

**Worship and Announcements:** December 27, 2020

**Prelude:** \**What Child is This* – Austin C. Lovelace

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### **GATHERING AROUND GOD’S WORD**

**Scripture Reading:** Genesis 1:25-31, The Message

God spoke: “Earth, generate life! Every sort and kind: cattle and reptiles and wild animals—all kinds.” And there it was: wild animals of every kind, Cattle of all kinds, every sort of reptile and bug. God saw that it was good.

God spoke: “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature  
So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle,  
And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.”

God created human beings; created them godlike,  
Reflecting God’s nature – God created them male and female.

God blessed them: “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!  
Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth.”

Then God said, “I’ve given you every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth and every kind of fruit-bearing tree, given them to you for food. To all animals and all birds, everything that moves and breathes, I give whatever grows out of the ground for food.” And there it was.

God looked over everything God had made; it was so good, so very good!  
It was evening, it was morning— Day Six.

### **Confession:**

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past we cannot change; open us to a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

## **Opening Hymn: *Joy to the World***

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
Let earth receive her king;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heaven and nature sing (3x)
  
2. No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found (3x)
  
3. He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love (3x)

*Joy to the World*, as in The Presbyterian Hymnal, © 1990 Westminster John Knox Press. Words: Isaac Watts, 1719. Music: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742, arr. Lowell Mason, 1836. Used by permission. CCLI #[20516410](#) Size A, Streaming #[20516427](#) Size A.

## **GOD'S WORD**

### **Prayer of Illumination**

Almighty God, you wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of Jesus Christ who came to share our humanity, and who now lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen.

**Scripture:** Psalm 8; Luke 2: 27-35

*Psalm 8*

- <sup>1</sup> O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory above the heavens.
- <sup>2</sup> Out of the mouths of babes and infants  
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,  
to silence the enemy and the avenger.
- <sup>3</sup> When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars that you have established;
- <sup>4</sup> what are human beings that you are mindful of them,  
mortals that you care for them?
- <sup>5</sup> Yet you have made them a little lower than God,  
and crowned them with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup> You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under their feet,  
<sup>7</sup> all sheep and oxen,  
and also the beasts of the field,  
<sup>8</sup> the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.  
<sup>9</sup> O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

*Luke 2:27-35*

<sup>27</sup> 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, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
<sup>31</sup> which 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 the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup> 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 <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

**Sermon:** Pastor Kerra’s Greatest Hits, A Half Century’s Worth of Wisdom

## **RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD**

### **Prayers of the People and the 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

### **Offering**

**Response:** *Verse 4 - Angels From the Realms of Glory*

*All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,*

*Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:*

*Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ the newborn King!*

*Angels From the Realms of Glory.* As in The Presbyterian Hymnal, © 1990 Westminster John Knox Press. Words: *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857. Tune: Henry Thomas Smart, 1867. Used by permission. CCLI #[20516410](#) Size A, Streaming #[20516427](#) Size A.

## **SENDING US OUT TO BE GOD’S WORD IN THE WORLD**

**Closing Hymn:** *All My Heart Today Rejoices*

1. All my heart today rejoices,  
As I hear, far and near, sweetest angel voices:  
“Christ is born,” their choirs are singing,  
Till the air, everywhere, now with joy is ringing.

2. Come, then, let us hasten yonder;  
Here let all, great and small, kneel in awe and wonder;  
Love Him who with love is yearning;  
Hail the star that from far bright with hope is burning.

*All My Heart Today Rejoices*, as in The Presbyterian Hymnal, © 1990 Westminster John Knox Press. Words: Paul Gerhardt, 1653. Music: Johann Georg Ebeling. Used by permission. CCLI #[20516410](#) Size A, Streaming #[20516427](#) Size A.

### **Charge and Benediction:**

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that you will live deeply and from the heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and the exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with just enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this old world, so that you will do those things others say cannot be done. Amen.

**Postlude:** *\*Angels from the Realms of Glory – Anne A. Davis*

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