

Online Gathering for Worship
Junction City United Methodist Church
December 20, 2020

Christmas 1: "Seeing the Messiah"

Opening

Prelude "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy" - with lyrics
- Love to Sing

Epiphany Welcome

Opening Song "Angels We Have Heard on High" -
- Maranatha! Music

Opening to the Spirit's Instruction

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:22-40

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴ 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

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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^[e] 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.

May God's Spirit speak to us today through these words of Scripture, the music we sing and hear, and the message shared this day.

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Song "Angels From the Realms of Glory" - The Wilds

Sermon "Seeing the Messiah" - Guest Preacher John Tucker

Song "Away in the a Manger/Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"
- Greater NW Virtual Choir

Prayers for Our World and One Another

Let us enter now into a time of prayer for one another and for our world. We will do what is called a Bidding Prayer. I will open, and then I will bid your prayers based around various categories. During the silence after each category is bid, I invite you to add your own prayers, either aloud or in silence. I will then close with a prayer, then the Lord's Prayer. Let us be in prayer.

Let us pray now for all who are ill, in hospital or at home, especially those affected by cancer or COVID-19.

Let us pray now for all medical and emergency services personnel who are responding to the best of their abilities with the resources that they have at hand.

Let us pray now for all those who are hungry or food insecure, and for all community and religious efforts to provide food and shelter.

Let us pray for all who are still displaced from their homes, and those who have no home.

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Let us pray for the leaders of nations around the world, not only regarding their response to this pandemic, but also that they may do everything possible to assure the health and welfare of their citizens.

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Let us pray for all school and college governing boards, administrations and staff, all faculty, and students as they work to offer appropriate and equitable education in a manner that protects the health and safety of all persons.

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Let us pray for our friends, family, and neighbors for their health and well-being.

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Let us also express our thanks to God for the expressions of love and caring that we have witnessed in our families, communities, and world.

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Let us express our gratitude for life and the myriad things that gladden our hearts.

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These prayers, spoken aloud or in silence, we lift into the universal embrace of the One who is Love, and we make them in the name of the One who showed us what Love looks like in the flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, and we now join our voices in the prayer he taught us, saying:

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

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lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

Prayer Response "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" – Burl Ives

Benediction "A Blessing for a New World"

The Lord arise as Light within you,
The Path of Jesus stretch out before you,
The breath of the Spirit renew you.
May justice be at the forefront of your thoughts,
May mercy and kindness be each step you take,
And may love flow as blood in your veins.
Be to the world the Good News they long to see,
The balm of healing for the pain they feel,
And the wisdom that melts away the dross of the foolhardiness that
grips our world so callously.
Be the change the world desires to see. Amen (CSPS)

Closing Song "Go Tell It On the Mountain" – Love to Sing

Closing Credits