

Feasts of the Holy Name and Presentation of Jesus

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22nd

The Rev. Rob Picken, Presenter

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Feast of the Holy Name
January 1st

Hymn of Christ's Humility

Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death--
even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,

so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Circumcision of Jesus

Luke 2:15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Brit Milah

- ▶ The *brit milah* or "covenant of circumcision" is the ceremony of circumcision in Judaism, at which the child is given his name.
- ▶ According to the Book of Genesis, God commanded the biblical patriarch Abraham to be circumcised, an act to be followed by his male descendants on the eighth day of life, symbolizing the covenant between God and the Jewish people.
- ▶ Today, it is generally performed by a Mohel on the eighth day after the infant's birth and is followed by a celebratory meal known *as seudat mitzvah*.
- ▶ *Brit Milah* is considered among the most important and central commandments in Judaism, and the rite has played a central role in the formation and history of Jewish civilization. The Talmud, when discussing the importance of *Brit Milah*, compares it to being equal to all other commandments (mitzvot).

Feast of the Holy Name

- ▶ Pre-1979 BCP called Feast of the Circumcision of Christ (origins in 4th C. Gallican rites)
- ▶ Now commemorates Naming of Jesus (in TEC takes precedence over Sunday)
- ▶ Council of Tours (567) had January 1st as a day of fast to counter pagan New Year's festivals. Local observations of Holy Name began about the 14th C.
- ▶ Roman Catholicism has varied widely over the centuries and now celebrates January as the month of the Holy Name with January 1st being observed as the Solemnity of Mary
- ▶ Lutherans, most of Anglican Communion, Methodists and Presbyterians observe on January 1st
- ▶ Eastern Orthodoxy keeps Circumcision of Christ on January 1st



10th Century Byzantine illustration / icon

Almighty and everliving God, we humbly pray that, as your only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts by Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

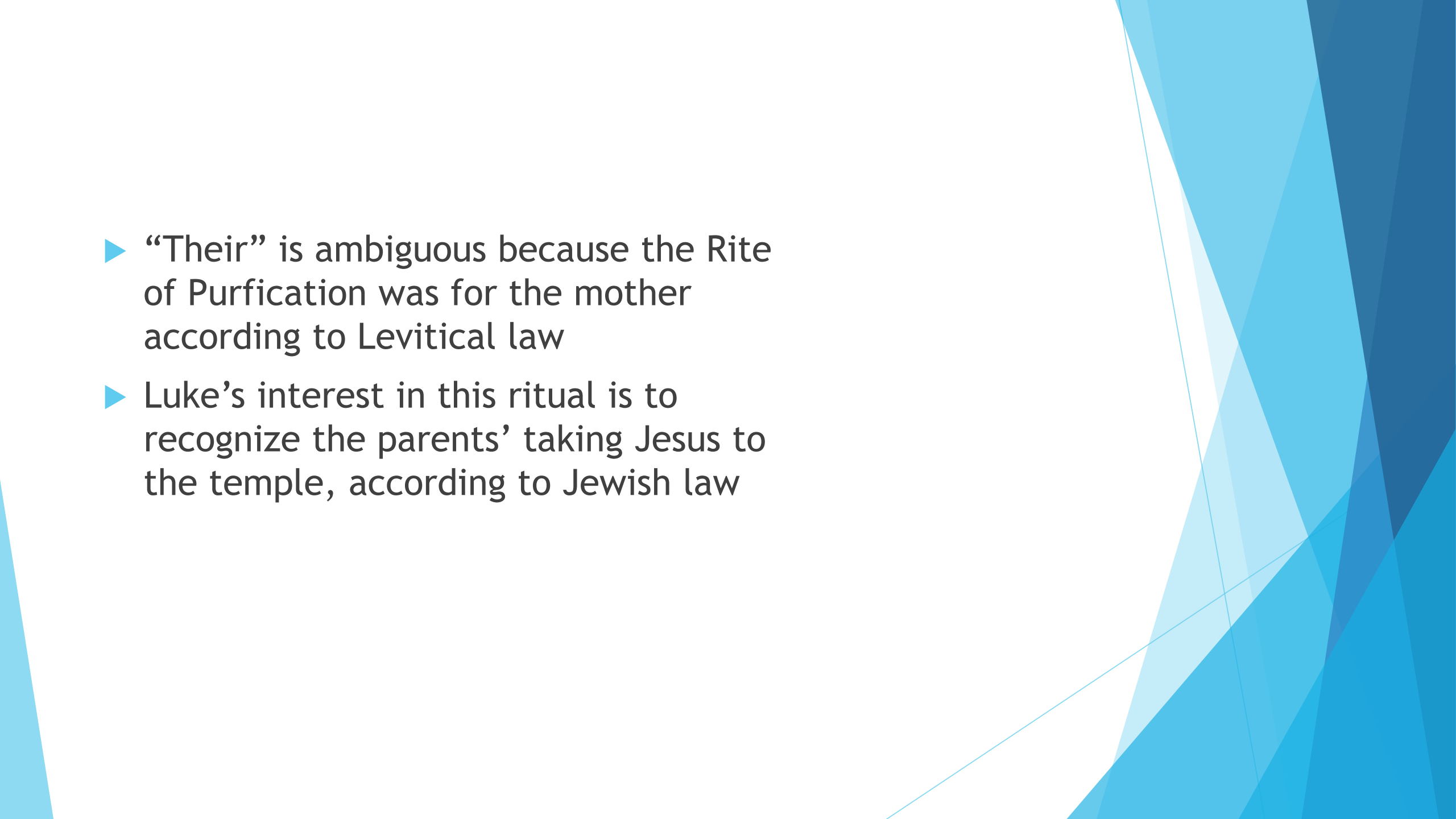
Feast of the Presentation

February 2nd

Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple: Luke 2: 22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."



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- ▶ “Their” is ambiguous because the Rite of Purification was for the mother according to Levitical law
 - ▶ Luke’s interest in this ritual is to recognize the parents’ taking Jesus to the temple, according to Jewish law

Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple: Luke 22-40 (Part II)

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

- ▶ Simeon and Anna are not otherwise known
- ▶ Acclaim Jesus as savior and redeemer
- ▶ The fourth hymn in Luke's gospel (known as the "nunc dimittis" in Latin)
- ▶ A light to the nations ref: Isaiah 46:6

Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple: Luke 22-40 (part III)

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

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.

- ▶ Joseph is the legal father of Jesus (notwithstanding the previous chapter in Luke)
- ▶ Anna is a prophetess
- ▶ Asher is the last of the sons of Joseph and one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel
- ▶ Daughter of Phanuel (Greek), which means “face of God” and in apocryphal writings is an Archangel
- ▶ In Genesis, Jacob named a place Phanuel (GK) because he saw God face-to-face

Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple: Luke 22-40 (part IV)

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.



History

- ▶ Christmas, in the West, was fixed on December 25th in mid-4th C.
 - ▶ A large feast in the Early Church and one of the 12 great feasts in Orthodoxy today
- ▶ This feast falls 40 days following Christmas and that is 33 days following the circumcision or naming of a child according to Levitical (Jewish) Law - ritual purification rites for a woman.
- ▶ Often called the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- ▶ One of the oldest feasts in Christianity
 - ▶ 4th C. “Pilgrimage of Egeria”
 - ▶ Spread West from Jerusalem in 5th and 6th Century
- ▶ It has historically marked the end of the Epiphany Season
 - ▶ (1979 v. Previous BCPs)
- ▶ The lighting of candles became involved season Epiphany celebrates Jesus as the Light of the World (Candlemas or Candle-Mass)

Practices

▶ ENGLAND

- ▶ Tudor England is was a huge festival dating back to Roman practice around Festival of Lights (half-way between Winter and Spring soltices)
- ▶ Candles were brought to church to be blessed and often candles still are

▶ FRANCE AND BELIGIUM

- ▶ A day of crepes (Pope Gelasius ate pancakes that day according to legend) and creches are not put away until this day since it makes the end of the Christmas season.

▶ GERMANY

- ▶ *Lostag* marked the beginning of a farmer's year, the day on which debts were settled, and the day when a servant's year-ended/begun (and they would be given new shoes)

▶ LUXEMBOURG

- ▶ *Liichtmëssdag* is the night in which children carry torches and candles through the street singing songs at shops and homes for a treat

▶ PUERTO RICO

- ▶ The statue of Nuestra Señora de Candelaria (Our Lady of the Light) is carried through the streets by candlelight. In the countryside, farmers burn their Christmas greens.

▶ PERU

- ▶ One of the largest festivals of the year in all of South America and lasts a fortnight.

Superstitions

Weather Proverbs

- ▶ If Candlemas Day be fair and bright, winter will have another fight. If Candlemas Day brings cloud and rain, winter won't come again (Gaelic)
- ▶ The badger peeps out of his hole on Candlemas Day, and, if he finds snow, walks abroad; but if he sees the sun shining he draws back into his hole. (German)

Other Superstitions

- ▶ A candle that drips on only one side in church on Candlemas Day denotes a death during the year.
- ▶ Snowdrops brought into the house before Candlemas Day are considered unlucky.
- ▶ Any Christmas decoration not taken down by Twelfth Night must not be taken down until Candlemas.

In Poetry: T.S. Eliot “Song of Simeon”

Lord, the Roman hyacinths are
blooming in bowls and
The winter sun creeps by the snow
hills;
The stubborn season has made stand.
My life is light, waiting for the death
wind,
Like a feather on the back of my hand.
Dust in sunlight and memory in corners
Wait for the wind that chills towards
the dead land.
Grant us thy peace.

I have walked many years in this city,
Kept faith and fast, provided for the poor,
Have taken and given honour and ease.
There went never any rejected from my door.
Who shall remember my house, where shall
live my children's children
When the time of sorrow is come?
They will take to the goat's path, and the
fox's home,
Fleeing from the foreign faces and the
foreign swords.

Before the time of cords and
scourges and lamentation
Grant us thy peace.

Before the stations of the
mountain of desolation,
Before the certain hour of
maternal sorrow,
Now at this birth season of
decease,

Let the Infant, the still unspeaking
and unspoken Word,
Grant Israel's consolation
To one who has eighty years and
no to-morrow.

According to thy word,
They shall praise Thee and suffer in every
generation
With glory and derision,
Light upon light, mounting the saints' stair.
Not for me the martyrdom, the ecstasy of
thought and prayer,
Not for me the ultimate vision.
Grant me thy peace.

(And a sword shall pierce thy heart,
Thine also).

I am tired with my own life and the lives of
those after me,
I am dying in my own death and the deaths of
those after me.
Let thy servant depart,
Having seen thy salvation.

In Music

word, For mine eyes have seen Thy sal-

For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,

For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,

For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,

For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,

For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,

The image displays a musical score for the hymn 'For mine eyes have seen Thy sal-va-tion'. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a common time signature, and a whole rest. The lyrics 'word, For mine eyes have seen Thy sal-' are written below the staff. The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics 'For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,'. The third staff features a similar melody with the lyrics 'For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,'. The fourth and fifth staves also follow the same melodic pattern with the lyrics 'For mine eyes have seen Thy sal - va - tion,'. The music is written in a simple, accessible style, likely for a children's choir or a beginner's hymn book.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMING

January 29th: Off

February 5th & 12th

Nancy is back to ask: *Why Stay Christian?*

February 19th: Off

Lenten Sundays, Feb. 26th - March 26th

The “A” Word

A look at various theological understandings of Atonement from Judaism to Early Church & Middle Ages to Post-Reformation & Contemporary Theologians