Sermon Outline

December 14
"Why Did Christ Come? – Truth!"
John 18:28-38a

Darkness and light

Jesus and Pontius Pilate

Opening the eyes of the blind

Our world of truth and lies

A light shines in the darkness

Points to Ponder to Prepare

December 14
"Why Did Christ Come? – Freedom!"
Luke 4:14-21

We are incredibly blessed in our time and place that we have very little experience with slavery, but the evil of slavery has been part of the history of our world. Tragically it still exists in many places. Slavery is more than an unjust economic system, it is the erasure of someone's humanity, making them something less than God created them in His image to be.

The original hearers and readers of the Bible were very familiar with slavery and the Biblical authors used this as an image to explain the tragic power of sin. Read for example Romans chapter 6.

Peter also uses this image in his first letter to explain why Christ came. Read I Peter 1:17-21. The key word is "redeem" or "redemption". This word means to pay the price to purchase a slave and give them their freedom back.

We were slaves on "an empty way of life". It kept us prisoner and made us less than we were created to be in the image of God. But Jesus paid the redemption price in his own blood to make us free again!

Read the beauty of Isaiah's poetry in Isaiah 61:1-3 (quoted by Jesus in Luke 4). Marvel at the wonder of what Christ has done and the price he paid to set us free.

Scripture readings for the week

Sunday December 14   Revelation 1:1-20
Monday December 15   Revelation 2:1-17
Tuesday December 16   Revelation 2:18 – 3:6
Wed December 17   Revelation 3:7-22
Thursday December 18 Revelation 4:1-11
Friday December 19   Revelation 5:1-14
Saturday December 20   Revelation 6:1-17
Sunday December 21   Revelation 7:1-17

Prayer Focus

Our prayer focus this week are members of our church family and community we have been praying for recently. Some updates are on the back side.

Grief

- ✞ **Michelle Bowen-Quist** passed away this week. We extend sympathies to her friends and family. A small family service was held yesterday.
- ✞ **Ava Cross** was an 11th grader at McBain Public High School who was killed in a car accident about two weeks ago. Visitation was held yesterday.

Cancer

- ✞ **Colter Bailey** is doing well, but is still in the middle of his long journey. He has been home from the hospital for a little while now. Clinic visits and his blood numbers have been going well. He has the next stage of his stem cell transplant on December 29, which will be followed by more radiation and immunotherapy.
- ✞ **Amanda Barton** continues her recovery from surgery. She looks forward to returning to work in the new year.
- ✞ **Amber Herlien** (Sierra Winkel's sister) had her last chemo treatment last Wednesday! Her surgery will be in January followed by six weeks of daily radiation. The praise is that recent scans show no sign of the cancer.
- ✞ Carrie Rozeveld's sister, **Shawna Baas** is continuing her cancer journey. They have switched her to a new chemo because the other one wasn't working and was causing reactions. Her next scan will be in January.

Accident, injury and surgery

- ✞ **Tammy Heuker** and **Kimber Westmaas** are both recovering well from falls, broken arms, and surgeries last month
- ✞ **Danielle Hoekstra** had a surgery two weeks ago. Her recovery is going well.
- ✞ **Kim Winkel** is recovering well from hip surgery last month.

Senior Saints

- ✞ **Dave Lucas** (Phil's dad) has moved to Whispering Pines following a fall in his home last month.
- ✞ **Tom & Norma Koetje** – Tom has faced increased health challenges in 2025.
- ✞ **Agnes Quist** is doing well after her stay in the hospital two weeks ago. She is taking a heart medication.
- ✞ **Cindy Sutton's mother** was put under the care of hospice several weeks ago. Prayers are for her mother's salvation and for the family as they prepare for her passing.
- ✞ **Ken Westdorp** has been experiencing greater challenges with his vision.

New babies!

- ✞ **Phil and Miriam Hoekwater** welcomed another son to their family this week. **Hank Alvin** is home and doing well.
- ✞ We pray for expecting moms and their little ones on the way:
    - o **Carie and David Mendoza**
    - o **Chase and Taylor Agema**
    - o **Auden and Keegan Eling**
    - o **Luke and Amber Peterson**
    - o **Toni and Ami Peterson**