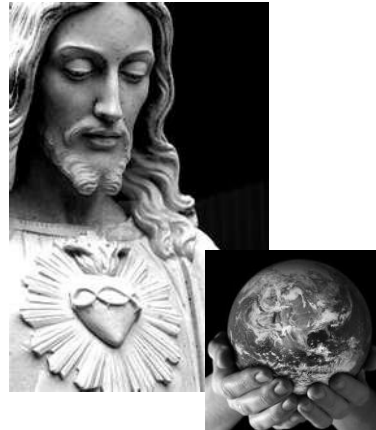


  
THIS SUNDAY @ OPCC  
FEBRUARY 5, 2012

If all the tenderness in this world could reflect from my eyes, would you accept that love? If all the forgiveness the heavens have known could be offered from one face, would you accept that divine pardon? In His sublime reason – every moment God offers that to us: anything that might comfort.

- St. Francis of Assisi



### GREETING

I will never sing *In the Garden* without seeing my daddy's face smiling at me in my mind's eye. He loved that hymn and never could seem to sing it enough. I hope there are hymns that effect you like this; hymns that stir your heart and bring to mind loved ones who have had an impact on your life. If so, you are in luck. On Sunday – and again on Feb 19 – we will have a hymn sing at 9:15 AM, and I encourage you to request your favorite. We will all sing along with you with verve and enthusiasm!

And while I'm reminding; Feb 19 is also *Back in the Day Sunday*. You are invited to wear a costume from the era you consider the *Good ol' Days*, or from an era you've always wanted to be a part of (your parents' era, your childhood, Ancient Rome, etc.). In this way we will remind ourselves that our tradition is the foundation that strengthens us for the journey into God's future. We always proceed along the way of faith in gratitude. Lots of great times coming up, but in the interim, Sunday will be a wonderful day of worship and fellowship.

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### SUNDAY, BEGINNING AT 9:00 AM:

9:00 - Coffee Fellowship in the Fireside Room

9:15 - Hymn Sing (Sanctuary)

9:30 - Worship Gathering

- Music by the Chancel Choir
- Sermon by Bo: *The Presentation*

- Youth Christian Education

10:30 - Worship at Garden Terrace led by OPCC volunteers

10:45 - Coffee Fellowship in the Fireside Room

- Christian Education for Kids & Adults

- RELĀT

- Individual worship stations (10:50 – 11:10)
- Praise, Prayer, and Reflection on the healing power of joy and mirth (11:10 – Noon)

## PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP:

READING: Luke 2.22-35, 39-40 (The Message)

Then when the days stipulated by Moses for purification were complete, they took him up to Jerusalem to offer him to God as commanded in God's Law: "Every male who opens the womb shall be a holy offering to God," and also to sacrifice the "pair of doves or two young pigeons" prescribed in God's Law. In Jerusalem at the time, there was a man, Simeon by name, a good man, a man who lived in the prayerful expectancy of help for Israel. And the Holy Spirit was on him. The Holy Spirit had shown him that he would see the Messiah of God before he died. Led by the Spirit, he entered the Temple. As the parents of the child Jesus brought him in to carry out the rituals of the Law, Simeon took him into his arms and blessed God:

God, you can now release your servant;  
release me in peace as you promised.  
With my own eyes I've seen your salvation;  
it's now out in the open for everyone to see:  
A God-revealing light to the non-Jewish nations,  
and of glory for your people Israel.

Jesus' father and mother were speechless with surprise at these words. Simeon went on to bless them, and said to Mary his mother,

This child marks both the failure and  
the recovery of many in Israel,  
A figure misunderstood and contradicted—  
the pain of a sword-thrust through you—  
But the rejection will force honesty,  
as God reveals who they really are.

When they finished everything required by God in the Law, they returned to Galilee and their own town, Nazareth. There the child grew strong in body and wise in spirit. And the grace of God was on him.

## REFLECTION:

In the gospel reading for Sunday, Luke describes the Presentation of the infant Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem. This presentation was obligatory for all faithful Jews in Jesus' day. The redemption act signified that the child was "on loan" from God, we would say "a gift from God." As you know, Luke is the only gospel writer to include stories of the child Jesus between his birth and his public ministry. I'm glad he did, because this story is important. It makes clear that "presentation is everything." That is to say, before the path of faith can be followed, one has to be offered to God, consecrated, set apart. Jesus was offered to God, and in return, Luke says, he grew strong in body, wise in spirit, and felt the grace of God upon him.

Luke could have concluded this episode with one of Jesus' favorite conclusions, "Go and do likewise," because our life of faith also begins with the presentation; our life of faith begins with being set apart, consecrated, committed in faith to God. The blessings of faith mentioned by St. Francis in our worship heading (cited above) can be ours day by day by day as we, too, feel the grace of God upon us. In preparation for Sunday, pray for the courage to present yourself to God in faith and feel that grace again and again.

UPCOMING SPECIAL WORSHIP EVENTS:

Sunday, 2/19..... *Back in the Day Sunday*. Come dressed in attire from the time of your favorite era, back in the day so to speak, and celebrate the strength of tradition that encourages us toward God's future

Campaign Breakfast at 8:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall

Hymn sing at 9:15 AM

Wed, 2/22..... Ash Wednesday worship at 7:00 PM

Sunday, 2/26..... First Sunday in Lent

Wed, 2/29..... Midweek Candlelight Worship from 7:00 – 7:30 PM

Lenten Study: *24 Hours that Changed the World* from 7:45 – 8:30 PM