



SECOND SUNDAY after CHRISTMAS

January 2, 2022

Within the profound words of today's gospel reading lies the simple message that God's love is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. The Christ comes among us in the gathered worshipping congregation, the scriptures, the baptismal waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine of the Eucharist. We receive the fullness of God's grace and truth through these ordinary gifts.

Prelude

*O Come, All Ye Faithful
The Coventry Carol*

arr. George Whiting
arr. William Lloyd Webber

Hymn

Let All Together Praise Our God



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God be - fore the
2 From God's right hand the Son de - scends, is born an
3 O ten - der Child, you veil in flesh the splen - dor
4 Your moth - er feeds you ten - der - ly, sings you a



high - est throne; to - day God o - pens heav'n a - gain and
in - fant small, and lies in pov - er - ty, his bed a
of your might; a ser - vant's garb now wraps the one who
lul - la - by, while an - gels, hail - ing Da - vid's heir, your



sends the on - ly Son, and sends the on - ly Son.
man - ger in a stall, a man - ger in a stall.
clothed the sky with light, who clothed the sky with light.
glo - ry mag - ni - fy, your glo - ry mag - ni - fy.

5 A wonderful exchange you make:
you take our flesh and blood,
and in return give us to share
the shining realm of God,
the shining realm of God.

6 Unlock the door again today
that leads to paradise;
the angel bars the way no more.
To God let praises rise,
to God let praises rise!

Apostolic Greeting

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

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

WE GATHER AROUND THE WORD AND THE PRAYERS

First Lesson - Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion, Israel will rejoice over God's gifts of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷Thus 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.”

⁸See, 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.

⁹With 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.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.”

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

¹²They 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.

¹³Then 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.

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

Psalm 147:13-21

The psalmist sings a hymn of praise to the Lord who has shown faithfulness to Jerusalem and God's people Israel.

Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion;
¹⁴for he has strengthened the bars of your gates;
he has blessed your children within you.
¹⁵He has established peace on your borders;
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.
¹⁶He sends out his command to the earth,
and his word runs very swiftly.
¹⁷He gives snow like wool;
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
¹⁸He scatters his hail like bread crumbs.
Who can stand against his cold?
¹⁹He sends forth his word and melts them;
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.
²⁰He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel.
²¹He has not done so to any other nation;
to them he has not revealed his judgments. Hallelujah!

Second Lesson - Ephesians 1:3–14

*In Jesus the Christ, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united.
Through him, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.*

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him 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; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Holy Gospel - John 1:1, 10-18

*The author of the gospel according to John begins his gospel with this prologue:
a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.*

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.
¹⁴And 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. ¹⁵(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.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.



Sermon

A new beginning. The calendar has turned once more and a new year is here – and not a moment too soon from a variety of perspectives. After the difficulties and challenges of a year in which we were faced with the ongoing pandemic, a political insurrection and domestic terrorism, horrendous natural disasters, rampant gun violence, racial injustice, and more, we are soooooo ready for a new beginning. Moreover, on this second day of the new year, most New Year’s resolutions – for those who make them – are probably still intact, creating for us at least the illusion of hope that the new year will be better than the old one.

But therein also lies the challenge. For while on this January 2nd our resolutions, expectations, and hopes are still intact, how will they be faring a week from now, or a month from now, or six months from now? There is a Mark Twain quote that speaks to this reality: “Now is the accepted time to make your annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual.” Most likely, many of our resolutions will be an afterthought in the coming weeks or months and, depending on the headlines, our hopes may be as well.

A new beginning is the audacious claim we hear in our gospel reading this morning from the gospel according to John. The author, a Jewish mystic, begins his story about Jesus of Nazareth by echoing the opening words of Genesis way back in the very first book of the Bible: “In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth . . .” It is as if the gospel writer is composing a **NEW** Genesis, a **NEW** beginning – of history, of humanity, of God’s involvement in the creation. His story about Jesus of Nazareth is structured from beginning to end not just to **TELL** us, but to **EVOKE** for us and in us the living, breathing promise of a **NEW** beginning for all of human history in and through the incarnate Word, Jesus the Christ.

With a nod to the seven days detailed in the first creation parable in Genesis, the gospel writer then goes on to tell of seven signs (what we often call miracles in the other Gospels). And then, the Johannine gospel writer culminates with the eighth sign: resurrection. The resurrection symbolizes an eighth day – the start of a new week, a new chapter, a new epoch. In addition, **ONLY** in the gospel according to John, does the resurrection happen in a **GARDEN**, stated very explicitly, also with a reference to a gardener – another reference back to Genesis and a literary flashback to the Garden of Eden so that we might see the resurrection as the **NEW** creation.

However, as we look into our lives and around our world, we may question whether or not we can really trust new beginnings. Fortunately, John’s gospel gives us a promise worth trusting and worth our attention.

First, the gospel writer describes Jesus as God’s Word, God’s Logos – meaning God’s logic, reason, or rationale. Just as words enable us to communicate, to share our thoughts and feelings with precision and clarity, to express ourselves to each other, and to be understandable and approachable, so does Jesus express the very mind, design, and purpose of God. Jesus is God’s word and promise to us, God speaking as clearly as possible. God in Jesus, John’s gospel makes clear, is doing something **NEW**. In earlier days, God gave the law and the prophets as expressions of God’s will, but now God is going a step further, actually speaking to us directly and personally in a **NEW** way through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

At the time of the Reformation, Martin Luther and other reformers spoke of the “speaking God” – “Deus loquens” in Latin, “loquens” being the Latin root of our English word “eloquent.” Therefore, the Word made flesh to dwell among us is God at God’s most eloquent, speaking as clearly as possible of God’s profound love for us.

Second, this new, tangible, enfleshed Word opens up the reality of a **NEW** relationship with God. We hear in today’s gospel that “No one has ever seen God” – which is not really something of which we need to be reminded. After all, when tragedy strikes, when disappointment crushes us, when hope and happiness flee, we often wonder where God is and sense the seemingly palpable **ABSENCE** of God far more profoundly than perhaps we’ve ever experienced God’s **PRESENCE**. An unknown and unseen God can easily be perceived as being capricious, untrustworthy, and ultimately fearsome.

This is one reason why Jesus our Lord – the Holy One nestled in the very bosom of God – comes as God’s Word made flesh, to reveal to us God’s parental love. He comes not just to **reveal**, but to **speak** through word and deed as eloquently as possible that there is **nothing** God won’t do, nowhere God won’t go, nothing God won’t endure – even the death of God’s own Son – so that we may know we are God’s beloved children, made worthy of dignity, honor, and love.

This is the heart of today’s audacious Gospel – that in Jesus the Christ we receive a love letter written in human flesh and blood from the God who, in the beginning, created the vast cosmos, who continues to sustain the universe even now, and who values each and every one of us more than we can possibly imagine. That Word creates all things **NEW**, taking our resolutions and hopes as well as our fears and disappointments, and binding them together in the promises of God – God the Divine One who created in the beginning and who **continues** to create again and again, even in this very place and time, in this new year. Amen

Hymn

Word of God, Come Down on Earth



1 Word of God, come down on earth, liv - ing rain from
 2 Word e - ter - nal, throned on high, Word that brought to
 3 Word that speaks God’s ten - der love, one with God be -



heav’n de - scend - ing; touch our hearts and bring to birth
 life cre - a - tion, Word that came from heav’n to die,
 yond all tell - ing, Word that sends us from a - bove



faith and hope and love un - end - ing. Word al - might - y,
 cru - ci - fied for our sal - va - tion, sav - ing Word, the
 God the Spir - it, with us dwell - ing, Word of truth, to



we re - vere you; Word made flesh, we long to hear you.
 world re - stor - ing, speak to us, your love out - pour - ing.
 all truth lead us; Word of life, with one bread feed us.

Text: James Quinn, sj, b. 1919

Music: LIEBSTER JESU, WIR SIND HIER, Johann R. Ahle, 1625–1673

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The Prayers

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the Church, the world, and all who are in need.

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.

You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor. Help us 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.

You overflow with love and compassion, O God. 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.

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. Restore healthcare workers. Refresh those who labor under the weight of pain or sickness.

You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light. Help us bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppression and misuse of power. Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another.

You turn our sorrow and mourning into joy. We give thanks for those who have died in faith. With all the saints, give us our inheritance in Christ. In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your love.

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

WE WORSHIP WITH OUR OFFERINGS

The needs of Holy Trinity's mission and ministry are ongoing.

May we be faithful and generous as we support our mission
"to care actively in the name of Jesus Christ."

Offerings may be mailed to the church or dropped off at the church office.

You may also use the online giving portal on our website.

Go to www.holytrinitylynchburg.org and click on "Give."

You may also download the "Vanco Mobile" app for your smart phone from Apple or Google.

Offertory Prayer

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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*

Blessing

Almighty God, Father, ✙ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen

Hymn

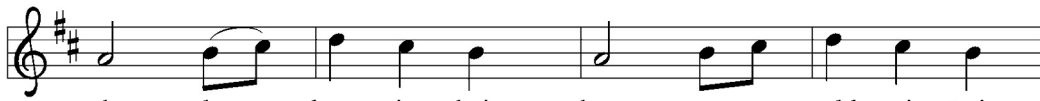
The First Noel



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .
4 This star drew near to the . . . north-west, o'er . .
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .



cer-tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and



night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
place where Je - sus lay.
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional
Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

Dismissal

*Our service now begins. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.*

Postlude

God Rest You Merry

arr. William Lloyd Webber

Today, we light a candle in the *Globusleuchter* in memory of Jim Slagle who died January 1.
We give thanks for his life and witness and keep his family in our prayers.



CANDLES

The candles are given to the glory of God by Nancy Carroll Childress in memory of her Dad, Lee Trent.

WREATHS

The door wreaths are given to the glory of God by Mr. and Mrs. George Childress III in memory of Lee F. Trent, Mr. and Mrs. George Childress, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Corbin Glass; and, in honor of Mrs. Lee F. Trent and families.

The organ loft wreath is given to the glory of God by Nancy Trent in loving memory of Lee F. Trent.

The sanctuary wreaths are given to the glory of God by Norma Jean Glass in memory of Cordia, Corbin, and Alfred Glass and Lee F. Trent; and, in honor of Nancy G. Trent and family.

SANCTUARY and CHANCEL POINSETTIAS

The Altar Guild in memory of Joanne McClelland and The Reverend Stephen J. Schulz; Carol and Ken Barclay in honor of their family; and, in honor of the congregation and staff of Holy Trinity;

Susan and David Barney in honor of the staff of Holy Trinity;

Edith Beck in memory of her parents, Herta and Herbert Pressler; her sister, Gudrun Fischer; and, her brother, Gerhard Pressler;

Ruth and William Belcher in memory of their parents;

Heide Cannon in honor of her family;

Tamara Feese Colagreco in memory of her son, Robbie Colagreco;

Melanie Cosby in memory of her husband, Christian K. Mount II; Thomas Mount, Jake and Margaret Carr, Earl Crawford, B. K. and Kathleen Mount, and Carol Peterson and Marie Stoecklin;

Elizabeth I. Harrington in memory of her husband, Doug Harrington and parents, Ed and Alice Schoenrock and Don and Pat Harrington; and, in honor of friends and family who have given her support, strength, and love;

Barbara and Simon Hatin in memory of Catherine Hertkorn and Angela and George Hatinoglou;

Faye Hesson in memory of Don Hesson;

Ruth, Tom, and Zachary Hesson, and Michelle Bardis and Tim Hesson in memory of their father and grandfather, Don Hesson;

Jackie and Paul Kluender in memory of Gertrude and Ed Kluender and Paul Wisman;
Ann Kreft in memory of her parents, Milton and Etta Margaritis;

The Krull Family in memory of Charlie Pollok;

Margie Lippard in memory of Dr. and Mrs. C. H. Lippard;

Joni and Bruce Pearson in honor of their children, Lauren, Charlie, and Natalie; son-in-law, David; and,
in memory of their daughter, Berkeley;

Beatrice S. Pendleton in loving memory of Warren E. Pendleton;

Karen Pollok in memory of Charlie Pollok; and, in honor of Holy Trinity congregation and staff;

Moira Rafferty and Robert Bass in honor of Susan and Jerry Bass and John L. Rafferty; and,
in memory of Patricia L. Rafferty;

Debbie Repass in memory of Bill Repass;

Tate, Clayton, and Billy Royer in honor of Carole Royer; and, in memory of Dick Royer;

Linda Sanders in memory of Lara S. Miller and George Cohen;

Sally and Jeff Schneider in memory of their parents;

Debra and Tom Schwab in memory of their parents, Bob and Betty Schwab and Fred and Wilma Brooks;
Tom's brother, Robert William Schwab; and, Debra's brother, William Thomas Brooks;

Miriam Taylor in honor of those we love;

Brenda Van Fossen in memory of Lacy and Carrie Van Fossen, and other loved ones;

and,

Carrie Wisman in honor of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and, in memory of Berkeley and Carly.

THIS WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY

Sunday, January 2	8:30 a.m.	Worship Service (via YouTube) Service of Holy Communion
	10:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	5:00 p.m.	Holy Trinity Youth Service Project
Monday, January 3	9:15 a.m.	Strength & Balance Exercise Class
	9:50 a.m.	Chair Yoga Class
	7:00 p.m.	Bible Study - <i>The Invention of Heaven and Hell</i> (via Zoom)
Tuesday, January 4	1:00 p.m.	Bible Study - <i>The Gospel According to John</i>
Wednesday, January 5	12:10 p.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	7:00 p.m.	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, January 6	9:00 a.m.	Parish Nurse Available (until 10:00 a.m.)
	5:30 p.m.	Epiphany Vespers
Friday, January 7	9:15 a.m.	Strength & Balance Exercise Class
	9:50 a.m.	Chair Yoga Class
	11:00 a.m.	Book Discussion Group - <i>The Call to Unite</i>
Saturday, January 8	10:00 a.m.	Altar Guild
Sunday, January 9		Worship Service (via YouTube)
	8:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Church School (adult class only)
	10:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	2:00 p.m.	Parish Nurse Education Program - <i>The Expanding Role of Telehealth in 21st Century Medicine</i>
	4:30 p.m.	Holy Trinity Youth
	6:00 p.m.	Confirmation Class (grades six - nine)

Our Mission: "To care actively in the name of Jesus Christ."

***Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
1000 Langhorne Road
Lynchburg, Virginia 24503***

Ministers: The People of Holy Trinity

President: Eric R. Kenny

Pastor: Dennis S. Roberts

Organist-Choirmaster: J. William Greene

Director of Youth and Campus Ministries:

Parish Administrator: Carol Dee Robertson

Susan H. Williams

Parish Nurse: Gail Midkiff

Sextons: Linda Woody and Patricia Wiggington

Church Office: 434-384-8441

e-mail: office@holytrinitylynchburg.org

www.holytrinitylynchburg.org