



My eyes have seen Your salvation;  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and for glory to Your people Israel.

+ Luke 2:30, 32

**THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

**December 27, 2020**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Epistle for the First Sunday after Christmas gives us Saint Paul’s one-sentence summary of the Christmas message: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son” (Galatians 4:4).

God knew the exact right time for His beloved Son to come to this sin-filled world. God has always had a plan for salvation and His Son, our Lord Christ Jesus, fulfilled it completely.

In these days of Christmastide (you know, there are twelve days of Christmas, after all), we ought to join the shepherd in “glorifying and praising God for all [we have] heard and seen” (Luke 2:20).

We and all of creation have received the greatest and most perfect gift in the babe of Bethlehem: forgiveness, life, and salvation.

Yours in Christ Jesus, +Pastor Griebenaw

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*Simeon and Anna in the Temple by Rembrandt van Rijn, 1627, Public Domain*

## ✠ DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING THREE ✠

### HYMN OF INVOCATION: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

LSB 338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv-er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Born to reign in us for-ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
By Thine own e - ter-nal Spir-it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo-rious throne.

*Text and tune: Public Domain*

*Stand – The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 184

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

*Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]*

**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.

*[Hebrews 10:22]*

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C** who made heaven and earth.

*Psalms 124:8*

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

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

*Psalms 32:5*

*Kneel (or remain standing)*

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

**P** Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**C** O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**P** Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

*Mark 16:16; John 1:12*

**C** Amen.

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

### INTROIT

Psalm 98:1-4; antiphon: Isaiah 52:10

*The pastor and congregation chant responsively. The antiphon is chanted by the pastor before and after the psalm.*



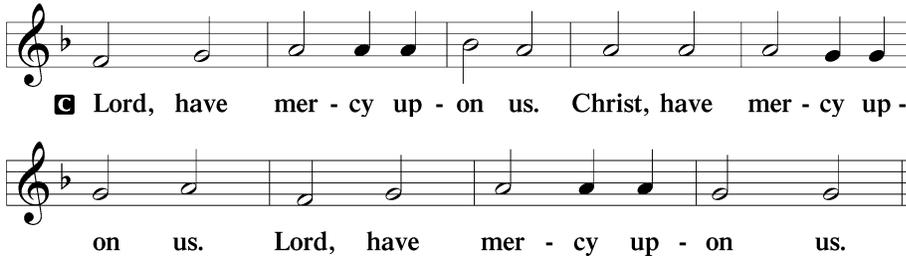
*(Antiphon)* The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the | nations,\*  
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation | of our God.

- <sup>1</sup> Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done | marvelous things!\*  
His right hand and His holy arm have worked salva- | tion for Him.
  - <sup>2</sup> The LORD has made known His sal- | vation;\*  
He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the | nations.
  - <sup>3</sup> **He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of | Israel.\***  
**All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation | of our God.**
  - <sup>4</sup> **Make a joyful noise to the LORD, | all the earth,\***  
**break forth into joyous song and sing | praises!**
- Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

*The antiphon is repeated.*

### KYRIE

Mark 10:47



Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -

on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

### GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Luke 2:14; John 1:29



Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward

men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,

we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.

O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
 that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.  
 Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.  
 Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-  
 on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.  
 Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost,  
 art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

**SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY**



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.



**P** Let us pray.

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

*Sit*

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 61:10—62:3

**P** The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapters 61 and 62.

<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. <sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

<sup>1</sup>For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. <sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. <sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## GRADUAL

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV); Psalm 98:1a (NKJV)

*The pastor and congregation chant responsively.*



For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is | given;\*  
and the government will be upon His | shoulder.

**And His name will be called Wonderful, | Counselor,\*  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.**

Oh, sing to the LORD a | new song!\*  
For He has done | marvelous things!

## EPISTLE READING

Galatians 4:4-7

**P** The Epistle is from Galatians, chapter four.

<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup>And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## ALLELUIA & VERSE



**C** Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Alleluia. My eyes have seen Your salvation;  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel. Alleluia.

Luke 2:30, 32



**C** Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, chapter two.



**C** Glo-ry be to Thee, O Lord.

<sup>22</sup>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 <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “*Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD*”) <sup>24</sup>and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “*A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.*”

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. <sup>26</sup>And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. <sup>27</sup>And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the Law, <sup>28</sup>he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

<sup>29</sup>“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,  
according to Your word;

<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen Your salvation

<sup>31</sup>that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and for glory to Your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup>And His father and His mother marveled at what was said about Him. <sup>34</sup>And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed <sup>35</sup>(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

<sup>36</sup>And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, <sup>37</sup>and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of Him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon Him.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



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

NICENE CREED

**C** 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  $\dagger$  of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

**HYMN OF THE DAY: Of the Father's Love Begotten**

LSB 384

1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten Ere the worlds be -  
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, When the vir - gin,  
 3 This is He whom seers in old time Chant - ed of with  
 4 O ye heights of heav'n, a - dore Him; An - gel hosts, His  
 Δ 5 Christ, to Thee, with God the Fa - ther, And, O Ho - ly  
 gan to be, He is Al - pha and O - me - ga,  
 full of grace, By the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,  
 one ac - cord, Whom the voic - es of the proph - ets  
 prais - es sing. Pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore Him  
 Ghost, to Thee Hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing  
 He the source, the end - ing He, Of the things that are, that  
 Bore the Sav - ior of our race, And the babe, the world's Re -  
 Prom - ised in their faith - ful word. Now He shines, the long - ex -  
 And ex - tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be  
 And un - end - ing prais - es be, Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -  
 have been, And that fu - ture years shall see  
 deem - er, First re - vealed His sa - cred face  
 pect - ed; Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord  
 si - lent, Ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring  
 min - ion, And e - ter - nal vic - to - ry  
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

A - men.  
 Text and tune: Public Domain

## SERMON

Rev. Griebenaw

*After the Sermon the pastor may say:*

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

*Philippians 4:7*

*Stand*

## OFFERTORY

*Psalms 51:10-12*

**C** Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

*Kneel (or remain standing)*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*(1 Timothy 2:1-4)*

- P** In peace let us pray to the Lord:  
**C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For grace to rejoice in Christ's blessed incarnation; in thankfulness that, in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us and give us the adoption as Your sons and heirs; and to grant us a glad new year, let us pray to the Lord:  
**C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For Matthew and Michael, for all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, that they be upheld and strengthened in service to God and to His kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord:  
**C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For the families of all Christians, that the heavenly Father from whom all fatherhood on earth is named would bless them with His promises; for parents, that they would be diligent and take delight in their work; for children, that by God's favor they would grow in strength and wisdom; and for all widows, orphans, and broken families, that God would comfort them with His mercy and give them joy in the redemption won for them in Christ, let us pray to the Lord:  
**C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For Donald, Gavin, and all who make, administer and judge our laws, that they may serve faithfully in their tasks, according to Your good pleasure, for the benefit of our people, let us pray to the Lord:  
**C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For the lonely, that they be comforted with the sure and certain knowledge that God will never forsake them, and that within the household of faith they may enjoy family, friends and loving companionship, let us pray to the Lord:  
**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the sick and suffering, that according to God’s gracious will, they be healed; and for all who mourn, that God comfort them with the certain hope of the resurrection of all flesh, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For those who receive the Lord’s Supper this day, that they behold their salvation in the true body and most precious blood of Christ, given and shed for them and that, like Saint Simeon, be well-prepared to depart in peace according to God’s Word, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For . . . [*additional bids for prayer may be inserted here*] . . . let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

*The prayers then continue:*

**P** For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:

**C** **Alleluia.**

**P** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

*Silence for individual prayer may follow.*

**P** Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord:

**C** **To You, O Lord.**

*The live-stream service concludes with the following:*

## LORD’S PRAYER

*Matthew 6:9–13*

**P** Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

**C** **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.**

## CONCLUDING COLLECT

**P** Let us pray.

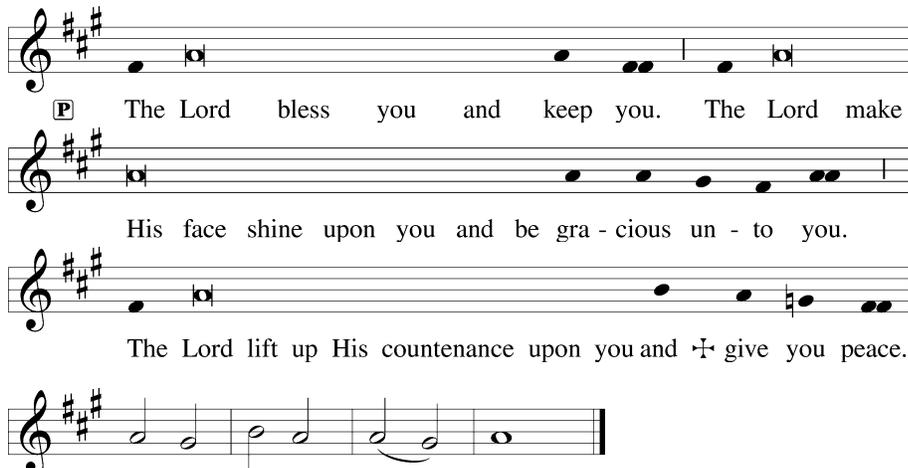
Blessèd Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

*Stand*

## BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26



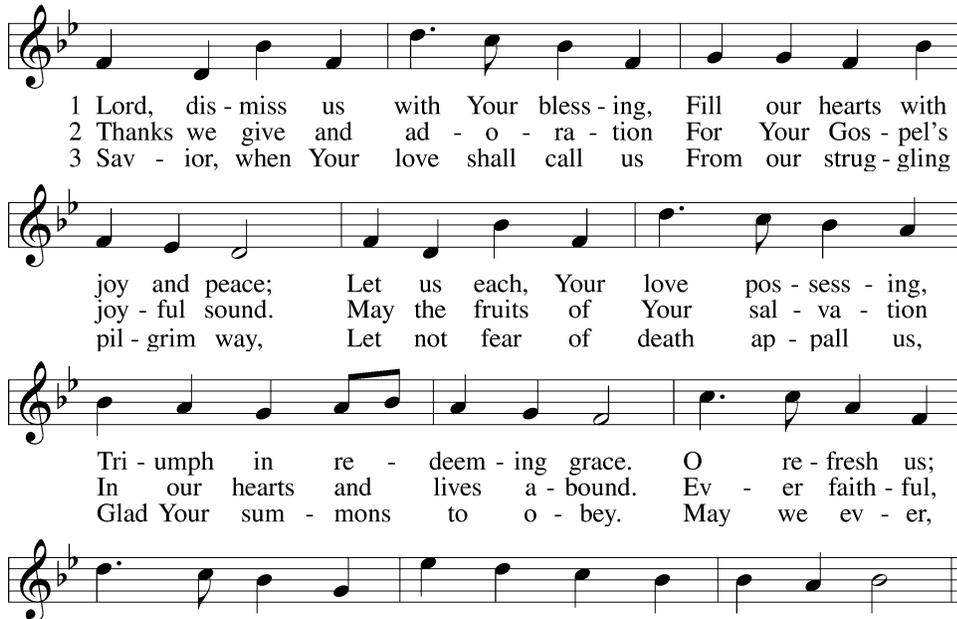
**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make  
His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

**C** A-men, a-men, a - men.

*The Divine Service will continue with the Lord's Supper for those present at the church. Please sing and/or read aloud the closing hymn in your home and come by the church for Holy Communion between 10:30am and 11:30am, parking by the concrete ramp along Holt Avenue.*

## CLOSING HYMN: Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

LSB 924



1 Lord, dis - miss us with Your bless - ing, Fill our hearts with  
2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion For Your Gos - pel's  
3 Sav - ior, when Your love shall call us From our strug - gling  
joy and peace; Let us each, Your love pos - sess - ing,  
joy - ful sound. May the fruits of Your sal - va - tion  
pil - grim way, Let not fear of death ap - pall us,  
Tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. O re - fresh us;  
In our hearts and lives a - bound. Ev - er faith - ful,  
Glad Your sum - mons to o - bey. May we ev - er,  
O re - fresh us, Trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.  
ev - er faith - ful To Your truth may we be found.  
may we ev - er Reign with You in end - less day.

*Text and tune: Public Domain*

**✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠**  
(TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY)

## SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR

Brothers and Sisters,

Merry Christmas everyone! We missed seeing all of you for the Christmas Day Divine Service (I hope that you still saw us—well, me—as you watched from home).

You can see Leo's excitement to get home and attack those presents! You can also see the "excitement" on Sam's face (poor baby was sooooo ready for a nap).

Even though it was a strange Christmas (what hasn't been strange this year, right?), we have something that nothing can take from us (not the pandemic nor violence nor threats nor any thing in this world)—Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God with us, "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14).

So keep the Christmas joy, brothers and sisters! It is yours! And I don't just mean for the next 10 or so days (you know, the 12 days of Christmas and all) . . . Yes, 2020 has been a strange and challenging and, at times, downright depressing year! And we're going into 2021 with a lot of the same challenges. But let's enjoy CHRISTmas because it is wonderful—or, rather, He is wonderful!

Now, I also want to share with you a couple of great photos from this last week. You know, no matter the circumstances, there are wonderful things to enjoy each day—blessings from our Heavenly Father for which we rightly give thanks. And for Holly and me, a lot of those daily blessings come in the smiles and laughter of our two little boys!

So here are a two more photos of the boys. The first is a picture of little Sam having a BLAST with Mom on the church swings! It was his first time swinging and he loved it! The next is from Christmas with Leo being adorable as a Christmas elf with a Christmas bear! I know the boys miss all of you and I hope that these pictures brings a smile to your faces.

On a more "business" note: there will NOT be a Tuesday "Zoom" Bible Study NOR will there be a Wednesday Night Prayer Service this week. I'm taking a little time off after Christmas to spend with Holly and the boys (and maybe even a little time with my Playstation4). We will resume the Bible Study and Midweek Prayer Services next year (which is less than a week away).

Lastly, I thank God for all of your steadfast prayers and financial support this past year and kindly ask that you consider supporting our little church with an extra gift before the year's end by mailing it to the church's post office box:

Grace Evangelical-Lutheran Church  
PO Box 1530  
El Centro, CA 92244-1530.

Yours in Christ Jesus,  
+Pastor Griebenaw

