

____Christmas Day____

The Salvation of Our God

FOR UNTO US
a child is born,
UNTO US
a son is
given.
- ISAIAH 9:6



December 25th, 2020



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN
— MINISTRIES —
CHURCH • SCHOOL • CHILDCARE

The Superior Son

OPENING HYMN

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful – CW 55

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

DIALOGUE OF PRAISE

P: Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord, let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

C: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You have set your glory above the heavens.

P: Give thanks to the Lord of lords, to him who alone does great wonders, who by his understanding made the heavens, who spread out the earth upon the waters, who made the great lights – the sun, to govern the day, the moon and stars to govern the night.

C: Great is the Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

P: But our iniquities have separated us from our God; our sins have hidden his face from us, so that he will not hear. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. We look for deliverance, but it is far away.

C: For our offenses are many in his sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our sins.

P: The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

C: From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

P: "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is

just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord our Righteousness.”

C: Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

P: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

C: Let the name of the Lord be praised forever and ever. Alleluia!

HYMN OF PRAISE

Angels We Have Heard on High – **CW 63**

The Gloria in Excelsis (Latin for “Glory [to God] in the highest”) has been the traditional song of praise sung at the beginning of Christian services for centuries. The text of the Gloria may be found on pages 16-17 in Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal. The following hymn quotes the opening words of the Gloria, the same words that the angels first sang on Christmas night.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yolk of sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 52:7-10

The ends of the earth will see God’s salvation

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!” ⁸ Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. ⁹ Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

HYMN

Joy to the World – **CW 62**

The First Lesson is normally followed by a psalm. The hymn, “Joy to the World,” is based on the words of Psalm 98, which is the psalm appointed for Christmas Day.

SECOND LESSON & SERMON TEXT

Hebrews 1:1-9

God has revealed himself to us through his Son

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. ⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? ⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." ⁷ In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire." ⁸ But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

HYMN

All Praise to You, Eternal God – **CW 33**

Martin Luther prepared the following Christmas hymn to be sung between the Epistle (Second Lesson) and Gospel. "Alleluia" is traditionally sung between the Second Lesson and Gospel to express the congregation's joy as they anticipate hearing about their Savior Jesus in the Gospel. Each stanza of this hymn concludes with an "alleluia."

GOSPEL

John 1:1-14

The Word became flesh and lived among us

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of

God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Of the Father's Love Begotten – **CW 35**

SERMON

Pastor Kenneth Frey

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Excerpts from the Athanasian Creed

It is necessary for eternal salvation truly to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh.

Now this is the true Christian faith.

We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man.

He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh. equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the Father as to his humanity; and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons, but one, one, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God; one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being, so God and man are one Christ. He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty, and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.

This is the true Christian faith. Whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior has been born for us. For fulfilling your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending your Son to be our Savior, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

C: Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

P: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation! Even though he is the all-powerful Lord of all, he is wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

C: Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our Savior.

P: In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the child.

C: Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

P: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

P: As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

C: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising – **CW 42**

CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING

P: Dear God of all glory, through eyewitnesses you have revealed to us your Son as the Babe of Bethlehem, as the Savior at the cross, and as the King of heaven. Help us, therefore, to praise him properly on this day, to receive him humbly by his grace, and to look for him to come

again in glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Let Us All with Gladsome Voice – **CW 64**

Presiding Minister: Kenneth Frey

Organist: Dan Vogel

Service Team: B. Holz (Head Usher), J./M. Holz, T. Abitz, B. Casey, A.

Malueg, G. Fredericks, M. Fay

Welcome

In an age of anxiety we still believe that peace comes from Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In an age of confusion we still believe that the Bible is the word of God, inerrant and infallible.

In an age of doubt we still believe that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary.

In an age of guilt we still believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay for the sins of the world, bringing complete pardon and joy to all believers.

In an age of reason we still believe that God is at work in the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

In an age of change we still believe in one unchanging God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Whether you are a first time visitor or returning guest, we are delighted to share our worship with you. Please come back and worship with us again.



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Worship Broadcast at 8:00 on
WNAM radio, 1280 AM

Videos of our service today can be
found on our Facebook page or our
website:
www.stpaulappletonwi.com