

A SERVICE OF THE WORD & SACRAMENT

December 3, 2023

The Prelude

The Welcome & Announcements

The Silent Preparation

-THE LORD CALLS US TO WORSHIP-

The Salutation

Philippians 1:2

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Call to Worship

Psalm 95:6-7

⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! ⁷ For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Hymn #297

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!
Behold the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near,
the Savior of the world is here.
2. A helper just, he comes to thee,
his chariot is humility,
his kingly crown is holiness,
his scepter, pity in distress.
3. O blest the land, the city blest,
where Christ the Ruler is confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes
to whom this King in triumph comes!
4. Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heav'n's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.
5. Redeemer, come! I open wide
my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in me reveal.
6. So come, my Sov'reign, enter in!
Let new and nobler life begin!
Thy Holy Spirit, guide us on,
until the glorious crown be won.

The Invocation & Prayer of Praise

Unison:

Our Father in heaven, we have come to worship and bow down, and kneel before you the Lord our Maker, for you are our God and we are the people of your pasture, the sheep of your hand.

We come to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; he is our advocate with the Father; he is the only mediator between God and man; he always lives to make intercession for us. Through him we come boldly to your throne of grace. In his name we earnestly seek you. O Lord, our souls thirst for you, our flesh yearns for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

Bow your heavens and come down. Inhabit the praises of your people; remember your promise, O Spirit of Christ, to be present in the midst of your worshiping people when two or more have gathered together in your name. Condescend to us; grant us the joy of your fellowship; speak to us through your word; and be blessed by our praise and adoration. Amen.

-THE LORD ASSURES US OF HIS FORGIVENESS-

The Call to Confession

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Confession of Sin

- ❖ Silent Prayers of Confession
- ❖ General Prayer of Confession

Unison:

Most merciful Father in heaven above, we are your people because of Jesus Christ your eternal Son who died for the forgiveness of our sins and rose again for our justification.

O God, we are your children because you have sent to us your Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of Adoption, who has transformed our stony hearts into hearts of flesh.

Yet, O Lord, even as your people and your children, being still in our fallen flesh, we confess that we so often break your holy laws and disobey your righteous commands. We confess that we do what we ought not to do and leave undone what we ought to do.

Please, gracious Father, forgive us and cleanse us again by the blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit that we may go forth to live holy lives as you are holy until Christ comes again. We ask these things in his name. Amen.

The Assurance of Pardon

John 3:16

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Hymn #394

Eternal Spirit, God of Truth

1. Eternal Spirit, God of truth,
our contrite hearts inspire;
ignite a flame of heav'nly love,
and feed the pure desire.
'Tis thine to soothe the sorr'wing mind,
with guilt and fear oppressed;
'tis thine to bid the dying live,
and give the weary rest.

2. Subdue the pow'r of ev'ry sin,
 whate'er that sin may be,
 that we, in singleness of heart,
 may worship only thee.
 Then with our spirit witness bear
 that we are sons of God,
 redeemed from sin and death and hell
 thro' Christ's atoning blood.

The Prayer of the Church

1 Kings 18:36-37

³⁶ And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. ³⁷ Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back."

-THE LORD INSTRUCTS US FROM HIS WORD-

The Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:1-17

¹ In the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah the king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not yet mount an attack against it. ² When the house of David was told, "Syria is in league with Ephraim," the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind. ³ And the Lord said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field. ⁴ And say to him, 'Be careful, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah. ⁵ Because Syria, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has devised evil against you, saying, ⁶ "Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us conquer it for ourselves, and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of it," ⁷ thus says the Lord God: "It shall not stand, and it shall not come to pass. ⁸ For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. And within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered from being a people. ⁹ And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all." ¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." ¹³ And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷ The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!"

The New Testament Reading

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb

and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

The Sermon

Rev. Dr. Michael J. Matossian

Honored Mother, Exalted Child
Luke 1:26-38

Hymn #293

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

2. O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe. [*Refrain*]
3. O come, thou rod of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. [*Refrain*]
4. O come, thou Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. [*Refrain*]
5. O come, thou Key of David, come
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. [*Refrain*]

-THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS TABLE-

The Confession of Faith

The Nicene Creed

Unison:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth, 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 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 is seated at the right hand of the Father;
and he shall come again, with glory,
to judge both the living and the dead
whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we 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 we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;
and we look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper

- ❖ Words of Institution
- ❖ The Breaking of the Bread
- ❖ The Sharing of the Cup

-THE LORD DISMISSES US TO HIS SERVICE-

The Benediction

2 Corinthians 13:14

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

The Doxology

#226 *O the Deep, Unbounded Riches*

O the deep, unbounded riches
of God deserve our praise!
How unsearchable His judgments,
how marvelous His ways!
For who His thoughts has fathomed,
or counsel to Him giv'n?
And who could make a debtor
of God, the Lord of Heav'n?
For from and through and to him
are all things, now and then.
To Him be all the glory
forevermore. Amen.