****

**Reflection for December 27/20**

Phew! Christmas is over!

No, wait – it isn’t. Not by a long shot, in fact.

Christmas *begins*on December 24 (Christmas Eve) and if we are doing things correctly, continues with us for a long, long time.

The scripture reading we get for the first Sunday after Christmas this year is a brilliant reminder of this. Mary and Joseph, being faithful Jews, take Jesus to the Temple for a blessing. Two elderly people there, Simeon and Anna, notice his arrival, and begin to tell everyone they can find that this is the Messiah, that this baby fulfills God’s promises to the people, and that it is a time for change and joy.

The same is true for us: we encounter the newborn Christ at Christmas, and this changes us forever and ever. And it happens again every year.

The truths Jesus brings to us are the things we need to learn and live in order to come closer to God, to avoid the evils and curses of this world, and to bring about God’s realm of peace, justice, and understanding.

Merry Christmas!

**Our Christmas Service Invitation is Shown below our Sunday Service,**

**Please join us tonight at 7:00**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**December 27, 2020**

**A Sunday Service for Summerland and Westbank United Churches**

**Rev. Donald Schmidt - Presiding**

**Power Point:  Judi Ritcey, LLWL – Summerland United**

 **GATHERING TIME**9:45 AM

**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**Donald

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**Donald

**BELL RINGIN:**10 AM

**WORDS OF WELCOME                        Rick Gasior**– Summerland United

*A warm welcome to our friends from Summerland and Westbank United Churches who are with us today and to all those joining us from other locations. If there are any visitors today from other congregations or other places, we welcome you and thank you for joining us this morning. If you are comfortable, please unmute yourself and tell us where or what congregation you are from.  Please remember to re-mute yourself.*

**MOMENT OF SILENCE TO VIEW THE CONGREGATION –**Donald

**LIGHTING OUR WORSHIP CANDLE**

**WE SING TOGETHER**                           Angels from the Realms of Glory (VU 36)

**CALL TO WORSHIP***(from* The Whole People of God)

Come and celebrate the good news: our hope has been fulfilled!

**Christ the Saviour is born!** **Thanks be to God!**

God’s promise has come true. Our salvation is here!

**Christ the Saviour is born! Thanks be to God!**

Let us rejoice and sing praises to God!

**Christ the Saviour is born! Thanks be to God!**

**OPENING PRAYER***(from* Seasons of the Spirit)

We have come to praise you, O God.

Your presence among us

is a long-awaited gift –

for us and all creation.

May the reality of this gift

be greater than our human expectations

as we receive this gift anew today. Amen.

**WE SING TOGETHER**                  Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (VU 35)

**SCRIPTURE READING**                 Isaiah 62:1–3 & Luke 2:22–40 – **Helen Reid, Westbank United**

**WE SING TOGETHER** Angels We Have Heard on High (VU 38)

**REFLECTION** Donald

**WE SING TOGETHER:** In the Bleak Midwinter (VU 55)

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:** Donald

**THE LORD’S PRAYER:** Donald - Jim Cotter

**OFFERING:** Donald
**PRAYER OF DEDICATION:** Donald

**WE SING TOGETHER:** Go, Tell it on the Mountain (VU 43)

**BLESSING**Donald

**BREAK INTO CHAT ROOMS**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Worship with Summerland and Westbank United Churches

December 27, 2020 09:45 AM Vancouver

\_\_**Join Zoom Meeting**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83971543383>

**Meeting ID: 839 7154 3383
Passcode: 487991**

Dial by your location
+1 778 907 2071 Canada
Meeting ID: 839 7154 3383

**Passcode: 487991**

**Summerland United Church website also provides access to our weekly Zoom church service.**

**Scripture Reading:**

**Isaiah 62:1-3 (Common English Bible)**

**Jerusalem redeemed**

**62**For Zion’s sake I won’t keep silent,
    and for Jerusalem’s sake I won’t sit still
    until her righteousness shines out like a light,
    and her salvation blazes like a torch.
**2**Nations will see your righteousness,
    all kings your glory.
You will be called by a new name,
    which the Lord’s own mouth will determine.
**3**You will be a splendid garland in the Lord’s hand,
    a royal turban in the palm of God’s hand.

Luke 2:22-40

**22**When the time came for their ritual cleansing, in accordance with the Law from Moses, they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (**23**It’s written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord.”) **24**They offered a sacrifice in keeping with what’s stated in the Law of the Lord, *A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons*.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A+22-40&version=CEB#fen-CEB-24989a)]

**Simeon’s response to Jesus**

25 A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He was righteous and devout. He eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. 26 The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he wouldn’t die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.27Led by the Spirit, he went into the temple area. Meanwhile, Jesus’ parents brought the child to the temple so that they could do what was customary under the Law. 28 Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. He said,

29 “Now, master, let your servant go in peace according to your word,

30   because my eyes have seen your salvation.

31You prepared this salvation in the presence of all peoples.

32 It’s a light for revelation to the Gentiles

    and a glory for your people Israel.”

33 His father and mother were amazed by what was said about him. 34Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “This boy is assigned to be the cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that generates opposition 35 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your innermost being too.”

Anna’s response to Jesus

36 There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who belonged to the tribe of Asher. She was very old. After she married, she lived with her husband for seven years. 37 She was now an 84-year-old widow. She never left the temple area but worshipped God with fasting and prayer night and day.38 She approached at that very moment and began to praise God and to speak about Jesus to everyone who was looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Jesus as a child in Nazareth

39 When Mary and Joseph had completed everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown, Nazareth in Galilee. 40 The child grew up and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God’s favor was on him.