

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT, December 5, 2021

Prepare the Way

(P: pastor/leader A: pastor/assistant C: congregation)

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

All who are able, stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: The day of the Lord is coming soon. The signs have been fulfilled.

C: But who can abide the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

P: Lest that Day surprise us unawares, let us confess our sins to God our Father, imploring his forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ, who will soon come as Judge and King.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Most merciful God,

C: We are unprepared for your coming, for we have sinned. In our thinking and speaking and doing, we have disobeyed your will. We have ignored the signs of Christ's return. We implore your forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ and seek the power of your Holy Spirit to restore our faith.

P: He who is coming has come, born among us to live our life and die our death, and guarantee our resurrection. For his sake your sins are forgiven. The gifts of the Lord are yours in great abundance.

C: Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Amen

THE ENTRANCE RITE

HYMN: "Prepare the Royal Highway" LBW 26 (Green book)

Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near!

Let ev'ry hill and valley A level road appear!

Then greet the King of glory, Foretold in sacred story:

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God's Word!

God's people, see him coming; Your own eternal king!

Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!

God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you!

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God's Word!

Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!

Your king, yet ev'ry nation Its tribute too may bring.

All lands will bow before him; Their voices join your singing:

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God's Word!

His is no earthly kingdom; It comes from heav'n above.

His rule is peace and freedom And justice, truth, and love.

So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding:

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God's Word!

All sit

The children are invited to come forward for a message.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you!

C: As fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known.

P: Two candles are set ablaze, as we wait with eager expectation for you, Lord, to come down.

C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come!

Two candles are lit.

ADVENT HYMN: “Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah” WOV, 630, st. 2



Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish



dark - ness. He shall feed the -



flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.

P: The Spirit and the Church cry out:

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: All those who await his appearance pray:

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: The whole creation pleads:

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

FIRST LESSON: Malachi 3:1-7b, The messenger refines and purifies

“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵“Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

⁶“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**

PSALM 66

The cantor sings the antiphon. The people repeat it.

The cantor sings the verses.

The people sing the antiphon where indicated.

Antiphon:



Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Cry out with joy to God all the earth, O sing to the glory of his name
Rendering glorious praise. Say to God: “How tremendous your deeds! **Antiphon**

Before you all the earth shall bow, shall sing to you, sing to your name!”

Come and see the works of God, tremendous deeds for the people. **Antiphon**

God turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the river dryshod.

Let our joy then be in the Lord, who rules forever in power. **Antiphon**

Come and hear, all who fear God, I will tell what God did for my soul.

Blessed be God who has not rejected my prayer

Nor withheld his love from me. **Antiphon**

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 1:2-11, A harvest of righteousness

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**

All who are able, stand

ALLELUIA VERSE

C: Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-20, Prepare the way of the Lord

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the third chapter. **C: Glory to you, O Lord!**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall become straight,
and the rough places shall become level ways,

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

⁷He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” ¹¹And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. ¹⁹But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reprovved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ!**

All sit

PRAYER CARDS can be handed towards the center aisle and given to an usher.

SERMON

All who are able, stand

HYMN: “On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry” LBW 36 (Green book)

**On Jordan’s banks the Baptist’s cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.**

**We hail you as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;
Without your grace we waste away Life flow’rs that wither and decay.**

**Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, And make us rise to fall no more;
Oh, let your face upon us shine And fill the world with love divine.**

**All praise to you, eternal Son, Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore, And Holy Spirit, evermore.**

NICENE CREED

**C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

PRAYERS AND INTERCESSIONS

P: Waiting and watching for our sure and certain hope, let us pray for the world redeemed, the church reformed, and for all people restored in the coming one.

After each portion of the prayers:

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

P: Alert and on guard for the coming of the Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting all things to your never-failing love in Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen

COMMUNION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san -na in the high - est.

P: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him should not perish,
but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you for the salvation
you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.
Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith
as he comes to us in his holy supper. Amen.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me. Amen.

P: Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

**C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

All sit

C: Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION

P: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. Amen

P: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen**



C: Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le-lu - ia.

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen

DISMISSAL HYMN: "Comfort, Comfort, Now My People" LBW 29 (Green book)

"Comfort, comfort now my people; Tell of peace!" So says our God.

Comfort those who sit in darkness Mourning under sorrow's load.

To God's people now proclaim That God's pardon waits for them!

Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever!

For the herald's voice is crying In the desert far and near,

Calling us to true repentance, Since the Kingdom now is here.

Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way!

Let the valleys rise to meet him, And the hills bow down to greet him!

Straight shall be what long was crooked, And the rougher places plain!

Let your hearts be true and humble, As befits his holy reign!

For the glory of the Lord Now on earth is shed abroad,

And all flesh shall see the token That God's word is never broken.

We strive to use our gifts and the best resources available to support people in their faith. To inquire about our sermons and/or the resources used to produce them please contact us through our church office. To God be the glory!

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PRAYER CARD

If you have a Prayer Request, use the **YELLOW** card that is available in the narthex, from an usher, or in the pew racks. Ushers will collect the cards before the Sermon so that prayers can be offered during the Intercessions.

If you are visiting with us, please use the Information Update on the reverse side of the card. Include your name and address and other important information. If our congregation can assist you in any way, please put that information on the card or speak to the Pastor.

ASSISTANCE

The ushers can supply parents of small children with soft toys, books, and a weekly children's worship bulletin. The parlor (the room behind the sanctuary) has a loud speaker and window so that, if necessary, parents can use it as a cry room and still see and hear the service. Large-print editions of our worship service are also available from the ushers.

HOLY COMMUNION

Based on the teachings of Scripture and in response to the Lord's admonition that, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup (1 Cor. 11:28)," we ask that those who attend the Lord's Supper ask of themselves the following questions:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner in need of God's grace? (1 John 1:8-9)
2. Are you truly sorry for your sins? (1 Cor. 11:26-29)
3. Do you believe in Jesus as your Savior? (Romans 5:6)
4. Do you intend with the aid of the Holy Spirit to amend your sinful life? (2 Cor. 5:15)
5. Do you believe you receive Christ's true body and blood in the Lord's Supper?
(Mark 14:22-24)
6. Do you trust God and His promises and accept as true all He teaches in Holy Scriptures? (John 8:31-32)
7. Have you been baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
(Matthew 28:19-20)

If your answer to these questions is yes, then we welcome you to the Lord's Supper. If you have any questions, burdens, or doubts concerning the sacrament, please speak with the Pastor before communing. Adults and children not receiving the Body and Blood of Christ may instead come forward to receive a blessing. Please indicate this by crossing your arms across your chest.

Gluten free rice wafers are available. Please indicate this by clearly raising your index finger. Those who wish may use the method of intinction (dipping the bread in the wine) for receiving the sacrament. You may receive the wine from either an individual cup or the common cup. In the center of the individual cup tray will be cups holding **white grape juice** for anyone who would prefer that over wine.

Please inform an usher if you are unable to come to the altar; the elements will be brought to you.



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