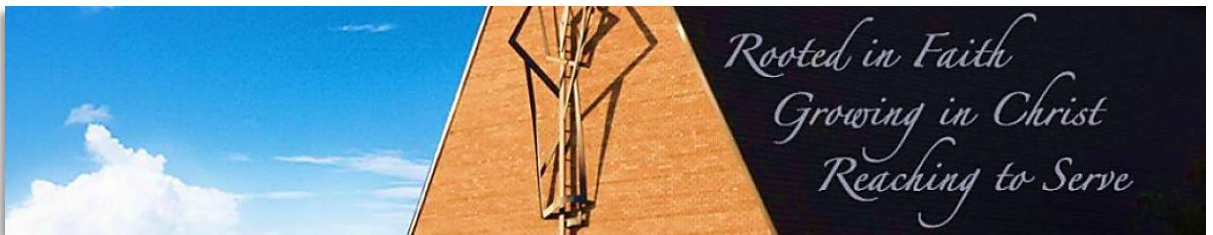


**First Sunday after Christmas**

**December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023**



# The First Sunday after Christmas | How does a weary world rejoice?

*We root ourselves in ritual* Luke 2:21-38

## PRELUDE

Kristen Weikum

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Every year we celebrate Christmas.

**Every Sunday we break bread.**

Every week we gather for worship.

**Every day we count our blessings.**

Every minute God is near.

**Yes, every minute God is near.**

These are the rituals of our faith.

**Let us worship Holy God.**

### CALL TO CONFESSION

Church family, our faith is decorated with rituals and rhythms that help tie us to God.

Confession is one of those rituals. Every week we gather in this space and tell the truth about our lives. And every week God hears our prayers and offers us grace. This holy dance of confession and mercy is one of the many rituals I could not live without. So let us embrace this holy tradition together. Let us pray:

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of rhythms, we confess:**

**Our faith would not be what it is without rituals.**

**Unlike you, we depend on bread and water.**

**We have to return to this space again and again to hear old, familiar stories.**

**For if we stopped, we know it would not take long before we lost our way.**

**Forgive us for our fragility, and thank you for giving us ordinary rituals and rhythms to hold onto.**

**With grateful and humble hearts we pray, amen.**

### WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, it is not enough to hear once a month or once a year that you are forgiven.

We need to hear it every single week. *Every single week* we need to be reminded that we are held in God's loving embrace.

So hear this good news: no matter where you are on your journey of life, love, or faith, and no matter what you have done or left undone, you belong to God. You are claimed. You are known. You are forgiven.

This is the good news of the gospel! Thanks be to God! **Amen!**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**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.**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:10-62:3**

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.  
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.  
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.  
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.  
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**

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

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

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

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

Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they were created,  
**who made them stand fast forever and ever,  
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

*continued*

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

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

mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars;

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

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

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

Let them praise the name of the LORD,

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

**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**

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

Word of God. Word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL: LUKE 2:21-38**

The Holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 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 so that the inner

thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” 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, 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. 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.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

**Pastor Ellen Taube**

**HYMN OF THE DAY Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming**

**ELW 272**

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We believe that faith is a journey marked by rituals and rhythms.**

**We come to worship.**

**We confess our sins.**

**We pass the peace. We offer grace.**

**We hear the Word. We baptize children.**

**We break the bread. And we tell the story of a loving God.**

**And through these sacred rituals, we are reminded:**

**we are not alone. God is near, and we have work to do.**

**May this belief shape the rhythm of our lives. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

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.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

**Amen.**

**SHARING THE PEACE**

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

Please share a sign of God's peace with one another.

**OFFERING**

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**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. Amen.**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### LORD'S PRAYER

pg. 191

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

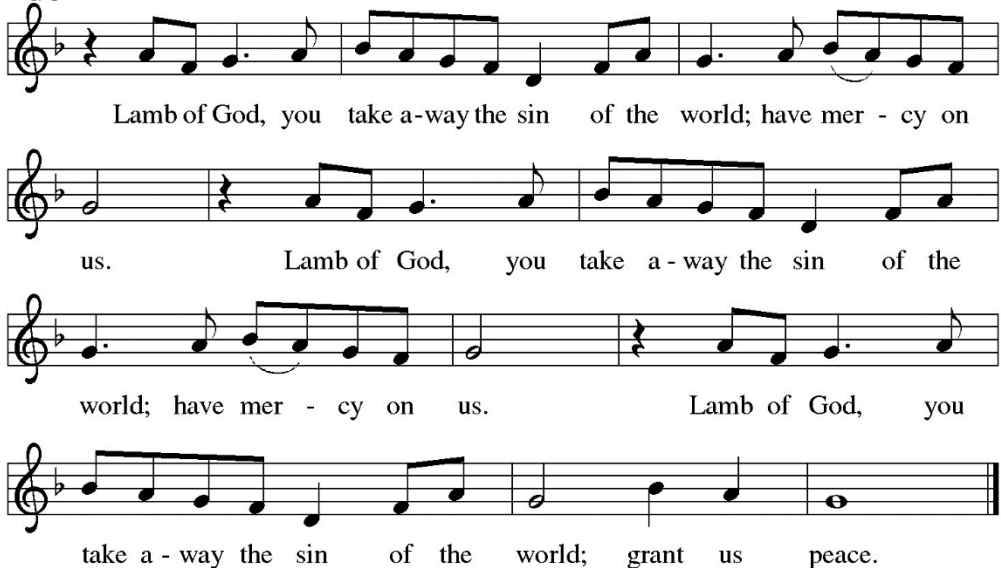
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

All are welcome.

### LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you  
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

### COMMUNION HYMNS

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord

ELW 286

What Child Is This

ELW 296

### TABLE BLESSING

#### PRAYER AFTR COMMUNION

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. Amen.

## **BENEDICTION**

Family of faith, as you leave this place, you go into a weary world –  
So speak tenderly. Do the good that is yours to do. Choose connection.  
Hold onto hope. And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.  
You are God's beloved. So go rejoicing. The world needs it. **Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG The Bells of Christmas**

**ELW 298**

## **DISMISSAL**

Christ the Savior is born!  
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

**Kristen Weikum**



### We hold in our prayers

Please pray for people in need of comfort, hope, healing, or safe transition: Mark, Jess, Kate, Joe, Matthew, Russ, Carolyn B., Dan, Adeline, Jesse, Tedd, Ed & Karen, Ralph, Diane, Chuck, Sue, Mike, Kate, Matt, Ken, Ruth T., Hermine, Deb L., Matt, Ross-(needs transplant of kidneys & pancreas), Brandon, Jessica, Breanna, Jeremy, Richard, Shari, Rodney, Lee, Kathy, Mary, Wally C., Marlene, Victoria.

Call Janet Heglund, prayer leader for this month, at 218-749-6143, for prayer needs.

**If you are in need of any pastoral care or if you or someone you know would like a visit, please call Pastor Liz Cheney at 218-780-8907 or the church office at 218-741-6207.**

### Visitors and Friends

We at Our Savior's practice open communion during Sunday Worship. Our Lord invites us to share a holy meal at His altar, and we understand that invitation to be open to all who wish to commune with us. You are therefore welcome to join us in our Lord's Supper.

If you prefer a Gluten Free wafer or juice, please let the Pastor/server know.

*A warm welcome to all visitors who are worshipping with us this morning! Please join us for coffee fellowship following the service.*

### CONTACT US

Church Office: 218-741-6207

office@oslcmn.com

www.oslcmn.com

www.facebook.com/oslcmn

YouTube Page ~ Our Savior's Lutheran Church Virginia MN Office

### OFFICE HOURS

Office Admin hours will now be Tuesday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

*\*This week, Colleen will take Wednesday, Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> off for the holiday, but will be in the office Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.*

### PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Liz will be here Mon. - Thurs. & off Fridays - 218-780-8907  
or lizcheney44@gmail.com

### STAFF

**Pastor:** Rev. Liz Cheney

**Church Secretary:** Colleen Brown Jacobson

**Bookkeeper:** Carole Rutka

**Musicians:** Kristen Weikum, Mark Ongalo, Ginny Ahrlin

**Custodian:** Steve Gagnon





## ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DECEMBER 31, 2023

**HAPPY NEW YEAR! We welcome Pastor Ellen Taube today ~** *Thank you Pastor Ellen for leading worship and preaching this morning.*

**ADULT FORUMS** We are continuing Adult Forums - the first Sunday of each month! **January 7<sup>th</sup>** is our first in the new year and we will be learning about Guatemala and the work Pastor Liz does with *Recycled Lives* ([www.recycledlives.org](http://www.recycledlives.org)). In February we will learn about Vanco & electronic giving options, and how to stream our worship service through your smart phone, computer, tablet or tv. Joy Hensel is visiting us in March: she is the Mental Health Minister for the NEMN Synod and will have resources and information to share.

**FREE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST** Join us again, **Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 12 noon**, for our Community Breakfast. We are inviting our neighbors and community members to join us for a meal. Please invite your neighbors, friends and family! If you would like to help out, let Pastor Liz know.



**ANNUAL MEETING** Our annual meeting is set for Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, following worship. Please have your reports in to the office by Monday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> so we can have a preliminary report made public to the congregation.

**WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS** We are in need of people to sign up to help **serve communion, be a lector, usher, greet**, etc...in order for worship on Sunday mornings to run smoothly. The sign-up sheets will now be located on the kiosk in the narthex. This work belongs to all of us, the ministers of the congregation. We all can take a Sunday to help out in many ways and that makes the work light. Please prayerfully consider how you might be able to sign up for one Sunday, a couple Sundays, a whole month to assist in worship in 2024. Not sure how to do something, just ask!

**TECH TEAM FORMATION** It's exciting to see what we will be able to do in the very near future! Shortly, Our Savior's will have the equipment and ability to live stream our worship services, funerals, weddings, concerts, etc... LIVE! People will be able to tune in at 9:30 on Sunday mornings and watch our worship in the moment on both our FB page & YouTube. This is very exciting! Pastor is looking to put together a *Tech Team* that would be able to help on Sunday mornings get mics on, camera on, radio on, easy tasks... Dan Peliska has been our solo Tech Team with help from our secretary Colleen. It's time to expand our team, and with our new equipment, now seems to be a good time. Please talk with Pastor Liz if you are interested in helping out in this way.

**SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE** It's time to re-energize our *Social Concerns Committee* – we sent out both Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets, but beyond that, there are many social concerns OSLC could be a part of. If you are interested in social justice, outreach ministry and concerns for our local community, this is the team for you! See Pastor Liz for more information.

**RADIO SPONSORSHIP** If you are interested in sponsoring a Sunday Worship in honor of someone or a special event (wedding anniversary, birth of children, baptism date) or in memory of a loved one who has passed, you may do so in full for \$90 or shared/partial at \$45. Just call the church office, **and/or sign up on the sheet provided on the bulletin board by the fountain. You can also sponsor to support our new tech and sound equipment.**

**HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS:** Colleen will take Wednesday off (Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>) as her holiday, but will be in the office Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

**UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS:**

Finance Meeting, 3:30pm, Wed. 1/3

Adult Forum after worship, 1/7

Council Meeting, Wednesday, 5:30pm, 1/10

Community Breakfast 9am – 12noon, 1/13

Be the Light Sunday 1/14

Youth Group, 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> gr., 6pm – 8pm, Wed. 1/17

Annual meeting after worship, 1/21

*\*Committee leaders please have your annual report in to the office by Monday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> so a preliminary report can be made available in time!*

**GIVING IS EASY WITH OUR QR CODE**

Just scan it with your phone's camera to learn more about contributing to OSLC's Ministries!



**YOU CAN STILL GIVE TOWARD THE ELCA "GOOD GIFTS" CAMPAIGN**

We will be collecting in the little piggy bank on the counter during Coffee, following worship this week and next.

Or, you can simply grab an ornament off the small tree in the entryway, take it home and send payment/pay online with the info attached.

See the Good Gift's magazine, kid's resources, & coloring books, etc. on the display cabinet under the monitor in the entry. Thank you for participating.

Let's give a gift that makes a big difference around the world!