

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

By the Grace of God!
January 2 & 3, 2016

AS WE GATHER

Most people long to be wanted and chosen. Children get picked for teams in gym class; adults get chosen for promotions at work. Society sometimes revolves around being chosen and wanted. Today, we are assured that God has chosen each of us, that we may all receive the greatest gift in the Savior Jesus Christ. Through Christ, God now sees us as His adopted people. Through the Holy Spirit working in us, we are able to know the “guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory” (*Ephesians 1:14*).

WELCOME

But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law,
that we might receive the full rights of sons. (*Galatians 4:4-5, NIV*)

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #523 “O Word of God Incarnate”

O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky:
We praise You for the radiance That from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps, Shines on from age to age.

The Church from You, dear Master, Received the gift divine;
And still that light is lifted O’er all the earth to shine.
It is the chart and compass That, all life’s voyage through,
Mid mists and rocks and quick-sands Still guides, O Christ, to You.

O make Your Church, dear Savior, A lamp of burnished gold
To bear before the nations Your true light as of old!
O teach Your wand’ring pilgrims By this their path to trace
Till, clouds and darkness ended, They see You face to face!

(Rise)

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 124:8; Ephesians 1:3–4*

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the LORD,

People: who made heaven and earth.

Pastor: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

People: who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

Pastor: He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world,

People: that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Dear friends, our own sin and our inability to free ourselves are the reasons a Savior was born. We now confess our sins to God, confident that He has first chosen and loved us, giving us forgiveness for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Almighty God, I confess to you all my sins in thought, word, and deed. Some of my sin I know; some is known only to you. I am by nature sinful. My works do not show a life of faith and repentance, nor do they glorify you.

Pastor: We have not lived according to the purpose of God’s will, but have neglected the richness of His grace with indifference and disobedience.

People: Have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

Pastor: Upon this your confession and through the Holy Spirit working in us, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE #368 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis De - O. Gloria in excelsis De - O.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song?
Gloria in excelsis De - O. Gloria in excelsis De - O.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis De - O. Gloria in excelsis De - O.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. God our Father, our Creator and Redeemer, when the time was right, you sent forth your Son into this world. Through Him, you chose us for salvation that we might live to the praise of your glory. Grant us your Holy Spirit that we ever remain firm in faith and bear fruit, until we possess the eternal inheritance prepared for us before the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

✠ WORD ✠

OLD TESTAMENT READING *1 Kings 3:4–15* (Solomon prays to the Lord for wisdom.)

The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. "Now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?" The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for--both riches and honor--so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. And if you walk in my ways and obey my statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life." Then Solomon awoke--and he

realized it had been a dream. He returned to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord's covenant and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he gave a feast for all his court.

EPISTLE *Ephesians 1:3–14* (God chose us before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.) Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

5:00 CHOIR ANTHEM

"Christmas Gloria"

St. Paul's Choir

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:40–52* (Jesus goes to Passover in Jerusalem and shows He is about the things of His Father.) And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his

answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN #410 "Within the Father's House"

Within the Father's house The Son has found His home,
And to His temple suddenly The Lord of life has come.

The doctors of the Law Gaze on the wondrous child
And marvel at His gracious words Of wisdom undefiled.

Yet not to them is giv'n The mighty truth to know,
To lift the earthly veil that hides Incarnate God below.

The secret of the Lord Escapes each human eye,
And faithful pond'ring hearts await The full epiphany.

Lord, visit Thou our souls And teach us by Thy grace
Each dim revealing of Thyself With loving awe to trace.

Till we behold Thy face And know as we are known
Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Coequal Three in One.

SERMON

"By the Grace of God!"

Ephesians 1:3-14

(Rise)

APOSTLES' CREED *(found on the inside back cover of the hymnal)*

(Be seated)

OFFERING As your offering is collected, **please sign our attendance book** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the book along to others in your pew, and return the book to the center aisle. You may check the register to see the names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places and who promises to hear our prayers. Heavenly Father, you have called us to be caretakers for all people, but in our weakness we fall far short of fulfilling Your calling.

People: **Give to your servants understanding minds and the ability to discern between good and evil as we fulfill the duties of our vocations. Teach us to love your Law and meditate on it all the day, confident that your commandment makes us wise.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, let not our will but your will be done among us. So teach us to ask not for what gives us comfort or pleasure, but for what we truly need for our physical and spiritual lives as your children.

People: **As we receive your daily bread, including all we need for body and soul, fill us with gratitude that, like King Solomon, joyfully brings you offerings of thanksgiving.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, you chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before you. Yet, we do not always live as the sanctified people you call us to be. Hear our pleas for forgiveness. Assure us that in Christ we have redemption through His blood.

People: **Lavish on us your grace, make known to us your will, and strengthen us to live as people who have been predestined for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, you placed your own Son into an earthly family and allowed Joseph and Mary the privilege of raising Him as He grew and became strong. Comfort those who desire children but have not received that gift. Grant them your peace.

People: **Fill those who have been given children with joy. Guide us to be faithful parents who provide for our children, care for their needs and teach them to know Christ.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, care for our children. Enable them to increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. Fill our children and all of us with a deep desire to be in your house, listening and asking questions.

People: **Defend also all lost and exploited children. Protect them from harm and provide them with loving caretakers.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, like King Solomon, the rulers of our nation need your help, your wisdom and your guidance. Give them understanding and enable them to do what is just and right.

People: Embolden them to defend life, to punish wrongdoing and to encourage all that is good. Protect our leaders from harm, and grant them fulfillment in their work.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, watch over those who work to protect our lives and defend our liberties. Grant courage and skill to first responders and to those in our military.

People: Bless and care for their children and families, especially when they are deployed or in danger.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, grant your care, comfort and healing to all who mourn or remember a loved one especially Mae Zepnick who remembers Ralph, and Steve and Laura Kohrs mourning the death of Steve’s father. To those who are sick or suffering Richard, Roy, Edith, Rosalie, Judy, Mae, Marion, Debra, Helen, Leonard, June, LuEva, Eleanor, Linda, Gladys, Russ, Kathleen, Jack, Shirley, Marion, Gretchen, Lois and Sarah.

People: Fill each of them with a confident trust in your mercy, and teach us all to look expectantly to the day when you will grant us permanent healing.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, you graciously invite your children to receive Christ’s body and blood.

People: As we feast on His life and your forgiveness in this holy meal, grant us your promised Holy Spirit that our lives might be lived to the praise of His glory.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, because we, by your grace, have heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation, and believed in Christ, we commend to you ourselves, our loved ones and all for whom we pray, through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

+ SACRAMENT +

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

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

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.

HYMN #384 “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

Of the Father’s love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see Evermore and evermore.

Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world’s Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face Evermore and evermore.

This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long expected;
Let creation praise its Lord Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heav’n adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow’rs, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev’ry voice in concert ring Evermore and evermore.

Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory Evermore and evermore. Amen.

HYMN #696 “O God, My Faithful God”

O God, my faithful God, True fountain ever flowing, Without whom nothing is,
All perfect gifts bestowing: Give me a healthy frame, And may I have within
A conscience free from blame, A soul unstained by sin.

Grant me the strength to do With ready heart and willing Whatever you command,
My calling here fulfilling; That I do what I should While trusting you to bless
The outcome for my good, For you must give success.

Keep me from saying words That later need recalling; Guard me lest idle speech
May from my lips be falling; But when within my place I must and ought to speak,
Then to my words give grace Lest I offend the weak.

Lord, let me win my foes With kindly words and actions, And let me find good friends
For counsel and correction. Help me, as you have taught,
To love both great and small And by your Spirit's might To live in peace with all.

Let me depart this life Confiding in my Savior; By grace receive my soul
That it may live forever; And let my body have A quiet resting place
Within a Christian grave; And let it sleep in peace.

And on that final day When all the dead are waking, Stretch out your mighty hand,
My deathly slumber breaking. Then let me hear your voice,
Redeem this earthly frame, And bid me to rejoice With those who love your name.

HYMN #389 "Let All Together Praise Our God"

Let all together praise our God Before His glorious throne;
Today He opens heav'n again To give us His own Son, To give us His own Son.

He leaves His heav'nly Father's throne, Is born an infant small,
And in a manger, poor and lone, Lies in a humble stall, Lies in a humble stall.

Within an earth-born form He hides His all creating light;
To serve us all He humbly cloaks The splendor of His might,
The splendor of His might.

He undertakes a great exchange, Puts on our human frame,
And in return gives us His realm, His glory, and His name, His glory, and His name.

He is a servant, I a lord: How great a mystery!
How strong the tender Christ Child's love!
No truer friend than He, No truer friend than He.

He is the key and He the door To blessed paradise;
The angel bars the way no more. To God our praises rise, To God our praise rise.

Your grace in lowliness revealed, Lord Jesus, we adore
And praise to God the Father yield And Spirit evermore;
We praise You evermore.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to you, almighty God, that you have refreshed us
through this salutary gift, and we implore you that of your mercy you would
strengthen us through the same in faith toward you and in fervent love
toward one another; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION *Based on Ephesians 1:13–14*

Pastor: When you heard the Word of truth and believed in Christ, you were sealed
with the promised Holy Spirit. As you have heard His Word, and give thanks
for the power of His Spirit, go as His chosen people in praise of His name. 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 in
the "guarantee of our inheritance."

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #725 "Children of the Heavenly Father"

Children of the heav'nly Father Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven Such a refuge e'er was given.

God His own doth tend and nourish; In His holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things He spares them; In His mighty arms He bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth, And their sorrows all He knoweth.

Though He giveth or He taketh, God His children ne'er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely To preserve them pure and holy.

Preacher/Liturgist

Lectors

Acolytes

Children's Ministry

Organist

Choir Director

Pastor Gregg Stanton

Dalen Heinzen, Heidi Leiser, Dan Vaclav

Laura Quigley, Michael Matusewic, Bree Rudig

Laurel Privatt

Roger Gottschalk

Nancy Hoelke

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