

Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions; Jan. 4-9, '21

Mon Micah 5:2-5a For 700 years Israelites had known Micah's prophecy of the Savior, so why was it a *mystery* to them? Let's follow the dots: David had been dead for centuries, so Micah wasn't pointing to him as *ruler in Israel*, but to someone who has been functioning *from everlasting*. Besides, He shall be *great to the ends of the Earth, and He shall be Peace*. All the data point to the Messiah, and Bible believers have been correct in recognizing Jesus of Bethlehem as the Messiah, God's saving gift to humanity. Thank You, Jesus!

Tues John 7:40-43 Folks who knew the prophecies were trying to figure out if Jesus could be the Prophet predicted by Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18). Since Jesus came from Nazareth, that seemed to disqualify Him—but they should have checked it out to discover that He had been born in Bethlehem and was a blood relative of King David. [Matthew and Luke did the research.]

Epiphany Wed. Ephesians 3:2-12 God has placed you and me atop a tall step ladder, from which we see God's whole enterprise from beginning to end. From a lower step (in an earlier century) the Apostle Paul admitted that God opened up the *mystery of the ages* to him, a *latecomer* into God's family (8)—revealing that God embraced non-Jews also in His great love and mercy (12).

Thurs Psalm 72 God opened mysteries to Solomon (shared with us) that via His coronation as King (1) Jesus has been authorized to bring justice (3-4) for all time (5), generously (6-7), over the whole planet and all sorts of people (8-10), for all human needs (12-14), convincingly and for their blessing (15-17). All of which we appreciate amid our troubled times.

Fri Matthew 2:1-12 We would be surprised to find an obituary that praised the deceased for having been *wise*. Smart, witty, loving, etc., but what's missing is *wise* — *wise* for coming from afar to worship the Christ-Child. We continue to pray that God would bring travelers from afar to Bethlehem, and beneath that star open their hearts to God's gift from heaven. Dear God, make more people *wise* unto salvation! In Jesus' name.

Sat Hebrews 2:10-18 Why was it *fitting* for the Son of God to become human? Because salvation depends on a genuine human regaining what the first humans lost. [That seems fair and square—*just* in Scripture language.] By His genuine human life (not by a wave of His hand), by becoming our Brother (11) to defend us, fight for us, suffer for us, and even sacrifice Himself for us in order to save us, Jesus fits the bill. Everything in the entire enterprise was *fitting for Him* (10). So that's why the Trinity did it that way. For you and me. Praise the Lord!

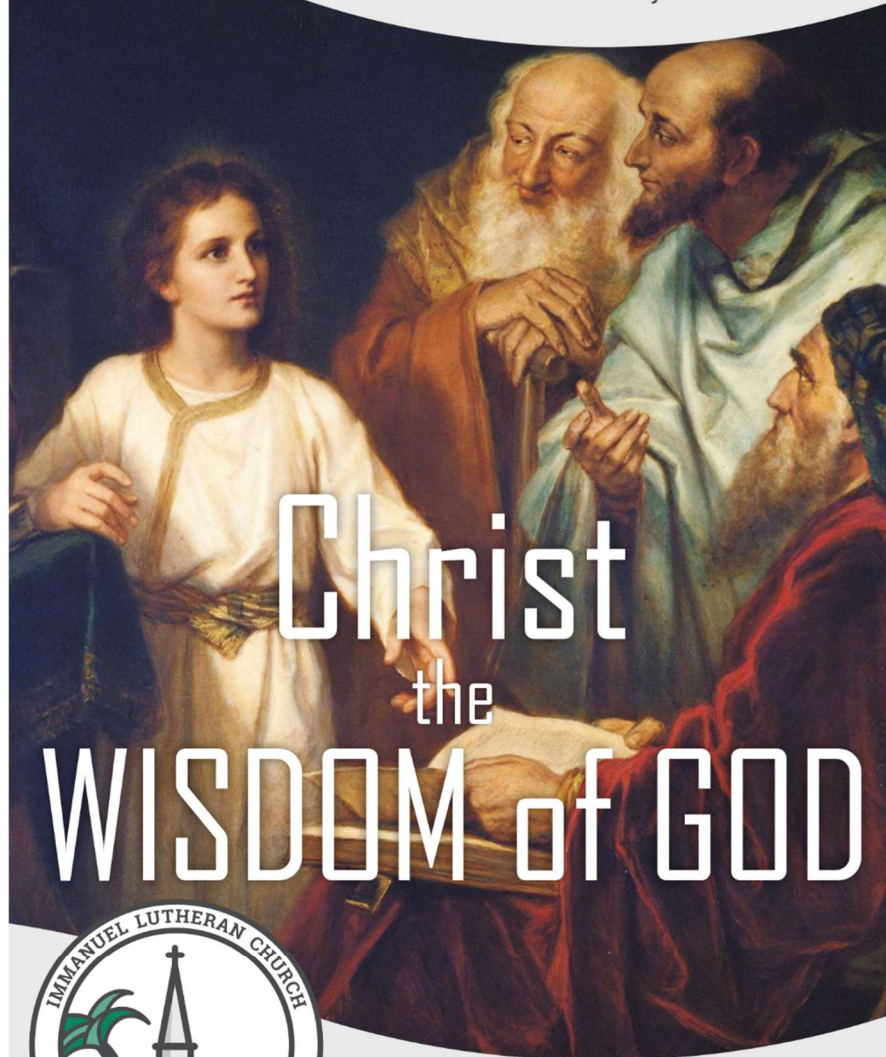
January 3, 2021

2nd Sunday after Christmas

Organ: Teresa Bernthal

Usher: Paul Seger

Acolyte: Mason Kuehne



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PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION

Ps. 119:97-104

⁹⁷ Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. ⁹⁸ Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. ⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. ¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts. ¹⁰¹ I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. ¹⁰² I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me. ¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! ¹⁰⁴ Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

✠ Order of Divine Worship ✠

OPENING PRAYER

P Pastor

C Congregation

HYMN: WS #716:1, 3-6 "Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year"

1. Now greet the swiftly changing year With joy and penitence sincere. Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.
3. This Jesus came to end sin's ware; This Name of names for us He bore. Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.
4. His love abundant far exceeds The volume of a whole year's needs. Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.
5. With Him as Lord to lead our way In want and in prosperity, What need we fear in earth or space In this new year of grace!
6. "All glory be to God on high, And peace on earth!" the angels cry. Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.

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

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION:

P God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

C If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P Let us pray.

✠ Announcements ✠

Thank you! From all of the called-worker families, I would like to express our deepest gratitude for your Christmas gifts to each of us. Your gracious show of love is not expected, but it is certainly appreciated. We are all truly blessed to be serving this wonderful congregation. Thank you!

Looking Ahead...

- ✠ **Today:** Annual Voters' Meeting
- ✠ **Today:** Communion
- ✠ **Today:** Masks-on Service 9 am
- ✠ **Jan. 4:** Second Semester Begins
- ✠ **Jan. 8:** Christmas Eve Service 7 pm
- ✠ **Jan. 10:** Orlando Service 8 am

Annual Voters' Meeting Today! We have a very important voters' meeting today, to be held shortly after church. At this meeting we will be having our annual officer elections, setting a budget, and making several other important decisions. If you are a voter, please stay to represent your families in this important work.

The Christmas Eve Service is being planned to still be held, we are postponing the service until this Friday, January 8th at 7:00 pm. The plan continues to be that we will be holding the service outside. Please pray that the Lord will send us warm, dry weather for the service!

Zoom Bible Class will resume on Wednesday, January 13th at 6:30pm.

Shut-in/Encouragement List Patti Meno continues to receive regular dialysis and is awaiting a kidney transplant. Bill Issitt III remains mostly housebound due to poor health. Johanna Jaehnigen remains mostly housebound. Bill Hartmann's health is deteriorating quickly. Paulette Galstad is suffering through bad back pain and other health problems. Emily Kuehne suffers from total blindness and severe knee pain, among other ailments. Loye Issitt is building back her strength. Greg Tincer is recovering from his recent surgeries at a rehab facility. JoAnne Weis was recently hospitalized, she is now building back her strength at home.

Rev. John Schierenbeck battled COVID-19 for about a week and a half, but he is doing well now. Praise the Lord for His care!

CLC Call News Neil Bernthal, Immanuel, Winter Haven, FL has been called to be principal and upper grade teacher by Faith, Markesan, WI.

Last Week (12/27) WH – 27 Orlando – 11 **Total Offering = \$2,615**

General = \$1,490 | CLC Missions = \$100 | Tuition = \$1,025

January Usher: Paul Seger

Cleaner (1/9): Bernthal

Acolyte (1/10): Grant Ream

THE BENEDICTION:

Numbers 6:24-26

- P** The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.

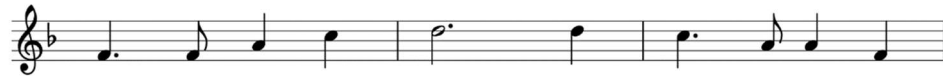
G Amen!

HYMN: Below

"Another Year of Grace My Friends"



1. Should all God's bless - ings be for - got And
The LORD, I AM, my Shep - herd is My
2. He leads me to life - giv - ing streams To
Though there be some dark days a - head They



- nev - er brought to mind? Should we for - get what
needs He sat - is - fies. He gives to me my
drink with - out a price; He leads me in His
can - not hide my God, For He is with me



- grace He's shown Each day to all man - kind?
dai - ly bread And all I need for life.
right - eous-ness, The right - eous-ness of Christ.
as He said With Shep - herd's staff and rod.



- Refrain*
An - oth - er year of grace, my friends, has come and now is gone. An -



- oth - er year of grace be - gins; For - give - ness in God's Son.

3. The Lamb of God my Shepherd is, His life He lived for mine.
His blood was spilled; His body killed To be our sacrifice.
The living LORD my Shepherd is. Though He was crucified,
His body rose in three days time And now stands glorified. *Refrain*
4. Surely His mercy and His grace Shall follow all life long.
And I will dwell within His house to praise Him with this song:
All glory be to You, O Christ, Who came to set me free,
With Father, Spirit, ever One, Through all eternity. *Refrain*

- G** Almighty God, merciful Father, we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. But we are sorry for our transgressions and pray You, of Your bountiful mercy, to be gracious and merciful unto us. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, renew us by Your Spirit, and lead us in the way everlasting. Amen.

- P** Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. We are forgiven. With boldness and confidence we may approach the throne to find grace to help in time of need. In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

- G** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

INTROIT

Ps. 147:1, 5, 11-12; Jn. 1:14

A collection of passages that set the tone for the service.

- P** The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- G** Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.

- P** Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

- G** But the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.

- P** Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

- G** The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.



PRAYER OF THE DAY:

- P** Let us pray. Almighty God, You have poured into our hearts the true Light of Your incarnate Word. Grant that this Light may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

EPISTLE READING – Ephesians 1:3-14 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

GOSPEL READING – Luke 2:40-52 And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. ⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." ⁴⁹ And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ And they did not

C: 1
2

O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
All glo - ry to the Son, For I have seen the
glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace: A
Spir - it, For - ev - er Three - in - One; For
light to lead the be - gin - ning, Un -
as in the the Gen - tiles, Is
to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord with gladness.

C: My heart has now be - come Your dwell - ing, O bless - ed,
ho - ly Trin - i - ty. With an - gels I, Your prais - es
tell - ing, Shall live in joy e - ter - nal - ly. Lord, may Your
bod - y and Your blood Be for my soul the high - est good!

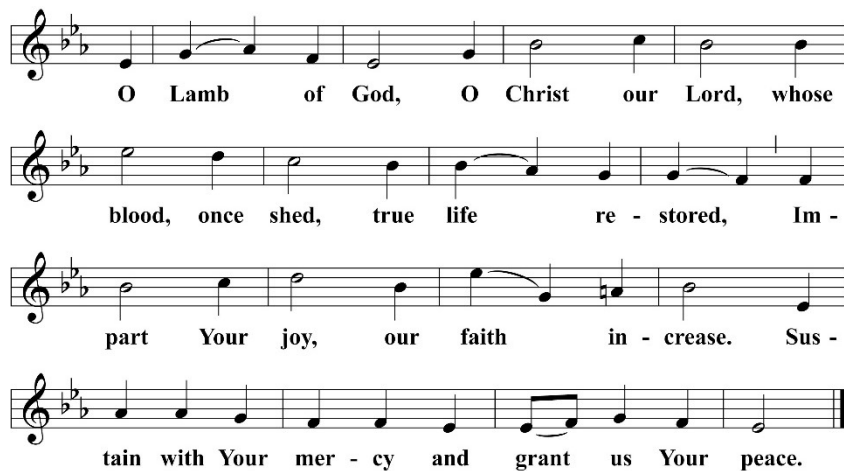
WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Lk. 22:19-20; Mt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-25

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread. And when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

In the same way He took the cup, after supper, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "Drink of it, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

And the peace of the Lord will be with you always!



Please Note: The Lord's Supper is described in 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 as a most precious medicine for the soul. Like all medicines, of course, it must be used at the right time for the right purpose by the right person, lest it do more harm than good. That is one reason we ask our visitors...please speak to the pastor before you commune with us. Thank you!

THE DISTRIBUTION

Please remain seated.

- P** Take and eat. This is the true body of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

Take and drink. This cup is the true blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.

May this body and blood strengthen and preserve you in the true faith, unto life everlasting. Depart in peace. Amen.

understand the saying that he spoke to them.⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

- P** Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.
G ♪ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

- G** 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 men 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.

HYMN: TLH #133:1,2,5,6

"Within the Father's House"

1. Within the Father's house The Son hath found His home,
And to His Temple suddenly The Lord of Life hath come.
2. The doctors of the Law Gaze on the wondrous Child
And marvel at His gracious words Of wisdom undefiled.
5. Lord, visit Thou our souls And teach us by Thy grace
Each dim revealing of Thyself With loving awe to trace,
6. Till from our darkened sight The cloud shall pass away
And on the cleansed soul shall burst The everlasting day.

SERMON – 1 Kings 3:4-15 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?" ¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴ And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." ¹⁵ And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

God Offers a Blank Check

OFFERTORY

WS p.16

In this prayer we OFFER God our hearts, asking Him for that best of all gifts, the Holy Spirit.

- ☞ **♪ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Uphold with Your Spirit free.**

HYMN: TLH #398

"Renew Me, O Eternal Light"

- 1. Renew me, O eternal Light,
And let my heart and soul be bright,
Illumined with the light of grace
That issues from Thy holy face.**
- 2. Destroy in me the lust of sin,
From all impureness make me clean.
Oh, grant me power and strength, my God,
To strive against my flesh and blood!**
- 3. Create in me a new heart, Lord,
That gladly I obey Thy Word
And naught but what Thou wilt, desire;
With such new life my soul inspire.**
- 4. Grant that I only Thee may love
And seek those things which are above
Till I behold Thee face to face,
O Light eternal, through Thy grace.**

PRAYER and the LORD'S PRAYER

Order of Holy Communion

- ☞ The Lord be with you.
- ☞ **And also with you.**
- ☞ Lift up your hearts!
- ☞ **We lift them up to the Lord!**
- ☞ It is right and beneficial that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God: Who, having created all things, took on human flesh and was born of the virgin Mary. For our sake He died on the cross and rose from the dead to put an end to death, thus fulfilling Your will and gaining for You a holy people. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious Name, evermore praising You and saying:
- ☞ **♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Sabbaoth, adored; Heaven and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name. Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord; Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

