

# REDEEMER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rev. Soren Flessen

Dec. 20, 2020/ Fourth Sunday of Advent



## *Introduction*

God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

## *Confession and Forgiveness*

Blessed be God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God, **we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news:

by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, ☩ comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## ***Gathering Song***

### **"He Came Down"**

- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love; hallelujah forevermore.**
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light; hallelujah forevermore.**
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace; hallelujah forevermore.**
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy; hallelujah forevermore.**

***Prayer of the Day***

Lord Christ, **stir up your power, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

***Lighting of the Advent Wreath~ Four Advent Candles are Lit***

Cantors: All creation lies in waiting, in the stillness of the night, with hope anticipating the Advent of Eternal Light.

***Litany for Fourth Sunday of Advent-PRAISE***

L: The response will be "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits".

L: Advent is a time to praise. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

**C: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

L: During Advent we remember God's past faithfulness.

**C: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

L: During Advent we remember God's present goodness.

**C: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

L: During Advent we remember God's future promises.

**C: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

This morning we light four candles. The **first candle** reminds us that during Advent we wait upon the promises of the Lord. The **second candle** reminds us to watch for God's presence with expectant eyes and anxious hearts. The **third candle** reminds us to prepare ourselves to receive the gift of the promised Savior. As we light the **fourth candle**, we are reminded that Advent is a time to give praise for what God has done, for what God is currently doing and for what God will bring to completion. As the light of Advent grows brighter, it reminds us that we move closer to receiving the gift of a Savior.

***Congregation sings:***

**We praise in hope for the morning Light,  
for the love of Christ to illuminate the night.**

**We praise with joy for the Savior's birth;**

**We praise in hope for peace on earth, peace on earth.**

***Prayer***

P: God in heaven, we look to you amidst a world filled with darkness. Help us to seek the light of your truth, as we remember your promises and offer our praise to you. **Amen.**

*The First Reading is from the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter of 2 Samuel*

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

*Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.*

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

L: Word of God. Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Song:

"What Can I Do?"

Dan Frawley

*The Second Reading is from the 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Romans*

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

*Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.*

<sup>25</sup>Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup>but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup>to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

L: Word of God. Word of Life. C: Thanks be to God.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

*In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people from little known places. This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in this gospel.*

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sermon*

**Sermon Hymn**

**"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"**

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

**Refrain**

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***

- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way.

**Refrain**

- 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. **Refrain**
- 4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

**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 of Intercession***

**God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.**

**(Open Prayers)**

**Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.**

**Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

***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.**

***Blessing***

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ☩ now and forever.

**Amen.**

***Sending song:***

**“Joy to the World”**

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her 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.**

***Dismissal***

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



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