



Hope Lutheran Church *February 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.*

We express our appreciation for being able to meet on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw People. May we always look for ways to confront past injustices and support Snuneymuxw governance and jurisdiction.

Prelude (we “quiet” for worship)

Welcome & Announcements

Thanksgiving at the Font

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and mighty, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring, you are the fire of rebirth.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes for rivers and streams. Honour to you for cloud and rain, for dew and snow. Your waters are below us, around us, above us: our life is born in you. You are the fountain of resurrection.

Praise to you for your saving waters: Noah and the animals survive the flood, Hagar discovers your well. The Israelites escape through the sea, and they drink from the gushing rock. Naaman washes his leprosy away, and the Samaritan woman will never be thirsty again.

At this font, holy God, we pray: **Praise to you for the water of baptism and for your Word that saves us in this water. Breathe your Spirit into all who are gathered here and into all creation. Illumine our days. Enliven our bones. Dry our tears. Wash away the sin within us, and drown the evil around us. Satisfy all our thirst with your living water, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Gathering Hymn¹: #705 God of Grace and God of Glory

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all. **And also with you.**

This is the Feast (*Hymnal, Setting 4, pages 149-50*)

Refrain:

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power and riches and wisdom and strength,
and honor and blessing and glory are his.**

¹ *Numbered hymns are from the cranberry coloured Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnbook*

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Refrain:

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**Sing with all the people of God
and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing and honor and glory and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

Final Refrain:

***This is the feast of victory for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia. Alleluia.***

Prayer for the Day

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. **Amen.**

Children's Corner

First Reading – Malachi 3:1-4

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.

Second Reading – Hebrews 2:14-18

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he 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

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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.

Gospel Acclamation (*Hymnal Setting Four*, page 151)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia

Gospel – Luke 2:22-40

The Gospel according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him 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.

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

Sermon Luke 2:22-40

It was a while back in 1972. A professor in a university class mentioned the *Trinity*. I thought it was probably three-something, but had no idea what she was talking about. When I asked my friend later what it meant, he burst out laughing in my face and ridiculed my ignorance. He attended church when he was younger and so he knew. His fun at my expense was annoying and I used some choice words in my response to him as I walked away.

How do you gently discover what you don't know about God? What I needed were welcoming people to point to God with genuine joy. Eventually they found me. Simeon and Hanna were provided by God for Mary and Joseph too. Maybe you are also someone like that.

Drama or not

40 days passed since Christmas in Bethlehem. Jesus was circumcised as required by his religion when he was eight days old. It probably took place at the home of distant relatives or new friends who make their acquaintance while in Bethlehem. We don't know. Then on the 33rd day the couple made their way to the Temple in nearby Jerusalem. They took two pigeons (or an equivalent donation), the sacrifice of the poor, to fulfill the religious requirement for Mary's return to sacred spaces and normal life following the birth. They also used the occasion to fulfil the tradition of redeeming the firstborn son. There was a five shekel fee for that. People still wonder about religious rites and ceremonies. What's the point?

Can you see them walking toward the Temple in awe of its massive majesty and history? I wonder what they talked about. They missed home at Nazareth as they went up. Over the past month or so, they had been through anxiety, surprise, wonder, uncertainty and loneliness. They would be away for a while yet. Life can throw a lot at us. We know this too.

They weren't sure what to tell the folks back home about the new baby. There were no photos, videos, newspaper birth announcements. They carried diary or notebook, had no email, cell phone, or website. All they had was stored in their hearts.

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What would you tell people? Jesus was born. What about the rest of the story? A star, angels, shepherds? What would you say? How would you tell it? How would family react to the drama of it all?

Sometimes life has drama, but more often not. Drama gets the attention. But what about every other day? On Sunday mornings at church, liturgy and ceremony try to remind us of who we are, that God permeates life, never loses us, and always calls us forward. Are we able then to keep our heads as time passes?

After this story there were 30 more years of life with scant moments of drama such as the probable death of Joseph. Jesus was quiet as families shopped the marketplace, children were born and the aged died, chanting drifted from synagogues, and Roman soldiers walked the roads. Life slipped by like silent sand in an hourglass. Who would dare to say, “*God is with you?*”

Welcomers: Simeon & Anna

When Simeon and Anna walked up to the little family in the Temple – smiling and with twinkling eyes, it was new moment. A meeting of generations was about to take place. We don’t always need to go looking for God, because God will find us where hurting, seeking, outcast, and vulnerable people are. Jesus later spent most of his ministry doing that.

Simeon reacted by praising God and announcing that could die with peace now. Anna danced a little jig with an 84 year old giggle and praised God as she told others about “the child.” When we come together in worship, through a time of liturgy, sacrament, and ritual, God says, “*Hello!*”

When God comes to say hello by means of this child, we know that our lifetime is involved. We come and go. We need to be strong to meet the challenges of life. We need wisdom. Jesus found that in family, in his community, in the bump and grind of growing up. We are going through the same process and the mercies of God meet us anew every morning. We know this best when in a gathering with the people of God. We help each other know God. It is much tougher when alone.

It is welcomers like Simeon and Anna and others in the family of God who help to keep us on course. They help us remember to praise. They help us sing and dance and rejoice. They remind us about challenges, risings and fallings, opposition, soul

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piercing moments. Together we discover that and even as death nears, as Simeon noted, we can go out in peace.

God With Us: *Hello!*

We have day to day life. We have our small families and we have this bigger one. We were welcomed and we are welcomers of others. And God comes to meet us through Jesus the child, the young man, the adult. Through his disciples and friends, God says, "*Hello. I'm with you.*"

We are met with love. We are loved without drama. The Spirit whispers to our hearts through story. Hymns echo within. Unexpected love blossoms. We look around the room and eyes of age, smiling through wrinkles, wink at us.

Salvation has come. At the manger, the Temple, the cross, the empty tomb... at your baptism, at this table... there is welcome. We share it. We never face the day alone. God says, "*Hello,*" and there is light.

His final visit to the Temple area was as he opened his arms on the cross: a gesture for all time indicating the favour of God now upon us.

So today at the end of the service, when I say to you, "*Go in peace, live in hope*" and you respond, "*Thanks be to God!*" know that God keeps saying, "*Hello!*" There is always help.

Amen.

Hymn of the Day #514 O Word of God Incarnate

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. We pray for **Bishop Kathy Martin**; for *St. Paul's Lutheran* in Maple Ridge & **Interim Pastor Nicolas Alexandre**; and for *Matsqui Lutheran* in Matsqui. 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.**

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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 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, especially...

*Sigrid C; Cynthia C; Judy F; Gary G; Ahmad H & family; Dennis K; Donna K;
Don & Vicki; Kari K; Colleen M; Marjorie M; Katja R; Colette S;
Pastor Kristen Steele; Jerry S; Colin F; June V-C; Gloria; Susana; Annie; Trisha;
Zack; Sonja; Pastor Diana Edis; the family of Anne Hughes;
Doug C & family; Vi A.*

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, baptismal sponsors, mentors, and prayer support volunteers. Reveal yourself in the neighbourly 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.**

The Peace [*unmute*]

The peace of Christ is with you always!

And also with you!

*(We greet each other gently with a wave, a smile,
or some other gesture of peace)*

The Offering & Offertory

"Let's Just Praise The Lord"

(Let's just praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

Let's just lift our hearts/voice/hands to heaven and praise the Lord!)

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Great Thanksgiving

The Lord is with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise...** (*pastor continues*)

Holy, holy, holy (*Hymnal, Setting 4, page 153*)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

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 (*raise the 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 (*raise 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 glory and honor, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

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Communion (*those on Zoom will be communed first, and then those in the sanctuary*)

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Happy are those who trust in the Lord.

Lamb of God (*Hymnal, Setting 4, page 154*)

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Hymns:

Hymn #631 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Hymn #487 What Feast of Love

Blessing

The Spirit of the triune God

+bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion,

and send you in love. **Amen.**

Sending Song #543 Go My Children, with My Blessing

Go in peace. Live in hope!

Thanks be to God.

+

Worship Assistants Today

Hymnologist: *John Collett* (*musician selecting hymns*):

Reader: *Tim Stime*

Intercessions: *Susan Collett*

Communion Assistants: *Marilyn Gross, Laurie Hansen, Carolyn Iles*

Zoom Techs: *Steve, Gail*

Zoom Host: *Dorothy Pagan*

Usher: *Shirley Forwell*

Piano: *John Collett*

Presiding: *Pastor Terry Richardson*

Readings for Sunday, Feb 9 - Epiphany 5

Isaiah 61:1-13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

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Coming up at Hope:

As mentioned previously, no lyrics are printed for the hymns. Please use a hymnal if you have one, or you may borrow one from the church. Just let us know.

Our ***Annual General Meeting*** will take place on **Sunday, February 23** immediately after the service.

