

Prelude Introduction to the Day

Entrance Hymn

God Bless the Day

[tune: 303]



God bless the day of this bright new beginning,
good things unfolding to love and surprise,
leaving the past in the Spirit's safe-keeping,
faith looking forward with confident eyes.

Let there be ending to hurt and to heartache,
channels of grace where forgiveness may flow,
surges of joy in our everyday living,
sunlight for seeds of new purpose to grow.

Here is a sign of God's patience and promise,
here's a clear page in the book of our days,
making new meaning of old understanding,
finding new reason to wonder and praise.

Text: Shirley Erena Murray

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.

Opening Verse

Ecclesiastes 3

A: For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

C: a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

God has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, God has put a sense of past and future into our minds, yet we cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil.

P: The Word of the Lord! C: Thanks be to God!

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray:

C: Almighty God, in the days of old You spoke to Your people through the prophets, but now in these last days You speak to us by Your Son. As we celebrate the gift that You give to us, let us be drawn toward Him and find the fulfillment of Your promise of salvation. We ask this in the name of the One who took on our nature for our sake, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Verse Carol *On this day of celebration* *[tune: 836]*

On this day of celebration, at this time when hopes are new,
God, we gather as your people, called to put our trust in you.
You have made the world we live in; you have worked through history.
In your plan we find our purpose, in your love, our unity.

Long ago, you sent our Savior to this world in deep despair.
In your Word made flesh you came, our life to know, our sins to bear.
Christ has died and Christ is risen! At this new year we proclaim:
Yesterday, today, forever — Jesus Christ is still the same!

Through two thousand years of changes, through these passing centuries,
You have called your church to witness to Christ's love that claims and frees.
Each new generation hears you, each must find a fresh new way
To make known the life you offer, to the people in their day.

On this day, we pause and wonder what the future years will bring,
Yet we know you clothe each flower, and you make each sparrow sing.
How much more will you protect us with your guiding, caring hand!
By your Spirit, lead us boldly in the future you have planned.

Text: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

❖ The Past ❖

Introduction

Reading

Nehemiah 9:5

Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise."

And Ezra said: "You are the Lord, you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. To all of them you give life, and the host of heaven worships you. You are the Lord, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham; and you found his heart faithful before you, and made with him a covenant to give to his descendants land . . . and you have fulfilled your promise, for you are righteous. And you saw the distress of our ancestors in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea. You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted insolently against our ancestors. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. And you divided the sea before them, so that they passed through the sea on dry land, but you threw their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. Moreover, you led them by day with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire, to give them light on the way in which they should go. You came down also upon Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and you made known your holy sabbath to them and gave them commandments and statutes and a law through your servant Moses. For their hunger you gave them bread from heaven, and for their thirst you brought water for them out of the rock, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you swore to give them. But they and our ancestors acted presumptuously and stiffened their necks and did not obey your commandments; they refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them; but they stiffened their necks and determined to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and you did not forsake them. Even when they had cast an image of a calf for themselves . . . Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell. And you gave them kingdoms and peoples . . . You multiplied their descendants like the stars of heaven and brought them into the land that you had told their

ancestors to enter and possess. . . . Nevertheless, they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast your law behind their backs and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies. Therefore, you gave them into the hands of their enemies, who made them suffer. Then in the time of their suffering they cried out to you, and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hands of their enemies. But after they had rest, they again did evil before you, and you abandoned them to the hands of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them; yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you rescued them according to your mercies. And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your ordinances, by the observance of which a person shall live. . . Now therefore, our God - the great and mighty and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love - do not treat lightly all the hardship that has come upon us . . . You have been just in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly . . .

Reader: The Word of the Lord! **C: Thanks be to God!**

Responsive Reading

Psalm 111

A: *Praise the Lord!*

C: **I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.**

*Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.*

**Full of honor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.**

*He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.*

**He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.**

*He has shown his people the power of his works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.*

**The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.**

They are established forever and ever,

to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

**He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.**

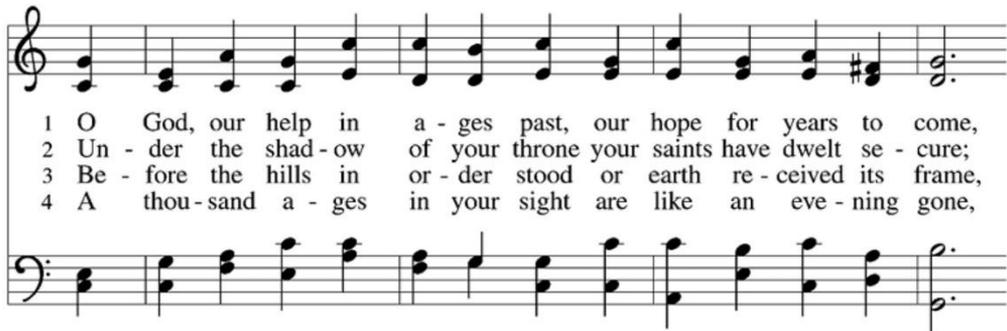
Holy and awesome is his name.

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever.**

Hymn

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

632



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
still be our guard while troubles last
and our eternal home.

❖ The Present ❖

Introduction

Reading

Romans 12

Therefore, I exhort you, brothers and sisters, through the compassion of God, to present your whole life as a living sacrifice, holy and very pleasing to God - your well thought out response of worship. And don't be shaped by this age, but be transformed by minds made new, in order that you would discern what is the will of God – what is good and well pleasing, and completely integrated with your real identity. Have sincere love - despising evils things and clinging to good things . . . be making peace with all people. Do not be avenging yourselves, brothers and sisters, but step away from wrath, for it has been written,

‘Vengeance belongs to me. I will repay, says the Lord.’
(Deuteronomy 32.35)

But,

“if your enemy is hungry, feed them! If they are thirsty, give them a drink! For, by doing this, you will heap burning coals on their heads.”

(Proverbs 25:21-22)

Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

Reader: The Word of the Lord! C: Thanks be to God!

Hymn

A New Year Confronts Us

[tune: 277]

A New Year confronts us: and must it be true -
'Whatever it brings us, it brings nothing new'?
Let cynics be silent - salvation is near!
God send us a happy and peaceful New Year!

'How quickly time flies!' is a cry from the heart;
We need all our courage to make a fresh start,
To track in life's jungle a path that is clear:
God send us a happy and peaceful New Year!

How easy the greeting! It slips off the tongue
As if we forgot the world's measureless wrong.
We stumble to find it, a prayer that's sincere:
God send us a happy and peaceful New Year!

How happy God's children, the makers of peace!

Too slowly, yet surely, their numbers increase;
Their patience in loving is casting out fear:
God send us a happy and peaceful New Year!

Text: Fred Pratt Green

Reading

Colossians 3

Paul writes . . . If, therefore, you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, sitting to the right of God, taking the point of view from above, not from earth, for you have died, and your life is being concealed with Christ in God! When Christ who is your life may be revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory!

You must, then, put to death the things within you that are “earthly”: fornication, uncleanness, anxiety, evil longings, and covetousness (the thinking that if only you had what others have your life would be better - which is idolatry)! Through these comes the wrath of God. You walked about in these ways when you were living as “earthly people.” But now you must not let your mouth speak such things: harsh expressions from internal churnings, rages that cause you to pant and sweat, words that are intended to cause harm, blasphemy (saying things about God that are not true), and dishonorable words. Do not be deceitful with one another. Seeing that you have stripped off the old self with those old practices and having clothed yourselves with the new, be renewed by the knowledge which comes from the One who created you: that there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all! Clothe yourself as God’s “Chosen Ones,” holy and loved, with the tender mercies of compassion, pity, kindness, with a humble evaluative point of view of yourself, being gentle and long-suffering, bearing with one another and, being gracious even if you may have a reason to accuse another of wrong-doing to you, just as the Lord has been gracious to you, so you must be gracious to one another. Then to all these things add all-encompassing love, which is a bond of completeness. And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which you were called in one body. And be thankful! Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly; teaching with Wisdom and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, with grace, singing in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord! **C: Thanks be to God!**



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
 2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

❖ The Future ❖

Introduction

Reading

Luke 12

Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life - what you may eat, or about your body - what you may wear. For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. How much more are you worth than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not being empowered to do so small a thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies and how they grow: they neither toil nor spin yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But, if God so clothes the

grass of the field which is alive today and tomorrow is being thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you--you of little faith! And you, do not keep striving for what you may eat and what you may drink, and do not be made wobbly. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be scared, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Reader: The Word of the Lord! **C: Thanks be to God!**

Hymn

O Christ the Same

1 O Christ the same, through all our sto - ry's pag - es,
 2 O Christ the same, the friend of sin - ners, shar - ing
 3 O Christ the same, se - cure with - in whose keep - ing

our loves and hopes, our fail - ures and our fears;
 our in - most thoughts, the se - crets none can hide,
 our lives and loves, our days and years re - main,

e - ter - nal Lord, the King of all the a - ges,
 still as of old up - on your bod - y bear - ing
 our work and rest, our wak - ing and our sleep - ing,

un - chang - ing still a - mid the pass - ing years:
 the marks of love, in tri - umph glo - ri - fied:
 our calm and storm, our plea - sure and our pain:

O liv - ing Word, the source of all cre - a - tion,
 O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heav - en,
 O Lord of love, for all our joys and sor - rows,

who spread the skies, and set the stars a - blaze,
 O Prince of life, in all your sav - ing power,
 for all our hopes, when earth shall fade and flee,

O Christ the same, who wrought our whole sal - va - tion,
 O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are giv - en,
 O Christ the same, be - yond our brief to - mor - rows,

we bring our thanks for all our yes - ter - days.
 we bring our thanks for this the pres - ent hour.
 we bring our thanks for all that is to be.

Reading

1 Corinthians 15

Listen, I tell you a mystery! We will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For, the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For, it is God's divine plan that this corruptible body has put on incorruptibility, and this mortal body has put on immortality. But when this corruptible body may have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal body may have put on immortality, then the word that is written will be fulfilled:

"Death has been swallowed up in victory."

"Where, O death, is your victory?"

Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But there is grace in God, who is giving us this victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader: The Word of the Lord! **C: Thanks be to God!**

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death

and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the Church

The Offering

1. We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and
mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,

westward leading, still
proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

5. Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
sounds through the earth and
skies. [*Refrain*]

A: Let us pray:

C: Gracious God, joining those people long ago who brought their gifts to your infant Son, we now bring our gifts of praise, adoration and thanks. Receive them as a response to the abundant blessings you provide us every day. We pray that You are pleased with our offerings and that you will use them to accomplish Your holy will. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and responsible that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you almighty and merciful God, through our Savior, Jesus, the Christ; who was born in a manger in a Shepherd's town, but took his throne in the holy city of God's Kings to overcome death and the grave on the cross. Because Jesus is born with our birth, we take hope in our re-birth through His resurrection. And so, in great joy this day, we now join our voices with those of the angels who sang over fields on that blessed night:

**Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the new-born King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

The 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

Jeg er så glad hver ju - le - kveld, ti da blev Je - sus født;
 1 I am so glad each Christ - mas Eve, the night of Je - sus' birth!
 2 The lit - tle child in Beth - le - hem, he was a king in - deed!
 3 He dwells a - gain in heav - en's realm, the Son of God to - day;
 4 I am so glad each Christ - mas Eve! His prais - es then I sing;
 5 And so I love each Christ - mas Eve, and I love Je - sus too;

da lys - te stjer - nen som en sol, og eng - ler sang så sødt.
 Then like the sun the star shone forth, and an - gels sang on earth.
 For he came down from heav'n a - bove to help a world in need.
 and still he loves his lit - tle ones and hears them when they pray.
 he o - pens now for ev - 'ry child the pal - ace of the king.
 and that he loves me ev - 'ry day I know so well is true.

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head;
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er, and love me, I pray.

the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky care
Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;

go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;

Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

The Post Communion Blessing & Prayer

Benediction

Recessional Hymn

[tune: 379]

1. As the old year passes,
we contemplate, reflect:
days of joy and promise,
and days we'd best forget.
God of the ages,
help us walk your way.
Draw us in your future,
To seize tomorrow's day

2. As the old year passes
sorrows swell within:
loved ones no more with us,
we wish they could have been.
God of compassion,
heal each grieving heart.
Draw us in your future
where we'll never part.

3. As the old year passes,
heal our struggling world.
Climate's ever-changing,
Violence! often heard.
Jesus, inspire us
to cherish all you teach,
Draw us in your future,
the promise of peace in reach.

4. As the new year dawns now
Hear our songs of praise.
Faithful God, come, lead us
boldly in new ways.
We'll love and serve you
Through all joy and strife,
Draw us in your future,
A people of new life.

Dismissal

Grace Lutheran Church

Christopher Chantelau, *Pastor* • Becki Advocate, *Dir. of Music*
Kristen Halderman, *Parish Administrator* • Vinnie Tipa, *Sexton*
Rev. Dr. Timothy Kennedy, *Pastor Emeritus*