

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 31, 2025
8:00 am

AS WE GATHER

Entering the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the traditional site of the birth of Jesus, is one of the most memorable experiences for any Christian pilgrim visiting the Holy Land. First constructed at the commission of Roman Emperor Constantine the Great in AD 326, the church is on the oldest site continually used for worship by Christians anywhere in the world. Although the basilica initially had a grand arched entrance in its first thousand years, it came into a period of disuse and neglect after the conquest of the Holy Land by the Islamic rulers of the Ottoman Empire in AD 1516. In an effort to prevent people from entering the church with horses and cattle, the Christians caring for the building at that time walled up the main entrance, leaving only a very small door. This opening has ever since been known as the "Door of Humility." It makes a most fitting way for those who come to worship at the site of the manger of the Christ Child to enter that sacred space. Where we worship here and now is also a sacred space. Although we may not have needed to bow down to enter the front door today, bringing an attitude of humility to our worship of our gracious Lord is truly fitting for us.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

851 Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us

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| <p>1 Lord of glory, You have bought us With Your lifeblood as the price, Never grudging for the lost ones That tremendous sacrifice; And with that have freely given Blessings countless as the sand To the_unthankful and the evil With Your own unsparing hand.</p> <p>2 Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to give You Gladly, freely of Your own. With the sunshine of Your goodness Melt our thankless hearts of stone Till our cold and selfish natures, Warmed by You, at length believe That more happy and more blessed 'Tis to give than to receive.</p> | <p>3 Wondrous honor You have given To our humblest charity In Your own mysterious sentence, "You have done it all to Me." Can it be, O gracious Master, That You deign for alms to sue, Saying by Your poor and needy, "Give as I have giv'n to you"?</p> <p>4 Lord of glory, You have bought us With Your lifeblood as the price, Never grudging for the lost ones That tremendous sacrifice. Give us faith to trust You boldly, Hope, to stay our souls on You; But, oh, best of all Your graces, With Your love our love renew.</p> |
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INVOCATION

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Leader: God's Word tells us that if we say we have not sinned, we make God out to be a liar, and his Word is not in us. Knowing that one who keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it, let's take a few moments to call to mind those times during this past week where we have fallen short of God's standard in our thoughts, our words, and our deeds.

TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Leader: Let us confess our sins to God our Father

People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Leader: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen

HYMN OF PRAISE

940 v. 1&5 Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

1 Holy God, we praise Thy name;
Lord of all, we bow before Thee.
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in heav'n above adore Thee.
Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign.

5 Holy Father, holy Son,
Holy Spirit, three we name Thee;
Though in essence only one,
Undivided God we claim Thee
And, adoring, bend the knee
While we own the mystery.

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SALUTATION

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: Let us pray.
O Lord of grace and mercy, teach us by Your Holy Spirit to follow the example of Your Son in true humility, that we may withstand the temptations of the devil and with pure hearts and minds avoid ungodly pride; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

READINGS

FIRST READING

Proverbs 25:2–10

It is the glory of God to conceal things,
but the glory of kings is to search things out.
As the heavens for height, and the earth for depth,
so the heart of kings is unsearchable.
Take away the dross from the silver,
and the smith has material for a vessel;
take away the wicked from the presence of the king,
and his throne will be established in righteousness.
Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great,
for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.
What your eyes have seen
do not hastily bring into court,
for what will you do in the end,
when your neighbor puts you to shame?
Argue your case with your neighbor himself,
and do not reveal another's secret,
lest he who hears you bring shame upon you,
and your ill repute have no end.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Hebrews 13:1–17

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say,

"The Lord is my helper;
I will not fear;
what can man do to me?"

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 14:1-14

One Sabbath, when [Jesus] went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. And he said to them, "Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?" And they could not reply to these things.

Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN

847 Christ, Our Human Likeness Sharing

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| 1 Christ, our human likeness sharing, Heaven's love on earth portrayed; Christ the Shepherd, tending, caring, In His death our ransom paid: Christ the Savior, Christ the Servant, Be Your life in us displayed. | 3 Christ, in ev'ry congregation Build Your temple, stone by stone, With Your word as firm foundation For a faith matured and grown: Christ the Savior, Christ the Servant, Make in us Your Gospel known. |
| 2 Hear the word that Christ has spoken, Help the weak, the hungry feed; See the pow'rs of darkness broken, Sinners pardoned, captives freed: Christ the Savior, Christ the Servant, Help us meet our neighbor's need. | 4 Come, O living Christ, renew us, As of old in wind and flame; With the Spirit's pow'r endue us, Servants of Your saving name: Christ the Savior, Christ the Servant, Christ whose kingdom we proclaim. |

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SERMON

"Dinner Parties"
Luke 14:1-14

Pastor Eric Clausen

OFFERING

LORDS PRAYER

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

HOLY COMMUNION

WORDS OF OUR LORD

Leader: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People: And also with you.

AGNUS DEI

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

618 I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table

1 I come, O Savior, to Thy table,
For weak and weary is my soul;
Thou, Bread of Life, alone art able
To satisfy and make me whole: Refrain

ref Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood
Be for my soul the highest good!

2 Thy heart is filled with fervent yearning
That sinners may salvation see
Who, Lord, to Thee in faith are turning;
So I, a sinner, come to Thee. Refrain

3 Unworthy though I am, O Savior,
Because I have a sinful heart,
Yet Thou Thy lamb wilt banish never,

For Thou my faithful shepherd
art: Refrain

4 Weary am I and heavy laden;
With sin my soul is sore oppressed;
Receive me graciously and gladden
My heart, for I am now Thy
guest. Refrain

5 What higher gift can we inherit?
It is faith's bond and solid base;
It is the strength of heart and spirit,
The covenant of hope and
grace. Refrain

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571 v. 1-4 God Loved the World So That He Gave

1 God loved the world so that He gave
His only Son the lost to save,
That all who would in Him believe
Should everlasting life receive.

2 Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,
Who was made flesh and suffered
death;

All then who trust in Him alone
Are built on this chief cornerstone.

3 God would not have the sinner die;
His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the Word declares
How we in Christ are heaven's heirs.

4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
Forgives all sins which you have done;

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And, justified by Jesus' blood,
Your Baptism grants the highest good.

623 Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray

1 Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly pray
That we may feast on You today;
Beneath these forms of bread and wine
Enrich us with Your grace divine.

2 Give us, who share this wondrous food,
Your body broken and Your blood,
The grateful peace of sins forgiv'n,
The certain joys of heirs of heav'n.

3 By faith Your Word has made us bold
To seize the gift of love retold;
All that You are we here receive,
And all we are to You we give.

Text: Public domain

4 One bread, one cup, one body, we,
Rejoicing in our unity,
Proclaim Your love until You come
To bring Your scattered loved ones
home.

5 Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly pray:
O keep us steadfast till that day
When each will be Your welcomed
guest
In heaven's high and holy feast.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Leader: Gracious God, our heavenly Father, we give thanks that we have again received the Body and blood of Christ, the bread from heaven. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage, that we speak the truth in love and build up the Body of Christ until that day we see You face-to-face; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Leader: The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The LORD look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen

CLOSING HYMN

921 On What Has Now Been Sown

1 On what has now been sown
Thy blessing, Lord, bestow;
The pow'r is Thine alone
To make it sprout and grow.
Do Thou in grace the harvest raise,
And Thou alone shalt have the praise!

2 To Thee our wants are known,
From Thee are all our pow'rs;
Accept what is Thine own
And pardon what is ours.
Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive,
And to Thy Word a blessing give.

3 O grant that each of us,
Now met before Thee here,
May meet together thus

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When Thou and Thine appear
And follow Thee to heav'n, our home.
E'en so, amen, Lord Jesus, come!

DISMISSAL

Leader: Go in peace, serve the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

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When
you give a feast,
invite the poor, the crippled,
the lame, the blind,
and you will be blessed.

Luke 14:13-14, ESV