

# December 28, 2014 — First Sunday after Christmas

## We Come Together as God's People

**Prelude** *Noël: Votre bonté Grand Dieu* Claude Balbastre  
Dale Caldwell, organ (1724-1799)

**Call to Worship** (from Psalm 148) Rev. Caroline V. Dennis

**Leader:** Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens;  
praise him in the heights!

**People:** **Glory to God in the highest!**  
**Praise God, all the angels;**  
**praise God, all the heavenly host!**

**Leader:** Praise God, sun and moon; praise God, all you shining stars!

**People:** **Fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind:**  
**Let them praise the name of the Lord.**

**Leader:** Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of  
the earth!

**People:** **Young men and women alike, old and young together;**  
**We will praise the Lord!**

**Leader:** Glory to God in the highest!

**People:** **And on earth peace, good will to all! God is with us.**  
**Christ is born. Alleluia!**

### Prayer of Adoration

\*+Opening Hymn #31 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* MENDELSSOHN

### Call to Confession

#### Silent Confession

#### Prayer of Confession

**Leader:** Loving God, you kept your promise to bring light into the  
world and to guide our steps into the paths of peace.

**People:** **You sent us Jesus and from him we receive salvation.**  
**Yet we confess to being less than faithful in our response.**  
**We have been tentative and cautious rather than bold and**  
**generous witnesses like Simeon and Anna. We have not**  
**searched for signs of your love, or trusted the goodness of**  
**your good news. We have failed to praise your Son's birth**  
**as we have refused his peace on earth. We have expected**  
**little and hoped for less.**

**Redeeming God, may your coming once again reorder**  
**our priorities, renew our commitments and refashion our**  
**witness. Cast out our sin and enter in; remake us in your**  
**grace. Amen.**



**Welcome!** We are so glad to have you with us in worship this morning. If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please fill out one of the "welcome" cards in the pew rack so we may greet you and respond to any questions you might have.

### HYMN #31

**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing** contains biblical phrases from Luke, John and Paul, all in a mixture of exclamation, exhortation, and theological reflection. It serves up a condensed course in biblical doctrine in poetic form. Following the re-telling of the angelic visit to the shepherds, the hymn teaches such precepts as the virgin birth, the deity of Jesus, the immortality of the soul, a new, or second, birth and a concern for Christ-like living. As Eric Routley observed, "[Wesley's] hymns were composed in order that men and women might sing their way, not only into experience, but also into knowledge; that the cultured might have their culture baptized and the ignorant might be led into truth by the gentle hand of melody and rhyme."

\* Those who are able may stand. + Latecomers may be seated.

**HYMN #46**

**On This Day Earth Shall Ring** traces its origins to the Protestant Reformation in Scandinavia. It is from *Pies Cantiones* (1582), a collection of 74 Latin hymns and school songs first published in Sweden. It is a hymn written for Holy Innocents Day, December 28, which is a commemoration of all young males in the vicinity of Bethlehem who were killed by order of Herod the Great who feared the loss of his throne to the King of the Jews. The tune, Personent Hodie, is a rollicking dance concluding with the refrain "Ideo Gloria in excelsis Deo"—'Therefore, glory to God in the highest.'

**PARENTS: TIME WITH THE CHILDREN**

Following the Time with Children, 4th and 5th Graders are invited to remain in worship with their parents.

Children ages 3rd Grade and younger may depart for Sunday School.

Infants, Room 240  
 Toddlers and Twos, Room 233  
 Threes, Fours and Fives, Room 234  
 Grades 1 - 3, Room 309

BEFORE SENDING YOUR CHILD OUT FOR THEIR ACTIVITIES, PLEASE FILL OUT A NAME TAG (IN PEW RACKS). PLACE HALF ON YOUR CHILD'S BACK AND BRING THE OTHER HALF WHEN YOU PICK UP YOUR CHILD.

**NEW MEMBER RECEIVED ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2014:**

Bonnie Hasemayer

**News Within the Church Family**

**Hospitalized:**  
??

**Deaths:**  
??

**Assurance of Pardon**

\* **Response of Praise** *Gloria in excelsis Deo* GLORIA  
**Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.**

\* **Passing of the Peace**

\* **Hymn #46** *On This Day Earth Shall Ring* PERSONENT HODIE

+ **Ritual of Friendship and Concerns of the Church** Dr. John R. Koppitch

**We Experience God's Word**

**Time with the Children**

**Prayer of Illumination**

**First Lesson** Galatians 4:4-7 (p. 1061)

**Solo** *What Songs Were Sung* John Jacob Niles  
 Mitzi Westra, mezzo-soprano (1892-1980)

We cannot tell, we do not know what stars shone down so long ago,  
 When Mary birthed her own sweet Son and peace and love became as one.  
 The Son of God, as scriptures said, was Virgin born in a tiny shed,  
 Where simple shepherds stood hard by while heav'nly sound filled up the sky.  
 Now let us stand, uncovered all, before this crèche in lowly stall,  
 Where kings and angels dignify God's gift, His Son, in humility.  
 We do not know, we cannot tell what songs were sung, what starlight fell,  
 Or why the holy mystery stands for so many years in so many lands.  
 We cannot tell, we do not know what stars shone down so long ago,  
 When Mary birthed her own sweet Son and peace and love became as one.

**Second Lesson** Luke 2:22-40 (p. 933)

**Response**

**Leader:** The word of God for the people of God.

**People:** Glory be to God.

**Sermon**

Rev. David A. Berry

**"Discovering the Present"**

*"So you are no longer a slave but a child,  
 and if a child then also an heir, through God."  
 (GALATIANS 4:7)*

\* Those who are able may stand. + Latecomers may be seated.

Sermon Response *O Little Town of Bethlehem* ST. LOUIS

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!  
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.  
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light;  
 The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

## We Give Thanks to God

### Invitation to Christian Discipleship

\* **Affirmation of Faith** The Apostles' Creed (Traditional) (Hymnal p. 14)

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer** (Hymnal p. 16)

**Offertory** *The First Mercy* Peter Warlock  
 (1894-1930)

Ox and ass at Bethlehem On a night, ye know of them.  
 We were only creatures small, Hid by shadows on the wall.  
 We were swallow, moth and mouse; The Child was born in our house,  
 And the bright eyes of us three Peeped at His nativity.  
 Hands of peace upon that place Hushed our beings for a space.  
 Quiet feet and folded wing, Nor a sound of anything.  
 With a moving star we crept Closer when the baby slept;  
 Men who guarded where He lay Moved to frighten us away.  
 But the Babe, awakened, laid Love on things that were afraid;  
 With so sweet a gesture He Called us to His company.

Bruce Blunt (1899-1957)

### Doxology and the Prayer of Thanksgiving

## We Go Forth to Serve

\* **Closing Hymn #603** *Song of Simeon* NUNC DIMITTIS

\* **Charge and Benediction**

\* **Postlude** *In Dulci Jubilo*, BWV 729 J.S. Bach  
 (1685-1750)

### THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

### DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
 Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
 Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

### HYMN #603

The *Song of Simeon* is a paraphrase by Father James Quinn (b. 1919) of the Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:29-32). It appeared in a collection of 100 hymns, *New Hymns for All Seasons* (1969), some of which are translations while the rest are original to him. Quinn is a Jesuit Priest from Scotland and author of three other hymns in our hymnal.

### A SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION AND WHOLENESS

Cancelled for today - will resume  
 January 4, 2015