

Presentation of Our Lord

February 2, 2025

The Presentation of Our Lord is referred to in some corners of the church as Candlemas because of an ancient tradition of blessing all the candles to be used in the church in the coming year at the mass celebrated on that day. It was a way of underscoring the truth of Simeon's confession that this baby Jesus was "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" and a light for glory to Israel. Let the light of every candle in church be a little epiphany of the love of God for all people in the person of God's son, Jesus, the light of the world.



WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE Partita on

- > I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light, (Theme)
- > John A. Behnke

Please quietly reflect and prepare for worship during the music.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the ⊕ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the # Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

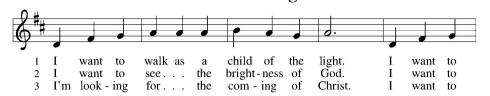
Amen.

The prelude's purpose is to prepare your heart, your hands, and your mind for worship. The Lord is worthy of our preparation and the prelude provides us a time to do just that.

Washed in water and marked with the cross, the baptized children of God are united with Christ, and through him, with other believers, we confess our sins and return to our baptism. In forgiveness God raises us up again.

The paraments, which are the hangings on the altar, pulpit, and lectern, are White. White symbolizes purity, light, glory, and joy..

GATHERING HYMN #815: I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light



The Hymns proclaim the Gospel in song. We sing a variety of hymns to help us tell God's story.



Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934 Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration

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God.

GREETING

day

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

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

Shine in my

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Lamb is

heart,

And also with you.

The Apostolic Greeting is given by the Pastor using the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Cor 13:13. In this greeting the assembly is rooted in the Triune life of God.

KYRIE



4

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, your only-begotten Son was presented this day in the temple. May we be presented to you with clean and pure hearts by the same Jesus Christ, our great high priest, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The prayer of the day is typically a prayer focused around the scripture texts for the day.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.



God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING Malachi 3:1-4

This reading concludes a larger section (2:17—3:5) in which the prophet speaks of the coming of the God of justice. Malachi looks for that day when the wondrous power of God will purify the priestly descendents of Levi who minister in the temple at Jerusalem.

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

The Word part of our liturgy, is where we hear "the living voice of the Gospel." We experience this in the Biblical readings, a sermon based around these readings, and the hymn of the day.

PSALM 84



How dear to me | is your dwelling, O | Lord of hosts!

My soul has a desire and longing for the courts | of the Lord; my heart and my flesh rejoice in the | living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest where she may | lay her young, by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my king | and my God.

Happy are they who dwell | in your house! They will always be | praising you. R

Happy are the people whose strength | is in you, whose hearts are set on the | pilgrims' way.

Those who go through the balsam valley will find it a | place of springs, for the early rains have covered it with | pools of water.

They will climb from | height to height, and the God of gods will be | seen in Zion.

Lord God of hosts, | hear my prayer; give ear, O | God of Jacob. R

Behold our defend- | er, O God; and look upon the face of | your anointed.

For one day in your courts is better than a | thousand elsewhere.

I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents | of the wicked.

For the Lord God is both sun and shield, bestowing | grace and glory; no good thing will the Lord withhold from those who walk | with integrity.

O | Lord of hosts, happy are they who put their | trust in you! R

SECOND READING: Hebrews 2:14-18

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, [Jesus] himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.





Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e-ter-nal life.

GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 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 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

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, 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. 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.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

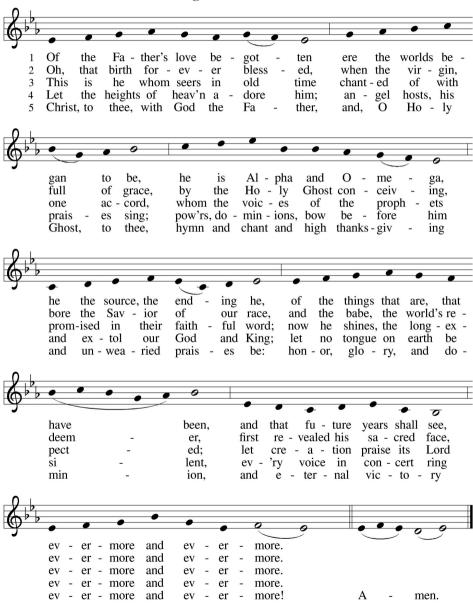
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN SERMON SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

#295: Of the Father's Love Begotten



THE APOSTLES' CREED

Living together in hope and trust, let us confess our faith together. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

As Lutheran Christians we have three creeds to articulate our faith. The Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds.
Through the Apostles' Creed we confess our faith in the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

The prayers of intercession are prepared in advance by writers from across the Church based around the scripture for a given week.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

God of generations, you instilled in Anna and Simeon faith, dreams, and the welcome of a child. Bless elders who embody faith and hope; bless the newly baptized. Energize us to share faith from generation to generation. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of creation, in you the sparrow finds a home and we find lush valleys and living water. Bless the birds of the air, the animals of the valley, and renew our stewardship of this bountiful creation. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of the nations, strengthen our resolve to care for all children and strive for peace among nations. Refine our nation where we have failed to root out racism (especially as we honor Black History Month) and guide us in truth-telling and reconciliation. God of grace, hear our prayer.

God of hope, many long to see your presence revealed amid challenging circumstances. We hold in prayer all longing for sustainable housing, secure employment, access to medical care, and health and wellness. Draw near to all undergoing and recovering from medical treatment or surgery especially Judy, Heather, Marcia, Greg, Jan, Janet, Joyce, Phyllis, Larry, Bob, Ellie, Mary, John, Pat, Anna, Pat, Susan, Wendy, and Charlie, and all those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of the people, you are made known in caring ministries. Bless those who serve as communion servers, homebound visitors, Stephen Ministers, Afghan refugee support, on the Social Ministry Team, with Habitat for Humanity, for Camp Destiny, as baptismal sponsors, confirmation leaders and in similar roles and as prayer support. Reveal yourself in the neighborly care we give and receive. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of life, we thank you for Jesus' life and for his death that has destroyed death. We remember the dearly departed as they dwell with you in your holy courts now and forever. God of grace, hear our prayer

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

Amen.



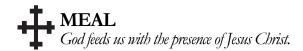
PEACE

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ. The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The congregation is invited to share a sign of God's peace with one another The assembly sits.

The passing of the peace is traditionally part of the liturgy, so that anyone in the gathered assembly may have a time to be reconciled to one another before sharing the meal.



OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERTORY

(8:30) Partita on I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light, (Cantabile) > John A. Behnke (11:00) He Comes to us As One Unknown > John Ferguson

The assembly stands.

OFFERTORY HYMN





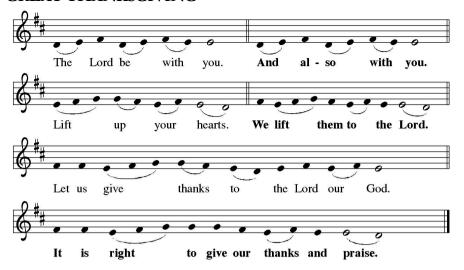
OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray together.

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

A musical offering is given to God in our worship as the gifts of the assembly are collected.
This is a reminder of God's abundance. We offer back to God just a small portion of what God has given us, so that the mission of God can be realized.

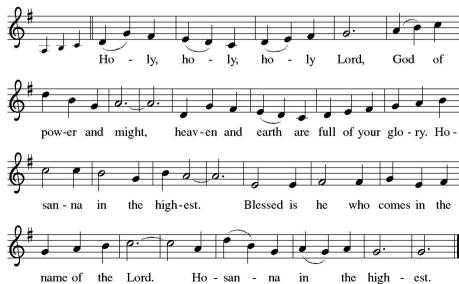
GREAT THANKSGIVING



PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



In the meal part of our liturgy we prepare to come to Christ's table. In the Great Thanksgiving we focus on being thankful for all God has done and for all God has given to us. In the Eucharistic Prayer, we ask God to send the Holy Spirit to this meal and we ask that Christ will fulfill his promise to be in the bread and wine.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying. Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table for all is now ready.

COMMUNION

This is the Lord's table. Jesus is the host. We are Christ's guests. Jesus welcomes everyone to come, to eat and be nourished, fed and forgiven. Visitors and children are welcome to receive communion. Those who do not receive communion are welcomed forward to receive a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available. The pastor and communion assistant will come to the pews of those unable to come forward.

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

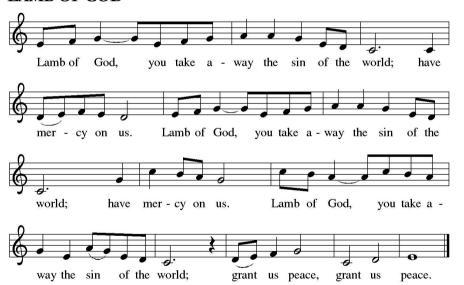
The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Each person may respond: Amen.

The assembly is seated.

LAMB OF GOD



The Lamb of God is a title for Jesus that appears in John 1:29. It is here that we are reminded that our Lord is present and we are to behold his glory.

COMMUNION HYMN

#296 What Child Is This



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es-tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?
- 3 So bring him in cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing? Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing. The King of kings sal - va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



whom shep-herds guard and Christ the king, an - gels sing; This, this is Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the me, for you; cross be borne for song on high, Raise, raise the the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

The assembly stands.

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together.

Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink.

Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.

In the name of Christ we pray,

Amen.

Our final part of our liturgy is the sending. We are sent out into the world reminded of God's mission and strengthened by the presence of Christ and one another through the power of the Holy Spirit.



BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and # give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

#275 Angels, from the Realms of Glory



- An gels, from the realms of glo ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth; Shep-herds, in the fields a bid ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
- Sa ges, leave your con tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam
- cre a tion, join in prais-ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth: re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the God with us is now na-tions, you have seen his seek the great de - sire of to the e-ter - nal Three in ev - er-more vour voic - es rais - ing



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, the new-born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, st. 4 Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

DISMISSAL

The assembly is sent into mission.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Partita on I Want to Walk As a Child of the Light, (Fantasia)

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"The Mission of St. Paul's Lutheran Church as a part of the family of God is to share God in Christ with the World by equipping one another through worship, learning, witness, service and support."

Congregation Council

PresidentKatie BenjaminVice-PresidentKen KnudsenSecretaryJonathan Hodges

Co-Treasurers John Foreman, Mike Mauriello Co-Financial Secretaries Rod Runestad, Phil Hart

Council Members Katie Benjamin, Jayce Getz, Emily Pauline, Ken Knudsen, Michelle Meadors, Steve

Myzk, Jonathan Hodges, Bill Gresham, Nicolina Strom-Jensen

Welcome to St. Paul's

In celebrating God's beauty and strength created through diversity, we welcome, value, and include all of God's children regardless of race, culture, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, ability, appearance, or citizenship. St. Paul's is committed to racial equality.

Admission to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is by invitation of our Lord, presented through the Church to those who are baptized. If you are unable to receive Holy Communion at the altar, please notify an usher to receive communion at your seat. All are welcome at the table for a blessing. We use red wine and bread at communion, and offer grape juice and gluten-free wafers. Inform your server at the rail if you desire either.

Distribution of the Communion Elements take place as follows:

Exit the pew to the side aisles. Empty cups are obtained from the trays located by the front exit. Proceed to the altar. Persons on the right side (lectern side) proceed to the back of the altar rail and fill forward towards the front. The left side (pulpit side) proceed to the front of the altar rail and fill towards the back. After communing, depart down the center aisle to your seat. Please place your cup in one of the baskets.

St. Paul's Live Stream Policy

- 1.St. Paul's Lutheran Church live streams the 11:00 AM service every Sunday. The service is posted to Vimeo and Facebook. In addition, special services may be live streamed.
- 2. The 8:30 AM service is not live streamed and is available for attendance by those who do not wish to be recorded. For live streamed services there will be a "No Video Zone" designated in the Narthex.
- 3. It is recommended that all livestream services include a disclaimer about the service being recorded, posted on a visible location at the entrance of the sanctuary and written in the bulletin.
- 4. Children must have a signed waiver from their parent or guardian before being recorded.
- 5. We will not share personal or identifying information while a service is being live streamed, this includes during announcement, prayer requests, or the sermon.

Staff of St. Paul's

Pastor	Rev. Scott Anderson	pastor@stpaulsdurham.org
Duke Lutherans Pastor/		
Associate Pastor	Rev. Amanda Highben	Amanda.highben@duke.edu
Vicar	Ashley Bowman	vicar@stpaulsdurham.org
Parish Adminstrator	Susan Esposito	admin@stpaulsdurham.org
Office Assistant	Heather Cain	assistant@stpaulsdurham.org
Minister of Music	Dr. Ted Turner	music@stpaulsdurham.org
Bookkeeper	Alan Rigsbee	bookkeeper@stpaulsdurham.org
Preschool Director	Candace King	preschool@stpaulsdurham.org
Property Manager	Clark Brunner	property@stpaulsdurham.org

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

1200 W. Cornwallis Rd., Durham, NC https://www.stpaulsdurham.org/ (919) 489-3214

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, North Carolina Synod