunday bulletin for Council's designation of where the funds received will be distributed. All offering envelopes may be mailed to the church or dropped in the mailbox located at the Adams Street entrance doors.

*Advent*  
*A Season of Hope*  
*& Expectation*



PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR – Our **Annual Congregational Meeting** is scheduled for **Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>** with snow date January 24<sup>th</sup>. Please watch for more details as to how the meeting will be held. this year.