



OUR REDEEMER
LUTHERAN CHURCH
GRAND PRAIRIE

You are welcome here!
**We are disciples of Jesus, growing
in Faith, Hope, and Love**

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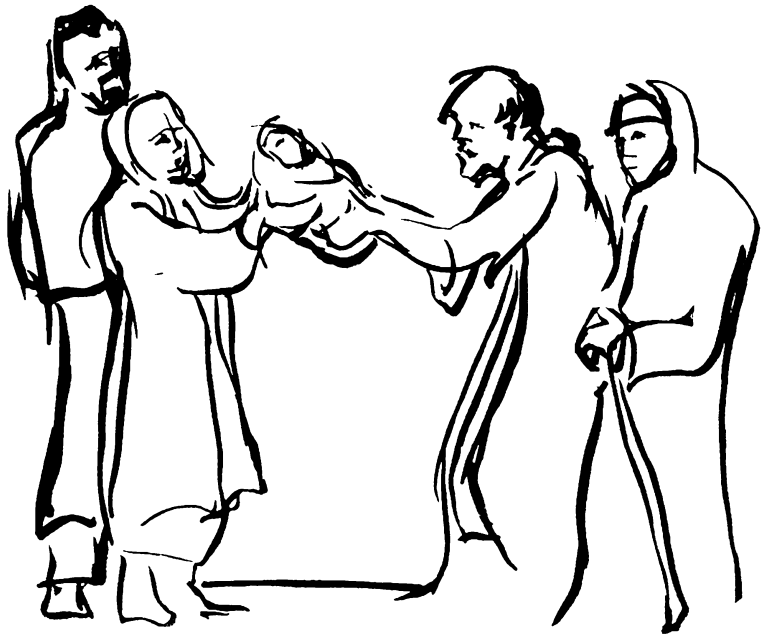
Worship Times

Sunday 10:15 am
Wednesday 7:00 pm



Pastor

Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal



December 31, 2023
First Sunday after
Christmas

Gathering

✠ 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.

✠ CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the Word made flesh,
our life and our salvation.

C Amen.

P Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of life,

C **you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us.**

Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.

Amen.

P Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In ✠ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed.
Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

C Amen.

✠ GATHERING HYMN –Angels, From the Realms of Glory (ELW#275)

✠ GREETING

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

C **And also with you.**

✘ GLORY TO GOD (ELW #289) vs. 1

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains.
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.
GLO - - - ria, in excelsis Deo.
GLO - - - ria, in excelsis Deo.

✘ PRAYER OF THE DAY

A 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.

C **Amen.**

Word

✘ FIRST LESSON – Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3

¹⁰I 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.

¹¹For 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.

^{62:1}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.

²The 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.

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

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

✠ RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 148

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels;
sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon;
sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD,
who commanded, and they were created,

⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever,
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens,
old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴**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 LESSON – Galatians 4:4-7

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

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able to welcome the gospel.

✘ **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – (ELW #513)**

Refrain
Leader All

Ne - no, ne - no la - ke Mu - ngu la - ku - i - ta we - we,
Lis - ten, lis - ten, God is call - ing, through the Word in - vit - ing,

ne - no la wo - ko - vu, te - na je - ma, ma,
of - fer - ing for - give - ness, com - fort, and joy. joy.

The image shows a musical score for a Gospel Acclamation. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is for the Refrain, with a 'Leader' part and an 'All' part. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 'Ne - no, ne - no la - ke Mu - ngu la - ku - i - ta we - we, Lis - ten, lis - ten, God is call - ing, through the Word in - vit - ing,'. The second system continues the melody and includes a double bar line with first and second endings. The lyrics for the second system are: 'ne - no la wo - ko - vu, te - na je - ma, ma, of - fer - ing for - give - ness, com - fort, and joy. joy.'

✘ **GOSPEL – Luke 2:22-40**

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

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

²²When 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 ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated 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; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided 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, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

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

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

³⁴Then 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 ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There 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, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At 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.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The 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.**

✘ SERMON

✘ HYMN OF THE DAY– Hallelujah, Sing Praise to Your Creator (ACS #1091)

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✘ APOSTLES’ CREED (ELW p. 105)

P With the whole Church, let us confess our faith:

C **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

A Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

A You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts and the witness of people who are neurodivergent, living with disability, or bearing invisible illness. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Your praise is sung throughout creation in all times and seasons. As the new year turns, ground us in your changeless and sustaining love. Keep us attentive to the rhythms of the cosmos and inspire us to live in harmony with all the earth. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Give hope and stamina to leaders who work tirelessly for the sake of the most vulnerable. We pray especially for organizations working on behalf of children to provide basic needs, to protect from abuse and neglect, to address trauma, and to rescue from trafficking. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Sustain all people who, like Simeon and Anna, have been waiting for salvation and wholeness. We pray especially for anyone living with cancer or chronic illness, all people who are in physical rehabilitation or addiction recovery, and those experiencing complications from long COVID. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. Teach us to honor the wisdom of children, the inquisitiveness of youth, the thoughtfulness of adults, and the knowledge of elders. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We give thanks for all the beloved who lived with expectation and departed this life in peace. Sustain us in joy until we join them around your throne. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

C Amen.

✘ PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

✘ OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, here and around the world.

After the offering is gathered, the gifts are brought forward to the altar.

As this happens, please stand as you are able for the offering prayer and meal.

✘ OFFERING PRAYER

A God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C **Amen.**

Meal

✘ GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

✘ HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW #190)

C **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest.**

✠ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

P With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C Come, Holy Spirit.

P All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

✠ LORD'S PRAYER

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

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.

✘ **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Glory to God in the highest!
Come to the table of peace.

✘ **DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

✘ **COMMUNION HYMN – What Child is This? (ELW #296)**

✘ **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life.
As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us
shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and
Lord.

C Amen.

✘ **BLESSING**

P God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send
peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

C Amen.

✘ **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

✘ **SENDING HYMN – O Lord, Now Let Your Servant (ELW #313)**

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✘ **DISMISSAL**

P Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C Thanks be to God.

**Submissions for the January Newsletter are due at noon this coming
Wednesday, January 3rd.**

Special Epiphany Service this Wednesday, January 3rd, at 7 p.m.



Come help us say good-bye to the Christmas Season while we learn about the celebration of the wise men in other cultures. Last chance to sing carols – by request!

✠ **SERVING TODAY**

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal
Music Director:	John Zacharias
Altar:	Nina Wallace-Martinez
Assisting Minister:	Julie Schmidt
Lay Reader:	Hattie Hammer
Usher:	Nino Martinez
Videographer:	Steve Curry
Communion Cup Holder:	Kyle Bennett

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