

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Psalm 103:1



ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Year's Eve ~ Thursday, December 31, 2020

NEW YEAR'S EVE

December 31, 2020

WELCOME to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

NURSERY AVAILABLE We have an unstaffed nursery for your convenience and privacy. The nursery has audio and video so you may hear and see the worship service while attending to your child.

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated at the 8:30 service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and at the 11:00 service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

For those wishing to commune at the Lord's Table with us today: The Lutheran practice of close Communion attempts to prevent a person from eating and drinking judgment on himself (1 Corinthians 11:23–30). Thus, attendance at the Lord's Supper implies a four-level commitment to Christ. We believe that communicants must: (1) be baptized Christians; (2) accept the real presence of Christ's body in the bread and His blood in the wine; (3) confess and repent of one's sins and trust that God offers complete forgiveness of those sins in this Sacrament; and (4) share oneness of faith, doctrine and practice among those who commune. Those wishing to commune with us today who have not done so previously, please see the pastor or an elder before the service begins.

(Grape juice is available for those who do not drink alcohol, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request.)

(**P** = Pastor, **C** = Congregation, **A** = Reader/Assisting)

✠ PREPARATION ✠

Theme: "Another Year of Grace"

AS WE GATHER

As the world rings in the New Year, there are many things to consider from 2020. We consider those who have died in the past year. We consider our own sins and failures. But we also consider all of the ways in which Jesus has continued to lead and guide us, even in the midst of trials. On this night, we remember the love of Christ that sustains us through each passing year, and we pray His blessing on another year of grace.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“O Lord, Our Father, Thanks And Praise”

(tune: Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice)

O Lord, our Father, thanks and praise In this new year we render,
For ev'ry evil had to flee Before you, our defender.
Our life was nourished, we were fed With rich supplies of daily bread,
And peace reigned in our borders.

Lord Jesus Christ, our thanks and praise In this new year we render;
Your reign has kept your people free, Has shown your mercies tender.
You have redeemed us with your blood; You are our joy, our only good,
In life and death our Savior.

O Holy Spirit, thanks and praise In this new year we render,
For you have led our eyes to see Your truth in all its splendor
And thus enkindled from above Within our hearts true faith and love
And other Christian virtues.

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 124:8*

P Our help is in the name of the LORD,
C **who made heaven and earth.**

P He has brought us to the ending of the day
C **and to the close of another year.**

P As we remember the year that is past,
C **forgive us, O Lord.**

P As we turn to the year that is ahead,
C **lead us, O Lord.**

P Our help is in the name of the LORD,
C **who made heaven and earth.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Our Lord loves us with an enduring love that never ceases. However, we do not love and obey Him in return. We are by nature sinful and unclean, and we sin daily throughout the year. We recognize that the wages of sin is death. At the close of this year, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P “If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?” As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Eternal God, we commit to Your mercy and forgiveness the year now ending and commend to Your blessing and love the times yet to come. In the New Year, abide among us with Your Holy Spirit that we may always trust in the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

✠ **SERVICE OF THE WORD** ✠

(The reading of God's Word is central to our worship, our life, and our faith; this portion of the service concludes with the sermon, or the preached Word.)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 103:1–5 (ESV)

(Praise be to God who forgives us.)

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! ² Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, ³ who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, ⁵ who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 90

(tune: O God, Our Help in Ages Past)

C (sings)

**Teach us to count our days, O Lord;
Let wisdom fill our hearts.**

From eternity to eternity--you are God! A thousand years to You are like one day, like yesterday already gone, like a short hour in the night.

**So shall Your Name be e'er adored
For all Your grace imparts.**

We, however, are dust, like weeds that sprout in the morning, to dry up and die by sunset. Our days pass away under your wrath; our life expires like a sigh. Seventy years? Eighty? Trouble and sorrow fill them all, and we face eternity.

**Teach us to count our days, O Lord;
Let wisdom fill our hearts.**

Who considers the power of Your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear we owe You. Teach us to count the days that we have, and inspire our hearts to use them wisely.

**So shall Your Name be e'er adored
For all Your grace imparts.**

Return, O Lord; how long will You tarry? Be gracious to Your servants. Satisfy us each morning with Your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

**Teach us to count our days, O Lord;
Let wisdom fill our hearts.**

Make us glad as many days as You have afflicted us, and as many years as we have suffered adversity.

**So shall Your Name be e'er adored
For all Your grace imparts.**

Let Your work be manifest to Your servants, and Your glorious power to their children.

**Teach us to count our days, O Lord;
Let wisdom fill our hearts.**

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us.

**So shall Your Name be e'er adored
For all Your grace imparts.**

Prosper for us the work of our hands--oh, prosper the work of our hands.

**Teach us to count our days, O Lord;
Let wisdom fill our hearts.
So shall Your Name be e'er adored
For all Your grace imparts.**

EPISTLE

Romans 8:31b–39 (ESV)

(Nothing can separate us from God's love.)

- P** If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.
- C** **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?**

P As it is written, “For Your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 12:35–40 (ESV)

(Stay dressed for action. Be ready.)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twelfth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

³⁵ “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning,³⁶ and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! ³⁹ But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN

“10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)”

by: Jonas Myrin | Matt Redman

Chorus

**Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul I'll worship Your holy name**

The sun comes up it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes (**chorus**)

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger
Your name is great and Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find **(chorus)**

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul I'll worship Your holy name
Worship Your holy name, worship Your holy name

SERMON

“DON'T FORGET”

Psalm 103:1–5
Pastor Jim Sprengle

HYMN

“Across The Sky The Shades Of Night”

(tune: All Glory Be to God on High)

Across the sky the shades of night This New Year's eve are fleeting.
We deck Your altar, Lord, with light, In solemn worship meeting;
And as the year's last hours go by, We raise to You our earnest cry,
Once more Your love entreating.

Before the cross subdued we bow, To You, our prayer addressing,
Recounting all Your mercies now, And all our sins confessing,
Beseeching You this coming year To keep us in Your faith and fear,
To crown us with Your blessing.

Then, gracious God, in years to come, We pray Your hand may guide us,
And onward through our journey home, Your mercy walk beside us
Until at last our ransomed life Is safe from peril, toil, and strife
When Heav'n itself shall hide us.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth and 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 sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I 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 I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

TIME CAPSULE DEDICATION

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P As we approach a new year, let us pray to our God who has been our help in ages past and will be our hope for years to come.

O God, our help, You have been our rock and fortress in times past. As we look forward to the new year, we ask that You would grant us faith to look to You as our hope for years to come. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O God, our help, You are eternal—without beginning or end. As the circumstances of life change and the creation longs for Christ's return, give us eyes of faith to see that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O God, our help, to You a thousand years are like a day, and a day like a thousand years. Give to us patience that we may await Your Son's return with eager hearts knowing that Your timing is perfect. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O God, our help, as the old year comes to an end, we recognize our own mortality. In the face of death, comfort us with the hope of the resurrection, and during this life, "teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom." Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

- P** O God, our help, in this new year, keep us ever mindful of our Savior's words: "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**
- P** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend this new year, trusting in Your mercy,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(sung)

(Matt. 6:9ff; Luke 11:2ff)

Our Father, which 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 debts as we forgive our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil,
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
Forever. Amen.

A NEW YEAR'S LITANY

- P** Sing to the Lord a new song,
C **for He has done marvelous things.**
- P** As we enter a New Year, we sing to the Lord a new song,
C **for He has done marvelous things.**
- P** As we struggle through division,
C **we look to Christ for unity.**
- P** As we consider our sins and failures of the past year,
C **we look to Christ for forgiveness.**
- P** As we seek to love our neighbors and enemies,
C **we look to Christ for guidance.**
- P** As we run the race set before us,
C **we look to Christ for endurance.**

P As we mourn those who have died in the past year,
C **we look to Christ for comfort.**

P As we lay down our brokenness at the foot of the cross,
C **we look to Christ for victory, and we sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things.**

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.
C **Amen.**

HYMN

“O God, Our Help In Ages Past”

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home.

Before the hills in order stood Or earth received its frame,
From everlasting You are God, To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Your sight Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Still be our guard while troubles last, And our eternal home!

ANOWLEDGEMENTS

Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*® Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Capitalization of pronouns referring to the Deity has been added and is not part of the original English Standard Version text.

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Ascension Lutheran Church and School

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Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement: Go and Share Jesus Christ

Our Vision Statement: Take part... Join Jesus on His mission

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God's witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God—the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God's Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

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