

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

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Second Sunday of Christmas ✠ January 3, 2021

PRELUDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & 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 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.**

HYMN

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

L: The LORD be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: 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.**

FIRST LESSON:

JEREMIAH 31:7-14

PSALM 147:12-20

¹²Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion,

¹³**who has strengthened the bars of your gates
and has blessed your children within you.**

¹⁴God has established peace on your borders;
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵**God sends out a command to the earth,
a word that runs very swiftly.**

¹⁶God gives snow like wool,
scattering frost like ashes.

¹⁷**God scatters hail like bread crumbs.
Who can stand against God's cold?**

¹⁸The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;
the wind blows, and the waters flow.

¹⁹**God declares the word to Jacob,
statutes and judgments to Israel.**

²⁰The LORD has not done so to any other nation;
they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

SECOND LESSON:

EPHESIANS 1:3-14

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1st Chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

JOHN 1:(1-9) 10-18

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN

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;

**by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became
incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**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.
With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and
glorified.**

He 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

THE PRAYERS

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER *The pastor offers the prayer.*

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**

HOLY COMMUNION

BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our LORD Jesus Christ strengthen you and
keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER

A: Let us pray...We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once
again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ.
Though this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a
world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy
through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the
magi by a star, bless you this day, ✠ through the Word made flesh.
Amen.

HYMN

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

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WELCOME TO ALL IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

We especially welcome those who are visiting. We invite you to sign our guest register in the narthex. Blank envelopes in the pews are for visitors.

"God's purpose for St. Paul's Lutheran Blue" Church is to spread the Good News of Christ's love for all people in the Southern Lehigh community and beyond." -Blue Church Mission Statement, adopted 2012

Second Sunday of Christmas: *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.*

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.....

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 gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing. God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

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.

John 1:1-18: 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 CHARTS TO SPONSOR ALTAR FLOWERS, BULLETINS, SANTUARY CANDLE AND WINE FOR 2021 ARE NOW ON THE BULLETIN BOARDS IN THE NARTHEX. Please check the appropriate charts.

BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR... Bill Exner, Maggie Fried, Ron Fried, Shirley Hildebrand, Jerry Smith, Hattie Smith, Bob Storat, Sue Storat, Dean Stover, Steve

Other concerns: Kevin Jones, deployment; Todd and Dottie.

Note: This is a short-term list, for those who are in "acute care" situations—hospitalized or in recovery, dying, facing the recent death of a loved one, or presently facing a severe life crisis. The names of those for whom we pray will be kept on the list for one month. If you wish to have them placed back on the list please contact the church office.

WEEKLY GIFTS, PRESENTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD...

SANTUARY LAMP... by Kathy Exner in memory of mother, Vermont Barilla.

COMMUNION BREAD... by Warren and Lois Adams.

LEADING OUR WORSHIP

CELEBRANT	The Rev. James Hammond
ORGANIST	Dr. Jennifer Dodd
ASSISTING MINISTER	Maggie Fried
LECTOR	Maggie Fried
GREETERS	Roger & Gloria Knappenberger
CHURCH COUNCIL REP	Roger Knappenberger

LOOKING AHEAD

MONDAY, JAN. 4 – 7 – 8 PM Girl Scouts Meeting.

THURSDAY, JAN. 7 – 6:30 – 7:30 PM Cub Pack#364 Meeting.

MONDAY, JAN. 11 – Church Council Meeting.

SUNDAY, JAN. 24 – Annual Congregational Meeting immediately following Worship.

THE ANNUAL COAT DRIVE - Blue Church is collecting gently used coats for the winter season to help those who can use them. You can bring in coats and drop them in the bin in the narthex. Many thanks to all those who have already donated coats. They have been delivered to St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Allentown.

PLEASE NOTE: The reports to be included in the Annual Congregational Report should be in the church office no later than January 17th. They can also be emailed at bluechch@ptd.net.

Betty Lou's Pantry Christmas gift update (From Chris Page)

To date we have collected \$12,440 from 81 individuals, 3 churches, 1 business (\$2500) and the football team (\$500). This does not include funds we continue to receive through PayPal. Each child and senior were given \$50 in Walmart cards and each family without children nor seniors a \$25 Walmart card and \$10 Giant card. Everyone received a \$25 Giant card. Faith UCC donated wrapping paper to go along with the cards. Thanks to everyone in Blue Church for their generous support.

BLUE CHURCH NOTES

IN-PERSON WORSHIP

- Masks must be worn at all times properly covering one's nose and mouth.
- There will be no formal collection of offering or passing of the peace. Receptacles will be provided in the narthex area for worshippers to deposit their offering envelopes (which may also be mailed in to the church office).
- In order to provide a sanitary and safe Holy Communion experience we are using pre-filled Communion chalices.

• **PLEASE NOTE** – *If you would like to help defray the extra expense of the Communion cups you can use your Communion envelope in your box of offering envelopes or a plain envelope marked "Communion" with your name.*

WE ARE STILL COLLECTING DETERGENT DONATIONS FOR

BETTY LOU'S FOOD PANTRY. They can be left at the side entrance to the church (red door) and someone will put them inside. Thanks again for being so generous with all your donations and volunteering to help those in need in our community!

LESSONS

Jeremiah 31:7-14 – 1st Lesson

⁷ For thus 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.'

⁸ See, 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.

⁹ With 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.

¹⁰ Hear 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.'

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

¹² They 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.

¹³ Then 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.

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

Ephesians 1:3-14 – 2nd Lesson

³ Blessed 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 towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

John 1:(1-9) 10-18 - Gospel

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.

⁶ There 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.*

¹⁰ He 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.

¹⁴ And 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.

St. Paul's Lutheran "Blue" Church
Prayers ✠ Second Sunday of Christmas ✠
January 3, 2021

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

"Your mercy is great."

A brief silence

A: Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth. Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A brief silence

A: You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testified to your splendor. Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance, from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, deserts to rainforests. Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority. Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities. Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: You bring consolation to those who weep. Embrace those who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated. Accompany those living with chronic and invisible illness. Sustain the weak and weary. Refresh those who labor under the weight of pain or sickness. Today we pray especially for: Bill, Maggie, Ron, Shirley, Jerry, Hattie, Bob, Sue, Dean, Kevin, Steve, Todd, Dottie, and everyone who has asked for our prayers or known only to the Lord. Hear us, O God.

Hear us, O God.

“Your mercy is great.”

A: You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light. Bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppressions and misuse of power. Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another. Hear us, O God.

“Your mercy is great.”

A: You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for those who have died in faith. With all the saints, give us our inheritance in Christ. In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your mercy. Hear us, O God.

“Your mercy is great.”

Pastor: 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.
