



## Wednesday Prayer

First Sunday of Christmas – Hope of Redemption in the Christ child

**There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.**

**Luke 2:36-38**

This week's gospel message provides us with two more examples of faithfulness to God's call: Simeon and Anna. For many years, both had lived day in and day out trusting in and telling others of God's promise of sending a savior. Both of them instantly knew God had fulfilled that promise when they saw the baby Jesus in the temple that day.

Simeon and Anna's world was not unlike today's world in the Holy Land. There was military occupation and killing of children by the government, women having difficulty finding a safe place to give birth, and families escaping as refugees. Jesus was born into that world, and into this world to bring hope, to bring light to shine in the darkness. Anna and Simeon saw the hope of redemption in the child, and "began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem."

People throughout the world today are desperate for a light to guide them through the darkness. People suffering in the midst of war, people desperate to find peace for their communities and for their neighbors, people who are held in the darkness of sex trafficking – all looking for someone to bring a word of hope for redemption. The hope of Christmas is born once again. Just as the presence of the Christ child inspired Simeon and Anna to tell all who would listen about God's redeeming message, may we be inspired to lift our voices and work tirelessly toward justice and show mercy to all afflicted by the evil in the world.

**God of light and salvation, you came in the flesh of the Christ child to bring hope to a troubled world. Grant us faith to see Christ in our neighbors, to be Christ to our neighbors, and to reach out in peace with our neighbors. Amen.**



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Written by Kay Kinkel, MSW, LICSW, Behavioral Health Professional with LSS, member of the Cherish All Children Advisory Board, and a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Iowa