

**Second Sunday after Christmas**  
January 3, 2021  
Living Faith Lutheran Church, Davis Bay, BC

Preservice Music/Welcome/Announcements

**GATHERING**

Gathering Song        #276    "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

Infant holy, Infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the warmth and protective company of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

O God our redeemer, you created light that we might live, and you illumine our world  
with your beloved Son. By your Spirit comfort us in all darkness, and turn us toward the light  
of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,  
now and forever. Amen.

**WORD**

First Lesson                Jeremiah 31:7-14

<sup>7</sup>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."

<sup>8</sup>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.

<sup>9</sup>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.

<sup>10</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,  
and declare it in the coastlands far away;  
say, "The One who scattered Israel will gather him,  
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

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

<sup>12</sup>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.

<sup>13</sup>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.

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

## Second Lesson          Ephesians 1:3-14

<sup>3</sup>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, <sup>4</sup>just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup>God destined us for adoption as God's children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of God's will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of God's glorious grace that was freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

<sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup>that God lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>God has made known to us the mystery of the divine will, according to God's good pleasure set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to God's counsel and will, <sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

<sup>13</sup>In Christ 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;  
<sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of God's glory.

Lesson Hymn            #299    "Cold December Flies Away"

- 1    Cold December flies away at the rose-red splendor.  
     April's crowning glory breaks while the whole world wonders  
     at the holy unseen pow'r of the tree which bears the flow'r.  
     On the blessed tree blooms the reddest flow'r.  
     On the tree blooms the rose here in love's own garden,  
     full and strong in glory.
  
- 2    In the hopeless time of sin shadows deep had fallen.  
     All the world lay under death. Eyes were closed in sleeping.  
     But, when all seemed lost in night, came the sun whose golden light  
     brings unending joy, brings the endless joy  
     of our hope, highest hope, of our hope's bright dawning,  
     Son belov'd of heaven.
  
- 3    Now the bud has come to bloom, and the world awakens.  
     In the lily's purest flow'r dwells a wondrous fragrance.  
     And it spreads to all the earth from the moment of its birth;  
     and its beauty lives. In the flow'r it lives,  
     in the flow'r, and it spreads in its heav'nly brightness  
     sweet perfume delightful.

Holy Gospel            John 1:1-18

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
<sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.  
<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,  
<sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>(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.'")

<sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made God known.

#### Hymn of Meditation #294 "In the Bleak Midwinter"

- 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
- 2 Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;  
heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;  
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.
- 3 What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him—give my heart.

#### Sermon

#### Song of the Day #292 "Love Has Come"

- 1 Love has come—a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.
- 2 Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers; Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.
- 3 Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas; Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

#### Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new;  
who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.**

## **We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**

*A New Creed: The United Church of Canada, General Council 1968, alt.*

### **Commissioning of the Rev. Glenn Inglis as our second part-time Pastor**

#### Prayers of the Faithful

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

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.**

You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies 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 and then grant us the will, courage and intelligence to do so. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Particularly do we pray for those serving in police forces, armed forces, peacekeeping missions and fire fighters everywhere along with first responders and intensive care unit nurses and doctors. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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 (*especially those we name before you now in silence or aloud. . .*). We also bring before you Dorothy Morse whose birthday is this week and who will have to celebrate it in her room, alone and lonely. Lead us to do what we can to stand with her in mind and spirit. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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 honour your image in one another and stand up for those who are abused, oppressed, humiliated or belittled by those they do not even know. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for those who have died in faith (*especially Patrick and Maggie*). 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.**

You have given us the gift of Glenn to share in our mutual ministry here. We are grateful for his willingness to offer his gifts to your service and our needs. Be present with him, and his spouse, Linda, and bless his work among us so that, as part of the pastoral team, our care for one another

and our outreach to the community around us might bring you honour and be for us a sign of your goodness. Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

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.**

Sharing of the Peace  
Offertory prayer

Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen.**

*Musical reflection as the table is set*

### **MEAL**

A Christmas Prayer of Blessing and Thanksgiving over the gifts

Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life, at the birth of time  
your word brought light into the world.  
In the fullness of time, you sent your Word, born of Mary,  
to shine in our darkness and to make us your daughters and sons.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us, his death and resurrection,  
we await his coming again when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup, that, held and nourished by you,  
we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honour is yours, Almighty God,  
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen**

Fraction      The gifts of God for the beloved daughters and sons of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Invitation to the Table and the Meal

The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine.

Come and meet Christ who waits to feed you in this meal.

Prayer after the Meal

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us  
from your very self with the body and blood of Christ.

Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise  
to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen.**

## SENDING

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.**

Sending Song            #290    “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

*Refrain*

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

- 1 While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*
- 2 The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*
- 3 Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;  
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Postlude

Dismissal

Go in peace and share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

*You may find the excerpt on the next page something well worth rejoicing over and meditating upon at the beginning of this new year. It is taken from a book by Paul Tillich, one of the most famous and influential theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was typed out by a very dear friend of mine, the Rev. Ken Harris who died this past spring. He was someone who found considerable comfort and hope in Tillich's emphasis on "You are accepted". I hope you find it equally comforting and hopeful.*

Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. It strikes us when we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life. It strikes us when we feel that our separation is deeper than usual, because we have violated another life, a life which we loved, or from which we were estranged. It strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility, and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us. It strikes us when, year after year, the longed-for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage. Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!" If that happens to us we experience grace. After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed. In that moment, grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement. And nothing is demanded of this experience, no religious or moral or intellectual pre-supposition, nothing but acceptance.

PAUL TILICH



### ***Some important (and not-so-important) announcements***

Beginning this Sunday, January 3, we will no longer “record and post” our zoom worship on our parish website. The time required of Gordon Bone to download, edit and upload the service (*particularly when participants “unmute” themselves and their private comments and conversations need to be edited out*). . . plus the recognition that very few people “visit and view” the posted service later on, have lead us to this decision. Our Sunday morning services will continue to be “zoomed” and we encourage all members and friends with internet access to join us on zoom and share our worship.

With the approval of Bishop Greg Mohr and the unanimous agreement of church council, the Rev. Glenn Inglis, an ordained Presbyterian minister, will join our pastoral staff. The initial six-month exploration of this “team ministry” will provide both Glenn and the congregation the opportunity to decide whether to extend that relationship into the future. If both parties agree to continue, the congregation will extend an official “call” to Glenn to serve as our second part-time pastor, working alongside Pastor Hergy.

Specific details of this present “interim” arrangement such as the number of hours per month and the compensation per hour will be provided to the congregation in due time once we all have a better idea of how this new relationship will work during the remaining months of the pandemic and its restrictions regarding gatherings for worship and study as well as visitation of members and friends. Please remember both Glenn and Hergy (as well as our musician, Val Rutter and our office administrator, Lisa Moore) with your prayers, encouragement and support.

If any members (or acquaintances of members) have candle stubs (any colour or shape or size) that are no longer used and taking up space in drawers or ready to be thrown out, please bring them in a bag or box and drop them off at the church (perhaps by the back doors). We have someone who uses candle wax as part of a “home project”. You may either email or phone Lisa Moore or Pastor Hergy to let them know you have delivered a package. Thank you.

Finally, Pastor Hergy hopes that many of you are willing to fill out a short questionnaire on the following page and send the replies to him by email (or deliver a printout and put it in the mailbox outside the office door). Your responses will be helpful in planning our worship for the remaining months prior to our resumption of “normal” in-person worship (whenever the Provincial Health Authorities permit us to do so).

You may either circle or underline the appropriate response. Finally, please note that any and all suggestions to improve/extend/expand our “online worship” will be gratefully received and carefully considered.

## ONLINE WORSHIP RESOURCES QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you participate in our zoom services?      Yes    No    Occasionally
2. If “yes” or “occasionally”, do you find those services meaningful?    Yes      No
3. Do you prefer to use the “read-only/printed” versions of the order of service and the sermon rather than join our zoom worship?      Yes      No
4. Do you “celebrate” or “share” in Holy Communion at home?    Yes    No    Occasionally
5. If not, it is because:
  - a. It just isn’t the same not being able to commune with other people
  - b. It feels (has felt/would feel) “uncomfortable” or “awkward” or “odd” to commune by myself or with only one other family member or friend
  - c. I don’t feel the need to have communion. Reading or watching the service is enough

*Other reason(s)*
6. Do you sing or read the hymns?      Sing      Read
7. Have you watched any of the sermon videos?    Yes    No    Occasionally
8. Do you find a video version of the sermon to be beneficial?    Yes    No
9. Should all our worship leaders be encouraged to “film” their sermons ahead of time so they can be viewed on Sunday morning(s) or at a more convenient time?  
  
Yes    No
10. Have you ever forwarded one of the video sermons to family or friends?
11. Since it does (or would) cost the congregation some money to film, download, upload and post these sermons videos on YouTube and/or our parish website, do you think the approximate \$100 per/month is money worth spending. . . and would you contribute a bit more each month in your offering to fund that?  
  
Yes    No    Maybe

If you wish, on a separate page, please share any suggestions or ideas you have which might help improve or extend or expand our “online worship” resources. We want to do the best we can to meet the spiritual needs of those in our parish community during this unusual time. Thank you.