

Wednesday December 15, 2021

Advent Service

As We Gather God's surprising message to Joseph caught him off guard and unsure of what to do. Who would have thought that God would use him in this way? But God constantly surprises us with His gracious gifts. How is God using you?

The Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

A voice cries out, "In the wilderness clear a way for the Lord;

C make a way in the desert, a road for our God.

P Every valley must be lifted up, and every mountain and hill leveled.

C The rough places will become a level plain, the rugged land a wide valley.

P The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it at the same time.

C For the Lord has decreed it."

P "Go up on a high mountain, O herald Zion!

C Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem! Shout, don't be afraid!

P Say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God!'"

C "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.

P And they shall call his name Immanuel (which means God with us)."

C "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Confession and Absolution

P: Let us confess our sins to God and ask his forgiveness.

C Loving Father, who sent Jesus as our Guide and Savior, we confess that our distracted doing has shrouded our Advent and turned us to follow our own way. Forgive us for shaping the celebration to fit our desires. Seize us by your Spirit. Focus our eyes and hearts on the coming Christ. Inspire us with Christ's advent so that we shout from the housetops the Good News that in the coming Savior God is indeed with us. Make us into your joy-filled messengers, sharing your powerful message of your loving salvation for all.

P Jesus has promised that the sins we forgive on earth will also be forgiven in heaven. Trusting that precious promise, as a called and ordained minister of the Gospel, I confidently declare to you that, in Jesus Christ, all of your sins are forgiven and you are privileged to share that same forgiveness with all the others in your life. We are filled with Jesus' light of life so that we can shine among the people of this world like stars in the sky.

The Prayer of the Day

P O Leader of us all, guide our footsteps to follow you in all we say and do. Help us to listen to you when you tell us to go. Let our path in this life be blessed through every twist and turn

by you, who knows all and can see the bigger picture of what you have in mind for us. Bring us this Advent season to your manger bed to worship you there. Remind us of the gift that you have given to us of yourself to accompany us through each day, Keep pointing us to your cross and empty tomb, and lead us by your mercy to life everlasting. Amen.

The Hymn Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

Hymn 352



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has truly
 2 What the Fathers most desired, What the prophets'
 3 Abraham's promised great reward, Zion's helper,
 4 As Your coming was in peace, Quiet, full of



kept His word And at last to us did send
 heart inspired, What they longed for many a year,
 Jacob's Lord— Him of two-fold race behold—
 gentleness, Let the same mind dwell in me



Christ, the sinner's help and friend.
 Stands fulfilled in glory here.
 Truly came, as long foretold.
 Which is Yours eternal ly.

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
 That, set free from doubt and dread,
 I may cling to You in faith,
 Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again
 As the glorious king to reign,
 I with joy will see Your face,
 Freely ransomed by Your grace.

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Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:10-15

10Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: 11"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." 12But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." 13And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? 14Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15He shall eat curds and honey

when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

The Hymn

"Savior of the Nations. Come"

Hymn 332 v 1-5



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
vir - gin mild, In her womb this truth was shown:
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
God was there up - on His throne.
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

5 God the Father was His source,
Back to God He ran His course.
Into hell His road went down,
Back then to His throne and crown.

The Message

The Prayers

Pastor: Advent Lord, we long for your return.

People: Come, Lord Jesus!

Pastor: Lord and Savior, forgive us when we are too busy to worship you. Forgive us when we grow impatient and unkind toward others and put our preparations ahead of the people in our lives. Help us to look forward to our celebrations with joy and peace. Advent Lord, we long for your return.

People: Come, Lord Jesus!

Pastor: Lord and Savior, lead us to help those in need during this holiday season, to share with others the blessings you have given us. Comfort those who suffer in illness, grief or loneliness, especially those we name in our hearts ... Advent Lord, we long for your return.

People: Come, Lord Jesus!

Pastor: Lord and Savior, because of your death and resurrection, we can now serve you without fear, in holiness and righteousness before you all the days of our lives. Fill us with joy as we prepare to celebrate your birth, and let our joy overflow into the lives of others, so that they too will worship you as their Savior. Advent Lord, we long for your return.

People: Come, Lord Jesus!

Pastor: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Blessing

Pastor; The Lord Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

People: Amen.

The Closing Hymn "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" Hymn 338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for-ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.