

There's a Psalm for This

When I think about the miracle of Christmas, I think of subverted expectations. The people of God expected a mighty king who would come and free Israel and rule forever, acclaimed by all and welcomed in glory. Instead, they got a child born to a poor family, acclaimed by some shepherds and welcomed with a manger. We see people's expectation in Psalm 147, as they declare what the Lord will do.

Psalm 147 (CEB)

Praise the Lord!

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing God's praise in the assembly of the faithful!
Let Israel celebrate its maker;
let Zion's children rejoice in their king!
Let them praise God's name with dance;
let them sing God's praise with the drum and lyre!
Because the Lord is pleased with his people,
God will beautify the poor with saving help.

Let the faithful celebrate with glory;
let them shout for joy on their beds.
Let the high praises of God be in their mouths
and a double-edged sword in their hands,
to get revenge against the nations and punishment on the peoples,
binding their rulers in chains and their officials in iron shackles,
achieving the justice written against them.
That will be an honor for all God's faithful people.

Praise the Lord!

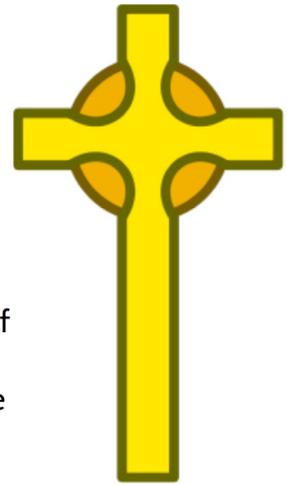
It's natural to want all of these glorious things from God – God is the King of Glory, after all – and yet what we “get” is so incredibly humble. But when we actually look at what is promised in this psalm and others, we also see that Jesus does bring exactly what he was supposed to; it's the same message he preaches for most of his ministry: justice for the oppressed and oppressor alike. The poor are “[beautified] with saving help” while the powerful are bound in chains.

While there is a literal aspect to this, the liberation of oppressed peoples is absolutely a theme for God, there's also a metaphorical aspect, in that we are freed from the spiritual poverty of our sin and the ruler of this world, the ancient serpent, is bound and judged. That's what Jesus came here to do, to bring freedom. Freedom from earthly chains and from the chains of sin.

Pastor Mike Galica

Holy Cross Announcements

We are entering the **Season of Christmas**, a whirlwind time of feasts as we quickly follow the growth of Jesus from an infant on Christmas, through getting lost in the Temple at 12, to the adult who teaches and heals and dies and rises again. Our paraments are white in celebration of our Lord and Savior.



Even as we continue to worship together apart, we're still celebrating the birth of Jesus. Our **Christmas Eve Worship** will be live-streamed December 24 at 7 PM to YouTube and on the church website. Please join us as we rejoice at the incarnation of the Savior of the world.

Katie Kihlstadius has started a **"Marco Polo" Prayer Group**. If you'd like to join an online group devoted to praying for our churches, communities, and world, reach out to her at 801-675-6279 for more info!

In lieu of collecting coats, **Box Elder Interfaith Council** is collecting money to purchase new coats during spring sales to donate to schools in the fall. If you'd like to donate to the coat drive, send it to the church marked "Interfaith Council Coat Drive".

Because of our county's "High" Transmission Level, **we will be meeting online-only until that Transmission Level changes**. We feel this is our best path forward to show love to all our neighbors, especially as our hospitals and medical works are overwhelmed.

Our state and local health departments' COVID-19 Transmission Level for our county is "High". This means social gatherings are limited and mask-wearing is required in public spaces. This is in addition to all the regular recommendations of practicing physical distancing, good hygiene practices, and staying home when sick. For more information visit coronavirus.utah.gov.

If you're a Thrivent member, you may have **Thrivent Choice Dollars** to distribute! Visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-847-4836 to find out if you are eligible.

If, while we can't meet together, you want to still give an offering to the church, you can mail it to PO Box 732, Brigham City UT, 84302. The post office box gets checked regularly and your giving will be secure.

Sunday School for children is recessed. Adult Sunday is posted to YouTube on Sunday mornings.

Holy Cross Quilters will continue refraining from meeting.

This Week's Readings:

Christmas Eve – *Birth of Jesus* – Psalm 96; Luke 2:1-20
1st Sunday of Christmas – *A Service of Lessons and Carols*

Next Week's Readings:

Baptism of our Lord – *Simeon and Anna* – Psalm 131; Luke 2:21-38

Prayer List

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." — Phil 4:6

Keep the following in your prayers

Bryce and Emily Herman and newborn daughter, nephew & family of the Kosbabs, who all have COVID-19.

Robert Quick, for healing from ulcers.

Jared, Robert Quick's son, for healing from COVID-19.

Family and friends of Sheryl, Walter Quick's sister-in-law, who passed away last week.

Family and friends of Hayden Eccles, a friend of Andrea's, who passed away.

Ryan, Kendra, and family, friends of Lexa. Prayers for comfort and peace after **Brooks** passed away.

Bobby Morstadt, for healing from severe acid reflux.

Jeff & Darlene Hoedt, for safe travels and for staying healthy over the holiday.

Elias, Pastor Mike's friend's son, is in the hospital. Prayers for wisdom for doctors and healing for him.

Mary, daughter-in-law of Pastor Mike's friends, prayers for healing.

Lisa Weaver, friend of Kosbabs, is home but still has a long recovery ahead.

Sherri Rackham recovering after a dog bite.

Chris, Ashley, and family, Jeff Hoedt's son and daughter-in-law, for health and safety during pregnancy.

Our vulnerable populations, especially those with underlying health conditions, the homeless, and those lacking access to proper medical care in this time.

Nora Greer, for healing.

Trudee Klein, friend of Deborah Kay, for healing from cancer.

Tom & Jeanette Croft, friend of Kosbabs, for healing.

Abby Rasmussen and family, friends of Kosbabs, as she struggles with cystic fibrosis.

John Buist, our custodian, for continued health problems.

Lynne, Robert Quick's wife, with health issues.

Aleasa, Robert Quick's daughter, with health issues.

Mark Sparkman, Quick's son-in-law, recurring health problems.

Gloria Perry, for healing from health problems.

Box Elder County Jail Ministry, that the inmates may respond to the Gospel.

Deborah Kay Hansen, prayers for healing from recurring health problems.

Give thanks to God

Pastor Neil Arnold & Noah, are recovering well but still have some lingering effects.

Bob Morstadt, is doing well after his surgery but still would like prayers as he continues to recover.

Claudia Long, Andrea's mom, is doing much better but still needs prayer for strength and health.

Tripp, newborn son of Lexa and Kyler, is off oxygen and doing much better.

Keep those in prayer who are in harm's way

Medical professionals and all who are continuing to work during this pandemic.

Braxton Jeppsen, serving in the US Navy.

Let Pastor Mike know if there are any petitions you wish to add to our Prayer List. If you added someone to the prayer list, please update us on how they are doing! We love to celebrate praises as well as petitions. Out of concern for people's privacy, we haven't been adding specific prayers to our church live-stream, but we continue to pray for all those needs and concerns.