

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Aitkin, Minnesota**  
**January 3, 2021**  
**Second Sunday after Christmas**  
**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

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

C **Amen.**

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the

grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

**Introit** *Ps. 147:1, 5, 11–12; antiphon: John 1:14*

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.

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

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

But the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him,  
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

**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.**

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.

**Collect 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.

C **Amen.**

### **Old Testament Reading**

*1 Kings 3:4–15*

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.

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." 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. 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. 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. 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?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 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, 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. 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. 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.”

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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## **Epistle**

*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, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

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, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his

glory. 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, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## **Holy Gospel**

*Luke 2:40–52*

And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, 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, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 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." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. 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.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

### **Apostles' Creed**

C **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 Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father  
Almighty.**

**From thence He will come to judge the living  
and the dead.**

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

### **Sermon Text – Luke 2:40-52**

#### **Theme – “Filled with Wisdom”**

When I was twelve years old, I was out Christmas shopping with my family. We were in a big department store. As it happen, I lost track of where they were. So, I

started walking through the store, looking up and down the aisles. I couldn't find anyone from my family, not my father or mother or my two brothers. Where could they be? My parents had always said, "If you get lost, go to the car." I wasn't lost; I knew right where I was. But, I went to the car and waited for them. I know I was happy and they were happy when they came to the car and "found" me.

In our Gospel lesson for today, we hear about another twelve year old boy who wasn't lost, even though His parents thought He was. The boy, of course, was Jesus.

This is how it happened. We are told: **"Now [Jesus] parents went to Jerusalem every year for the feast of the Passover"** (Luke 2:41). Mary and Joseph were good parents. They take their children to church like parents are supposed to do. The family is in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Passover.

The story continues: **"And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey"** (Luke 2:43-44a). In those days, often people from the same town would travel to the feast in a group. So there is no need to call social services and report Mary and Joseph. They just thought that Jesus was somewhere in the group, but when they stopped for the evening, Jesus was nowhere to be found.

Where could Jesus be? I am sure, Mary and Joseph asked their traveling companions when any of them had last seen Jesus. The answer must have been "in Jerusalem." So Mary and Joseph hustled back.

We are told **“after three days they found him in the temple.”** What an appropriate place for Jesus to be! The temple was thought to be the dwelling place of God and Jesus was and is God.

What was Jesus doing at the temple? Mary and Joseph **“found him ... sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers”** (Luke 2:46-47). What those teachers were seeing was Jesus displaying His divine wisdom.

Wisdom is more than mere knowledge. Wisdom is knowing what to do with one's knowledge. Wisdom is exercising sound judgment; wisdom is making right decisions. Wisdom is right understanding connected to right action.

Jesus certainly had wisdom! In fact St. Paul says about Him in 1 Corinthians 1, verse 24 that **“Christ [is] the power of God and the wisdom of God.”**

If you want to be wise, if you seek wisdom, then seek Christ who is **“the wisdom of God.”** He can give you wisdom. And, you don't have to look all over to find Him. You can find Him in the temple. You can find Him in church. Church is where He has promised to be present, in His Word and Sacraments.

Jesus is true God and true Man. He is the Son of God and the son of Mary. He is fully divine and fully human. We confess that He “came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary.” This was all for us and for our salvation. That was His divine mission. It is the

mission He would accomplish some 20 years later when He once again was in Jerusalem for the Passover.

The feast of the Passover was celebrated so that people could remember how God had brought their ancestors out of the slavery in Egypt. When that happened, the people sacrificed lambs so that they could put some of the lamb's blood alongside their doors. That way, the angel of death would pass over their home and not kill the first born in that house.

So, every year, as the people celebrated the Passover, they sacrificed lambs, just as their ancestors had. All of these lambs were pointing ahead to the Lamb of God who would bring all people out of slavery to sin. Jesus is that Lamb of God who was not sacrifice at the temple; He was sacrificed on a cross.

That's what He had to do. We get a little sense of that in Jesus reply to Mary and Joseph. He said, "**Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?**" (Luke 2:49). Did you hear that word "**must?**" Jesus said, "**I must be in my Father's house.**" There is a divine necessity about His being there. It has to be.

If you look at the original Greek, it literally says, "It is necessary for me to be among the things of my Father." That's why this verse can also be translated "**I must be about my Father's business.**" That's what Jesus had come to do. The "business" of His Father was the mission Jesus had been sent to accomplish. It is a rescue mission, a mission to redeem all people from the bonds of sin and death.

Jesus was a twelve-year-old boy who was filled with wisdom. That is made clear as we look at how our text begins and ends. It begins with these words: **“And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man”** (Luke 2:40). And, it ends with these words: **“And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man”** (Luke 2:52).

I pray that we all will do the same **“increase in wisdom”** as we continue to hear God’s Word. And, I pray that we will remember that God has looked upon us with **“favor”** by sending His only begotten Son to be our Savior.  
AMEN

- P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
- C **Amen.**

### **Prayer of the Church**

Heavenly Father, we give You thanks that Your Son, the eternal Word, became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. Extend His praise into all the world, that many more with us would come to hope in His steadfast love.

Heavenly Father, Your Son diligently heard the Word of God and grew in wisdom and stature, submissive to His earthly parents and always about Your business and in Your house. Keep the families of Your Church abiding in Your Word, eager to be found among Your Word and Sacraments and always treasuring Your divine wisdom and favor.

Heavenly Father, You have blessed us in Christ, Your beloved Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Preserve Your Church by the

preaching of the Gospel of salvation and the seal of the promised Holy Spirit in Baptism. Raise up among us faithful preachers to the praise of Christ's glory, until we acquire the inheritance promised us in Him.

Heavenly Father, You gave to Your servant Solomon unsurpassed wisdom to rule Your people Israel, chiefly the wisdom that begins in fearing You. Give to the leaders and elected officials of our nation wisdom for their task to discern between good and evil and to govern this people in peace and quietness. Be gracious to preserve our president and president-elect, our governor, and all legislators and judges.

Heavenly Father, give patience and endurance to all who are sick or in any need, [*especially \_\_\_\_\_*,] and heal them according to Your will. Receive our thanksgiving for every blessing and kindness You have shown to Your people [*especially \_\_\_\_\_*]. Give comfort and hope to all who mourn [*especially \_\_\_\_\_*]. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. **Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

- **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.**

### **Benediction**

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to  
you.

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

C **Amen**

### **Acknowledgments**

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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