

Christmas #2

1/3/21

J.V. Trautwein
Vicar Karen Pugatch

Announcements:

- Sundays – Jan 10th, 1:00-4:00 PM Nativity Village Open,

Celebrate (Introduction)

“Within the gospel reading’s profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God’s grace and truth.”

We come together in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Opening Hymn: [“In the Bleak Midwinter”](#)

Psalm: 147:12-20

“Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

¹³ For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.

¹⁴ He grants peace²³ within your borders;
he fills you with the finest of wheat.

¹⁵ He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.

¹⁶ He gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes.

¹⁷ He hurls down hail like crumbs—
who can stand before his cold?

¹⁸ He sends out his word, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.

¹⁹ He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and ordinances to Israel.

²⁰ He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his ordinances.

Praise the Lord!”

Hymn of Praise: [“’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime”](#)

Prayer of the Day

“Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever. Amen.”

1st Reading: [Jeremiah 31:7-14](#)

2nd Reading: [Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

The Gospel: [John 1:1-18](#)

Hymn of the Day: [“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”](#)

The Angel Tree, and The Message: ([Video Link](#))

Do you remember the Broadway musical “My Fair Lady”? As you may recall it was the story about a professor of speech or of speaking proper English by the name of Professor Higgins. He was a prim and proper English gentleman or what we may call a stuffed shirt. Higgins made a bet with his colleague Colonel Pickering that he could change even the lowest and most ill spoken young women into a polished English Lady who would be mistaken for a member of high society. The object of the bet became one Eliza Doolittle, a common street vendor. The whole experience got tangled up in known and unknown feelings of love. During this tangled web of affairs, Eliza sang these words:

“Words! Words! I’m sick of words!
I get words all day through
From him and now you!
Is that all you blighters can do?”

Eliza had discovered how empty and shallow words can become and how they reflect the life of those who speak them. She found out how important words had become to her. So true, since words are the basis of communication they are the foundation of language both spoken and written. Words are also the keeper of knowledge and give expression to all emotions and feelings.

Words from the ancient people to today are thought to be what defines life and thereby what defines mankind. From early on words have been thought to have the power to change lives and the course of history. One only has to recall President Franklin Roosevelt and his calming words of his fireside chats which were given the credit to help Americans get past the economic panic. Or, think back to Winston Churchill who instilled hope and perseverance within the English people during the World War II bombings with his famous speeches.

Words take on a life of their own and with this life come the power to change life. Words have instigated wars and instilled peace. They have expressed hate and extended love. They

have propagated revenge and brought healing with forgiveness. They have communicated bad news as well as proclaimed good news. Today we are living the results of words meant to divide and endanger life. The human being is judged by his words and is defined by every word which is uttered. It can be said that man is defined by his or her word.

The ancient Greeks found the Word or Logos to be the reason for all of life. This Logo was the very reason of God. The Word was the purpose, plan and design behind all of the world's events, all of life, and was the eternal glue to hold everything to its purpose and order. Logos gives the ability to reason, think, to judge between right and wrong and to recognize truth from fiction.

To the ancient Hebrews and Greeks the Word was life, wisdom, the reasoning of life, and the eternal plan of God. It was no mistake that John, in his introduction to his gospel, used Logos or the Word to identify Jesus. John's insight tells us that the Word was there in the beginning as the world was created, for the Word was God. Notice John does not use the word Messiah which would not be understood by the Gentile world but Logos which would be understood by all. Everybody would understand that Logos or the Word would be understood by all as being the very essence of God and God's eternal order and revelation.

Therefore he wrote "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." John gave a very clear definition of Jesus as being associated with or, better yet, of God. This gives clarity to the concept of the Trinity as well as to the term Son of God for Jesus was the Logo, the Word which is the revelation of God.

In giving this insight, John set forth not only the definition and identity of Jesus as being of God but also why it was a necessity for God to reveal Himself in the form of mankind, the incarnation. Going back to the song "Show Me" in "My Fair Lady" Eliza, who had found no meaning behind the empty and misconstrued words of Professor Higgins and his cohorts, sang these words:

"Show me! Show me!
Don't talk of love lasting through time,
Make me no undying vow.
Show me now!
Sing me no song! Send me no rhyme!
Don't waste my time, Show me!"

This is exactly what happened to the ancient Hebrews. The Word of God had been misinterpreted and misrepresented among them and was totally out of reach of the Gentile world. God's love was only partially understood and was being misconstrued as being restrictive and reliant on being revengeful. Time and time again the people pleaded for God to show them His love by way of protecting them from their dangers and giving them the power to become the people and nation of their dreams. They cried out "Show me! Show us! If you love us show us! Don't just offer commandments and laws but show us the love, the action behind these words."

Even today, especially during the pandemic and troubling times, we do the same thing; “Lord show us that you love us, heal us; free us from pain and suffering. Show me! Show us!” This is exactly what God did; he brought His Word, Logos, to life with all of its depth and essence of His nature. God’s Word has been given to us in the form that we would be able to understand and not misconstrued. His word came alive through Jesus. This was the Word which had been, is now and ever will be because it is of God who is eternal. God answered the call of His children to “Show me! Show us!” This is why we celebrate the Season of Christmas, this is why we sing “Joy to the World” for God has shown us His eternal Word through Jesus.

It is this Word which truly brings light and enlightenment to the world that always seems to want to live in darkness. The light of His Word though, will always win out. This light can never be extinguished by darkness for this light is eternal. Light always conquers darkness, darkness can never conquer light.

When we accept this eternal Word it then enlightens us for it becomes the Word which defines our lives. The Word makes us His Children, the children of light. John states, “But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become Children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.”

As children of God we need not ask “Show me!” for God’s eternal Word through Jesus has already shown us. His Word will be our word of life and then our lives will never project shallow or hollow words nor will our life’s word be meaningless and lost in despair. To the contrary, we shall be fulfilled with a life of God’s Word of love. Thus the joy of Christmas will find life and meaning since the Word will always be with us and in us. This is the Good news of the Angels, “... to you is born this day, in the City of David, a savior who is Christ the Lord.” The light of His word will conquer the darkness which enfolds us. In this we find hope in the New Year.

The Anthem: [“From Heaven Above I Come”](#)

Offering*: ([On-Line Giving Link](#))

We give thee but thine own, what e’er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

The Prayer

Eternal Father, a New Year is upon us while amidst the spreading pandemic and a highly divided nation. We pray for your peaceful and healing presence which is able to bring light to the present darkness. We need strength in our conviction in the Word you sent us through your Son so we may be a part of the peaceful and healing process.

We are continually thankful for those who are giving of themselves so that others may find healing and life. We pray that the vaccines will soon put an end to the misery and deadly consequences of covid-19 so that the fullness of life can be restored.

We pray for all who need your comforting and healing presence especially Bob and Pat Allen, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, the Elshafei family, Betty Fultz, Katie Hawkins, the Johnson Family, Robert Karner, Donna Mayhew, Bev and Jim Mertz, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, David Otto, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Linda Rigby, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family, Linda Stephens, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Linda Williamson, Pastor Jack, and all those who are suffering pain, and sorrow as a result of this pandemic.

We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make His face shine upon you;

The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters

Live on knowing God's love,

The joy of living this life of love,

And the peace which only come through the power of His presence within you.

So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

Closing Hymn: ["Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"](#)

We are discontinuing in person worship services on Sundays until further notice. The online worship experiences will continue as well as the Midweek Thoughts.

Bible Study with Vicar Karen Pugatch, Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 PM more information attached below.

*Offering to be sent to:

Bob Brackbill

10274 Raleigh Tavern Road

Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church

9122 Sybert Drive

Columbia Hills

Ellicott City, MD 21043

<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithe/give-one-time/2627291

Zoom Bible Study

Meeting ID: 941 432 0826

Password: 300maple

OR

By Telephone: (929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 941 432 0826

Password: 914022