

ly Father, almighty and ever living God. But chiefly we are bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of our Lord; for he is the true Passover Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who by his death has destroyed death; And by his rising has brought us to eternal life. And so with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy (music on screen)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

L: Holy, living and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth. We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

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 life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world. Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: Carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

A: Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us,

A: 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

L: The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

Communion Music Video

“What a Beautiful Name” by Hillsong

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L: Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray,

A: Amen.

SENT FOR WORK AND WITNESS

BLESSING

L: The Spirit of the triune God ✚ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

A: Amen.

SENDING HYMN- “He Has Made Me Glad” WP 54 (words on screen)

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Live in Hope.

A: Thanks be to God!

Worship Servers for Feb 2

Worship Pastor: Pastor Christine McNeal

Worship Steward: Jack Bristow

Greeters: Dawn Boitnott & Pat Lund

Ushers: Dawn Boitnott & Pat Lund

Lector: Dawn Boitnott

Communion Prep: Marty Heller

Communion Assistants: Denny & Mary Leach

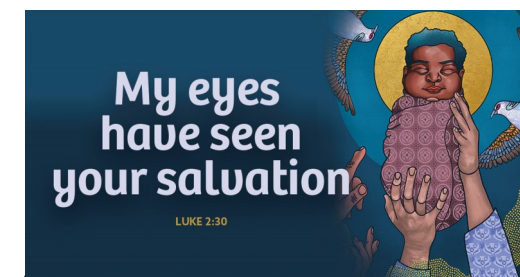
Musician: Sandy Erickson

SS Teacher: Katie Longstreet & Blayne Dixon

Hospitality: Jack Bristow & Carissa Webster

Counters: Mark Mackinson & Jake Dixon

Livestream: Louis Kehinde



St. Paul Lutheran Church

February 2, 2025

Presentation of Our Lord

Introduction: The Presentation of Our Lord is referred to in some corners of the church as Candlemas because of an ancient tradition of blessing all the candles to be used in the church in the coming year at the mass celebrated on that day. It was a way of underscoring the truth of Simeon's confession that this baby Jesus was “a light for revelation to the Gentiles” and a light for glory to Israel. Let the light of every candle in church be a little epiphany of the love of God for all people in the person of God's son, Jesus, the light of the world.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please consider sponsoring Altar Flowers!

GATHERING HYMNS

“My Life is in You” - words on screen

“Holy Ground” WP 59 (words on screen) (sing twice)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

A: Amen.

L: Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin. *(Silence is kept for reflections)*

L: Merciful God,

A: you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your loving-kindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

L: God proclaims these words of assurance: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.” In ✚ Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

A Amen.

GREETING

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

A: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty and ever-living God, your only-begotten Son was presented this day in the temple. May we be presented to you with clean and pure hearts by the same Jesus Christ, our great high priest, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Children’s Message—Dismissal to Children’s Chapel

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading- Malachi 3:1-4

L: A reading from Malachi

1 See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. 2 But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; 3 he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. 4 Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

L: Word of God, Word of Life

A: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 84

A reading from Psalm 84

¹ How dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts!

² **My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**

³ Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young, by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts, my king and my God.

⁴ **Happy are they who dwell in your house! They will always be praising you.**

⁵ Happy are the people whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on the pilgrims’ way.

⁶ **Those who go through the balsam valley will find it a place of springs, for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.**

⁷ They will climb from height to height, and the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

⁸ **LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob.**

⁹ Behold our defender, O God; and look upon the face of your anointed.

¹⁰ **For one day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.**

¹¹ For the LORD God is both sun and shield, bestowing grace and glory; no good thing will the LORD withhold from those who walk with integrity.

¹² **O LORD of hosts, happy are they who put their trust in you!**

L: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word

A: Thanks be to God

Second Reading – Hebrews 2:14-18

L: A reading from Hebrews

14 Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, [Jesus] himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. 16 For it is clear that he did not

come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. 17

Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. 18 Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

A: Thanks be to God.

Please rise, as you are able, for the reading of the Holy Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Allelulia, Lord (Words on Screen)

Gospel - Luke 2:22-40

L: The Holy Gospel according to Luke

A: Glory to you, O Lord.

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ²⁴ “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.” ²⁵ 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. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ 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, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹ “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” ³³ And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ 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 ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” ³⁶ 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, ³⁷ 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. ³⁸ 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. ³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Christine McNeal

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Let All Together Praise Our God” ELW 287, vs. 1&6

Apostles’ Creed

L: Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

A: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition will end “God of Grace”

and the congregation will respond “**Hear our Prayer**”

SHARING OF THE PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you always.

A: And also with you.

You are invited to share a sign of God’s peace with your neighbors by turning to the people near you saying, “Peace be with you.”

OFFERING

Offerings can also be sent by mail or given online. You can send a check to St. Paul Lutheran Church 210 Deerfield Rd Pontiac, IL 61764 or give online at stpaulpontiac.org

Offering Prayer

L: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

A: Amen.

MEAL

All are welcome at Christ’s table. Communion is distributed in front of the altar by intinction. Please dip the wafer into the lighter colored liquid which is grape juice or the darker liquid which is wine. If you prefer not to receive communion you may come forward with your hands crossed over your chest to receive a blessing or you may remain in your seat.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

L: The Lord be with you.

A: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

A: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, ho-