
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 23, 2018

WORSHIP THEME... Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of Mary. Meaning what? With Jesus and Immanuel, we are given all of God's love, grace and mercy!

RINGING OF THE BELL...After the ringing of the bell, we take a moment of *silence* to prepare our hearts and minds for today's worship.

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

C: Amen.

P: Jesus is the Son of *David*.

C: Our coming King!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Abraham*.

C: Our sacrifice for sin!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Solomon*.

C: He finished for us!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Mary*.

C: Immanuel—God with us!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Sinners*.

C: He forever loves us!

P: Let us worship *Jesus!*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: On the four Sundays in Advent, we light a new candle each week. We mark the four candles with these four words: hope, peace, joy, and love.

P: Jesus Christ is the hope of all nations.

C: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we hope.

P: Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

C: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we rest.

P: Jesus Christ is the source of all joy.

C: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we rejoice.

P: Jesus Christ is the Lord of love.

C: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word His love finds us.

*The first, second, third and fourth candles
are lit during the Advent Song*

ADVENT SONG:

“My Soul in Stillness Waits”

C: For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits; truly my hope is in you.

P: Come, let us bow before the God who made us, let ev'ry heart be opened to the Lord, for we are all the people of His hand.

C: For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits; truly my hope is in you.

OPENING UP TO GOD

P: In the season of Advent, we prepare for Jesus to come. Sometimes in our preparations, we lose sight of God's grace. Sometimes we are so desperate for God's approval, we think we can earn His favor by doing more, by being better, or by scheming in just the right way. Despite God's unconditional love, we still try to earn our way into security and salvation. We turn to the Lord for forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

P: Heavenly Father,

C: We confess that we have not trusted Your Word of forgiveness, life and salvation. We have questioned if we are truly forgiven. We have doubted the new life we now live. We have distrusted Your way of salvation. Restore us, O God. Let Your face shine, that we may be saved!

P: God's ways are not our ways. Despite our continued inability to trust as we ought, Christ's death and resurrection for Your forgiveness remains effective; and it always will. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

GREETING AND PRAYER

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: We pray. Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins that weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy. For You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON:

Micah 5:2-5a

“The ruler of Israel shall come from Bethlehem.”

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time

when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.

And he shall be their peace.

When the Assyrian comes into our land

and treads in our palaces,

then we will raise against him seven shepherds

and eight princes of men;

GOSPEL LESSON:

Luke 1: 39-56

“Mary visits Elizabeth.”

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for he who is mighty has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

And his mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

P: This is the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

CHOIR ANTHEM:

“I Hear the Prophet Callin’”

Words & Music by Pepper Choplin

I hear a prophet callin’, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”
I hear the prophet callin’, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”
I hear the prophet callin’, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”
I hear the prophet callin’, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

Come and make straight the way in the desert, a highway for our God.
Come and make straight the way in the desert. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Prepare the way of the Lord.

I hear Isaiah callin’, “Fear not, your God has come.”
I hear Isaiah callin’, “Fear not, your God has come.”
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened.
The ears of the deaf will hear. And the mute will shout for joy.
The mute will shout for joy, shout for joy.
They’ll be shouting for joy. They’ll be shouting for joy.

And the desert will be joyful and blossom as a rose.
And the desert will be joyful and blossom as a rose.
We shall rejoice with joy and singing and see the glory of God.
We shall rejoice with joy and singing and see the glory of God,
and see the glory of God.

I hear the prophet callin’, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”
I hear the prophet callin’, “Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the way of the Lord.”

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



SERMON

“Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of Mary.”

SERMON HYMN: “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful”

LBW 45

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels;
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God. In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

A CHRISTMAS CREED

C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, who sent his Son as my Savior on Christmas.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, announced by the angels, worshiped by the shepherds, and adored by the wise men; who lived to suffer, die, and rise again to free me from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who has brought me to faith in the Christ of Christmas and by whose work in my heart I am led to lay before the feet of Christ the treasures of my love and live under him as my King both now and forevermore. Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P Let us come before our Lord in prayer, asking him to hear our prayer and grant us love.

P: Lord, Jesus, come to all those who are in bondage to sin and Satan. Break their chains and release them from their enslavement, that they serve You in peace and quietness. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Lord Jesus, we live in a world where everyone does what is right in their own minds. Come to us with Your perfect wisdom, that we follow You and not our own selfish ways. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Lord Jesus, come to those whose life is in chaos and provide order, structure, and discipline, that they live in peace and unity with their neighbors. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Lord Jesus, so many in this world are lonely and longing for friendship and a place to belong. Send us to those people, that we befriend them and bring them to You. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Lord Jesus, come to Your broken Church with the gifts of reconciliation and restoration. Unite Your people once again, that we enjoy fellowship rather than fractured division. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Into Your hands, Lord Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your ever-present mercy.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

CLOSING SONG: "Joy to the World"

LBW 39

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive its King; Let ev'ry heart prepare him room

And heav'n and nature sing. And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!

Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3. No more let sin and sorrow grow Nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make his blessings flow Far as the curse is found,

Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

4. He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove

The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,

And wonders of his love, And wonders, wonders of his love.

DISMISAL