

# Praise Today

Contemporary Worship Forms in the Context of the Historical Service

Volume 5, Number 1

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## Church Anniversary

*The 50th Anniversary Service of Redeemer Lutheran Church*

*In a previous issue, several years ago, I made mention that Ascension might be an ideal time to celebrate an anniversary, whether it is a congregational anniversary or a synod anniversary, or even a school anniversary. Don Butler (WELS) graciously shared his congregation's 50th. anniversary service to share with you, the readers of Praise Today.*

*October 11, 1998*

### The Opening Hymn:

255: "Open Now the Gates of Beauty"  
(used as the opening hymn at the Building Dedication  
Service: July 27, 1952)

**PASTOR**—In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**CONG**—Amen.

### Prayer

O Lord, our Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter, we come together to worship You. Draw near to us through Your Word, and assure us of Your loving kindness. Curb our wandering thoughts, that with undivided attention we may hear Your Voice and sing Your praise. Open our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit to the proclaiming of Your Word so that we repent of our sins, trust in Jesus as our Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

### The Confession of Sins

Almighty God, we freely admit that we have disappointed You in many ways. We recognize that our sinful thoughts, words and actions are offensive to You. We make no excuses for our sins. Nor do we minimize their seriousness. We rely only on Your grace and mercy. Declare us innocent on the basis of Christ's innocent suffering and death. Declare us perfect in every way because of Christ's perfect life.

### Hymn

152: "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" v.1,8

### The Absolution

God, our heavenly Father has been merciful to us and has given His only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### The Responsory

#### PSALM 100

Shout for joy to the LORD all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; We are His people, the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; Give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.

**THE CHOIR**—"Praise The Lord"

## Lessons

### THE FIRST LESSON—Isaiah 55:6-11

Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy; and our God, for He will freely pardon. “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is My word that goes out from My mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

### HYMN 260—“Let All Things Now Living”

(Used as the Opening Hymn for the 40th Anniversary Service, July 24, 1988)

### THE SECOND LESSON—Selected verses of Ephesians 2:

As for you, you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.... Remember that at one time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.... Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.

### HYMN 621—“For Years On Years Of Matchless Grace”

(Sung to Melody for Hymn 203: Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Your Word)

### THE THIRD LESSON—Matthew 28: 18-20:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

## The Confession of Faith

### • The Apostle’s Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### HYMN 622—“For Many Years, O God Of Grace”

## The Sermon

### THE SERMON TEXT—Ephesians 2:1-9

### THE SERMON THEME—Redeemer’s 50th Anniversary: A Celebration of God’s Grace to Sinners

*Praise Today* is an independent publication serving pastors and worship leaders of confessional Lutheranism. It is published quarterly and relies heavily on the submissions of subscribers to share their ideas of worship framed in the historical orders of service with application to the needs of Christians today.

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Back issues are available by writing to the editor at the address above.

## *Praise Today*

Volume 5, Number 1, January/February 1999

## The Offering

## The Anniversary Prayer

### • 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 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.

### THE CHOIR—"Go Into All The World"

## Prayer For Peace

Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from You. Give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to

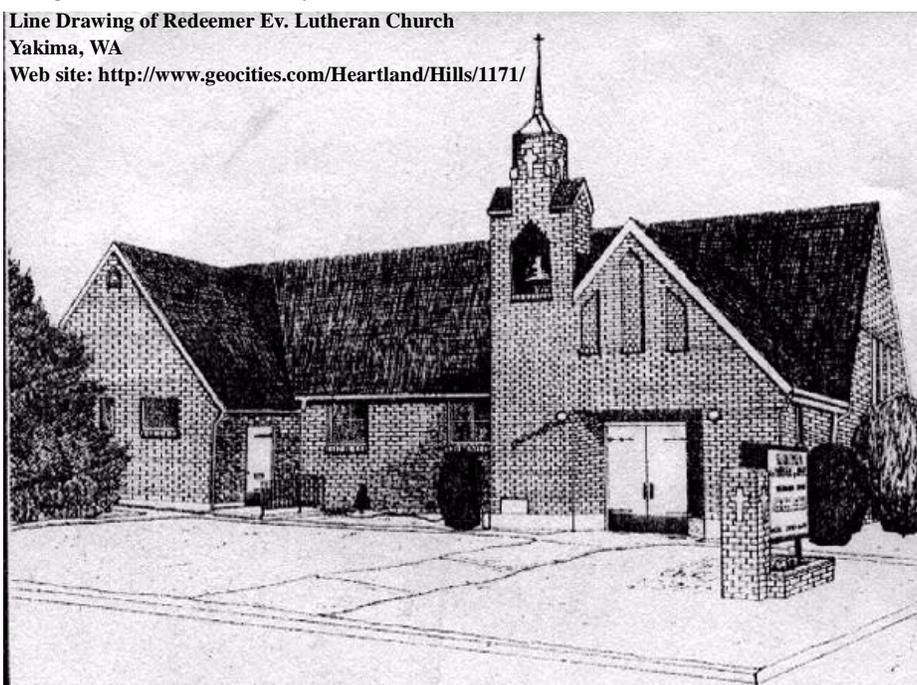
obey Your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## The Benediction:

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face shine upon you  
and be gracious unto you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you  
and give you peace.  
Amen.

### HYMN 592—"All Praise To Thee, My God, This Night"

(Used as the closing Hymn at the 30th Anniversary of the Cornerstone Laying and Mortgage Burning Service, September 30, 1981)



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## Beautiful Savior—A Christmas Eve Service

by Rev. Eugene Andrus

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*For the children of St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church; 1998. Developed by Rev. Eugene Andrus (WELS, Ann Arbor, MI). This service includes original hymns written by Rev. Andrus.*

### Opening Hymn—On Christmas Day

Written by Rev. Eugene R. Andrus

1. On Christmas day, our hearts will sing,  
For Jesus is the King of kings,  
But He came down to earth to be,  
The giver of eternity.
2. This day brings peace and joy and mirth,  
To all who live upon the earth.  
For though we all were born in sin,  
Christ Jesus came our souls to win
3. So bring your gifts, and show your love,  
Our Savior came from heav'n above.  
The little baby in the stall  
Is God's own Son the Lord of all.

## Responsive Reading

**P**—O Lord, open my lips

**C**—And my mouth shall declare your praise.

**P**—Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

**C**—Make haste to help me, O Lord

**P**—How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news,

**C**—who proclaim peace,

**P**—who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation,

**C**—who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

**P**—Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy.

**C**—When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.

**P**—Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem,

**C**—for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

**P**—The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations,

**C**—and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

## Hymn 94—Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim. “Christ is born in  
Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored. Christ, the everlasting  
Lord,  
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin’s  
womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell; Jesus, our Immanuel!  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”

3. Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of  
Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Risen with healing in His  
wings.  
Mild He leaves His throne on high, Born that man no more  
may die;  
Born to raise the sons of earth; Born to give them second  
birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”
4. Come, Desire of nations, come, Fix in us Thy humble home;  
Oh, to all Thyself impart, Formed in each believing heart!  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners  
reconciled!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”

## Part I Jesus Is Our King Of Creation

**JOHN 1:1-3**—*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

**GEN 2:7**—*The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

**GEN 5:1-2**—*When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them “man.”*

**JOHN 1:4**—*In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

**NARRATION**—Some things our Lord did not create was sin and the results of sin like pain and death. Man brought that upon himself when he disobeyed God in the garden of Eden.

**GEN 3:6**—*When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

**ROM 5:12**—*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned*



## Hymn 369—All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall

1. All mankind fell in Adam's fall, One common sin infects them all; From sire to son the bane descends, And over all the curse impends.
2. Through all man's powers corruption creeps And him in dreadful bondage keeps; In guilt he draws his infant breath And reaps its fruits of woe and death.
3. From hearts depraved, to evil prone, Flow thoughts and deeds of sin alone; God's image lost, the darkened soul Nor seeks nor finds its heavenly goal.
4. But Christ, the second Adam, came To bear our sin and woe and shame, To be our Life, our Light, our Way, Our only Hope, our only Stay.
5. As by one man all mankind fell And, born in sin, was doomed to hell, So by one Man, who took our place, We all received the gift of grace.
6. We thank Thee, Christ; new life is ours, New light, new hope, new strength, new powers: May grace our every way attend Until we reach our journey's end!

## Part II Jesus Is the Son of God and Son of Man

**JOHN 1:14**—*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

**MAT 1:23**—*"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him "Immanuel" --which means, "God with us."*

**GAL 4:4-5**—*But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.*

**2 COR 5:21**—*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*



## Hymn—When Time Had Fully Come

By Rev. Eugene R. Andrus

Tune: Hymn 58

1. When time had fully come, God sent His Son to die To change what we'd become And let us live on high. He sent his Son to save us, By living in our place. Our Savior's name is Jesus, He saved our fallen race.
2. The world became so evil That death reigned over all. When tempted by the devil Mankind had chose to fall. But we were not left lying In helplessness of sin. God promised that by dying His Son, our lives would win.
3. He is our God and Father, His promises are sure. The Christ became our brother, Our own flesh to endure. Jesus was born of Mary In little Bethlehem. He came our sins to carry And give life to all men.

## Part III Truly I'd Love Thee, Truly I'd Serve Thee

**PSALM 116:1-5**—*I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live.*

The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, save me!" The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

**MAT 22:37**—*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."*

**2 JOHN 1:6**—*And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.*



## Hymn 657—*Beautiful Savior*

1. Beautiful Savior, King of Creation, Son of God and Son of Man! Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee, Light of my soul, my Joy, my Crown.
2. Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands, Robed in flowers of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer; He makes our sorrowing spirit sing.
3. Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight, Bright the sparkling stars on high; Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer, Than all the angels in the sky.
4. Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man! Glory and honor, Praise, adoration, Now and forevermore be Thine!

## Part IV The Gift

**NARRATOR**—This is how the birth of our beautiful Savior came about.

**LUKE 2:1-7**—*“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.*

*“So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”*

## Hymn 647—*O Little Town Of Bethlehem*

1. O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by; Yet in thy darkness shineth The everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, And fathered all above, While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wondering love. O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth And praises sing to God, the King, And peace to men on earth.
3. How silently, how silently, The wondrous Gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven. No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell: Oh, come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

**LUKE 2:8-14**—*“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.’*

*“Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.’”*

## Hymn—*Angels We Have Heard On High*

1. Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains.

**REFRAIN**—Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis Deo  
Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis Deo

2. Shepherds why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

**REFRAIN**—

3. Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the new-born King.

**REFRAIN**—



**LUKE 2:15-20**—When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

*So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.”*

### **Children Sing: Away in the Manger**

1. Away in a manger, No crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus Laid down His sweet head,  
The stars in the sky, Looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus Asleep on the hay.
2. The cattle are lowing, the poor Baby wakes,  
But little Lord Jesus No crying He makes.  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, Look down from the sky,  
And stay by my cradle Till morning is nigh.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, And love me, I pray,  
Bless all the dear children In Thy tender care,  
And take us to heaven, To live with Thee there.

**MATTHEW 2:1-12**—“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

*When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.’”*

*Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”*

*After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go*

*back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.*

### **Hymn 128—Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning**

1. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning, Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid; Star of the East, the horizon adorning, Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
2. Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining; Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall. Angels adore Him in slumber reclining, Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.
3. Shall we not yield Him, In costly devotion Odors of Edom and offerings divine, Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean, Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
4. Vainly we offer each ample oblation, Vainly with gifts would His favor secure. Richer by far is the heart’s adoration; Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
5. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning, Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid; Star of the East, the horizon adorning, Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

**NARRATION**—We have a beautiful Savior, who loved us so much, he willingly died in our place. Let us return his love by living lives worthy of him.

### **Hymn—Silent Night, Holy Night**

Children Sing verses 1 & 2 of English

Congregation sings verse 3

1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child,  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,  
Christ the Savior, is born, Christ the Savior is born.
3. Silent night, holy night! Son of God, loves pure light  
Radiant streams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

### **Offertory**

### **Prayer Lord’s Prayer**

### **Benediction**

Congregation Sings: Amen, Amen, Amen.

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# Praise Today

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## Hymn 92—Now Sing We Now Rejoice

1. Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heaven our voice;  
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies; Not so  
brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies. Thou my Savior  
art! Thou my Savior art!
2. Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee Cheer my  
wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child; Through Thy grace  
and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild, Draw me unto Thee!  
Draw me unto Thee!
3. Now through His Son doth shine The Father's grace divine.  
Death o'er us had reigned Through sin and vanity; He for us  
obtained Eternal joy on high. May we praise Him there! May

we praise Him there!

4. Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heavenly  
ground? Where the angels singing With all His saints unite,  
Sweetest praises bringing In heavenly joy and light. Oh, that  
we were there! Oh, that we were there!

**Note:** The Sunday School and Staff would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas. May the love of God be the focus of your joy this holiday season. We worked hard to bring you this service of worship, and we pray that the Lord would use it to bless you all year round. May the message of our beautiful Savior give you peace in knowing that your sins are forgiven.

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## Editor's Notes

John L. Hoh, Jr.

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When I first began *Praise Today*, it was my hope that the newsletter would grow. Along the way, there were ups and downs, erratic distribution at times, and at first the dream of a quarterly could not be fulfilled because of a lack of submissions.

This issue reflects the grace of God in the growth of *Praise Today*. Beginning with this issue, *Praise Today* is a bi-monthly publication. This is the January/February issue rather than the Winter or Spring issue.

One media that has helped is the use of e-mail and *Praise Today's* own web site (<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Agora/5814>). These tools have helped reach a broader audience at a far smaller cost.

I wish to thank all of you readers and contributors alike. Without you, this success would not be possible.

Also, watch for the inaugural issue of *Peer Teacher*, a newsletter devoted to those lay members who assist in teaching Bible class in their congregations. This would include BIC and Sunday school as well as Adult classes.

**PEER TEACHER**  
A Newsletter for lay Bible teachers in the Lutheran Church