

# First Sunday of Christmas

## December 27, 2020 (Real Church Virtual)



### Welcome and Announcements

### Confession and Forgiveness

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection*

P: God of goodness and lovingkindness,

**C: 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.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

### Go Tell It on the Mountain

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

#### Verse 1

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. **[Chorus]**

#### Verse 2

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. **[Chorus]**

#### Verse 3

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born; and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. **[Chorus]**

### 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!**

## Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

**C: 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.

## Children's Message

### First Reading: Galatians 4:4-7

*Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as beloved children.*

<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So 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**

### Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

*Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.*

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>22</sup>When 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 <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." <sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>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, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." <sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>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 <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." <sup>36</sup>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, <sup>37</sup>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. <sup>38</sup>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. <sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The 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.**

# Brief Message (Pr. Paul) and Excerpts from Our Synod's "Lessons and Carols" Service

## Prayers of the Church / Sign of the Peace

### 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.

### Final Blessing

P: 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.

C: Amen.

### Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C: Thanks be to God.

## Here I Am to Worship

### Verse 1

Light of the world You stepped down into darkness, opened my eyes, let me see. Beauty that made this heart adore You, Hope of a life spent with You.

### Chorus

So, here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that You're my God. You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me.

### Verse 2

King of all days, oh so highly exalted, glorious in heaven above. Humbly You came to the earth You created, all for love's sake became poor.

### Chorus

So, here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that You're my God. You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me.

### Bridge

And I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross. And I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross.

### Chorus

So, here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that You're my God. You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me.



**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*December 27, 2020*

**Traverse City High School Update:** Last week a plea went out to our wonderful Bethlehem congregation to provide the at-risk students of Traverse City High School with gift cards for Christmas gifts. Again, we had a wonderful response. Over 60 gifts cards plus snacks were donated. TCHS thanks you all for your continued support and wishes all to have a safe, healthy and Happy New Year.

**Stewardship Encouragement 2021 is Underway!** Many pledge cards have been received. Even though the due date (December 1st) is now past, it is not too late to send your pledge in. You can either mail the envelope to BLC or provide it with your offering during Parking Lot Communion at church (Sundays 11-11:45 a.m.) Many thanks and God bless!

**Covid hits our congregation!** Please keep praying for all who are being hit by this illness especially one of our own council members. Even though all in that household were being careful, someone who was ill came to their home without wearing a mask and all are now very sick. Through the wonders of ZOOM this person was able to participate in the most recent council meeting, and the rest of us saw how ill someone could be even without being hospitalized. Another council member had to be in work/home only quarantine for 2 weeks due to recent multiple exposures in that person's essential job. *Know that any of the tough decisions that the council is making are with the well-being of all members in mind.*

**The DECEMBER issue of the STAR is ready!** The STAR is no longer being subsidized by anonymous donors. We thank them for the generosity for three months and their hard work in preparing it for mailing. (There is even a rolling pin involved!!!) The cost of postage for the STAR is now being taken from the general fund. If anyone wants to make an extra donation towards postage due to the monthly cost of keeping all members informed, a notation can be made on any check or envelope. If you read the STAR on line and have not told us, please make certain you contact the office so we are not sending out copies needlessly. Printed STARS will also be available in the "Shooting Star box" outside the church entry later this week. Feel free to check online at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org) < About Us > "The Online Bethlehem Star" or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>

The outdoor "**Shooting STAR Dispenser**" at BLC is **now full** with several paper publications, including the December STAR and the current week's worship folder/bulletin. If you would like a copy of a DVD, please contact the church and one will be produced for you.

This is a year when we cannot visit many of our members to bless them with our Christmas carols. Instead please pull out your BLC directory and take a moment to make a phone call to one or two of them or send a card wishing for a better New Year. Not sure who needs a call or card? How about you choose members whose last name is closest in the alphabet to your own?

**List of Home Bound Members of BLC 2020  
BLC = Directory**

**Marlene Baesch BLC**

**Marinan Bradford in Traverse Manor on Draka Rd. Traverse City, MI**

**Carol Collins – Burcham Assisted Living 2700 Burcham Dr. East Lansing, MI 48823**

**Brenda Denoyer at home BLC**

**Richard Fernholz BLC**

**Jo Hasse she is in French Manor BLC**

**Corinne Hill BLC**

**Christian Stretlien and Julie LaPeer 14720 Mc Coll Ave. Thompsonville, MI 49683**

**Tom and Lee Miller BLC**

**Marilyn Skay BLC**

**Nancy Smith BLC**

**Lois Stretlien (Jan's sister in-law) in Traverse Manor Room #24**

**Ellie Tacke BLC**

**Inge Thomas BLC**

**Priscilla Thomas @ Samaritas Assisted Living 4354 Mt. Hope Rd. Williamsburg MI 49690 BLC**

**Jan and Butch Waisanen BLC**

**Dee and Bill Springer Boardman Lake Glens 1400 Brigadoon Ct. TC 49684 BLC**

**Marjorie Whitney in Traverse Manor on Draka Rd. Traverse City, MI BLC**