



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sunday, December 13, 2020

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The Redemption of God in the Manger

As We Gather

Who doesn't love a good mystery? And what greater mystery is there than the mystery of God's love? So great is His love that He come down to us in our own flesh, as a lowly baby, to redeem and save our lives from sin, death and hell. Today we celebrate the mystery of God in the manger!

Prelude & Welcome

Ringing of the Tower Bell

354 Arise, O Christian People

- 1 Arise, O Christian people!
Prepare yourselves today;
Prepare to greet the Savior,
Who takes your sins away.
To us by grace alone
The truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven
To all the world is shown.

- 2 Prepare the way before Him;
Prepare for Him the best.
Cast out what would offend Him,
This great, this heav'nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way:
The lowly valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing,
His path all even lay.

3 The humble heart and lowly
God raises up on high;
Beneath His feet in terror
The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right,
That heeds God's invitation
And makes true preparation—
It is the Lord's delight.

4 Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus;
Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive You
This blessed Adventtide.
From stall and manger low
Come now to dwell within me;
I'll sing Your praises gladly
And forth Your glory show.

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Invocation

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

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P Behold, the true light has come into the world. Let us enter into His presence, confessing our sins and receiving His forgiveness.

C **Lord God, our heavenly Father, hear us as we confess the darkness of our waywardness and sin, especially our reluctance or refusal to rejoice, pray, or give thanks amid the troubles we have brought upon ourselves. Make us truly repentant, that we may receive the holiness of faith in our Savior Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of our sins. Amen.**

P The true light has come. To all who receive Him, He makes to be the children of God. Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you. And in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Lighting the Advent Candle

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

C **the light no darkness can overcome.**

P Let Your light scatter the darkness

C **and illumine Your Church.**

ADVENT CANDLE HYMN (Candle 3, JOY)

st. 3

We light the Advent candle
And sing with cheerful heart.
With joy, we spread the message—
A blessing to impart.
Our joy is never ending;
The Son to us is sending.
We wait with growing light
Till God makes all things right!

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Introit

Psalm 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: v. 7

Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.
Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to folly.
Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land.
Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way.
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray.
Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to
lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for
You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”
⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 126; antiphon: v. 5

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

²Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,

“The LORD has done great things for them.”

³The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad.

⁴Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like streams in the Negeb!

⁵Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!

⁶He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.

Epistle

Ephesians 1:1–10

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly
places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he
predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to
the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which
he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through
his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of
his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight
⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his
purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of
time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse for Advent 3

Matthew 11:10b



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

A Alleluia. Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.

C REFRAIN

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Holy Gospel

Luke 2:25–38

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

**☐ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge
the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

538 Praise Be to Christ

- 1 Praise be to Christ in whom we see
The image of the Father shown,
The firstborn Son revealed and known,
The truth and grace of deity;
Through whom creation came to birth,
Whose fingers set the stars in place,
The unseen pow'rs, and this small earth,
The furthest bounds of time and space.**
- 2 Praise be to Him whose sov'reign sway
And will upholds creation's plan;
Who is, before all worlds began
And when our world has passed away:
Lord of the Church, its life and head,
Redemption's price and source and theme,
Alive, the firstborn from the dead,
To reign as all-in-all supreme.**
- 3 Praise be to Him who, Lord Most High,
The fullness of the Godhead shares;
And yet our human nature bears,
Who came as man to bleed and die.
And from His cross there flows our peace
Who chose for us the path He trod,
That so might sins and sorrows cease
And all be reconciled to God.**

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Sermon "The Redemption of God in the Manger"
Based on today's readings

ADVENT THEME HYMN "See God in the Manger"

See God in the Manger; His splendor above
He left far behind Him, descended in love.
His advent, so humble; His passion, so pure,
His life to be taken our life to assure!

Through prophets God promised, "I call you by name;
I come to redeem you from sin and your shame.
My life for your rescue, the gift of my grace;
My arms stretched in suff'ring your life to embrace."

Lord Jesus, as promised, in mercy receive
Our earnest confession, the sins that we grieve,
That from our sad exile upon this cursed soil,
Your Church may be rescued, released from her toil.

Dear God in the manger, now raised to Your throne,
Be near to Your people whom You made Your own.
When waiting is over, then Lord, hear our prayer,
And take us to heaven to live with You there.

Offertory & Steward *MINUTE*

Offering Prayer

Prayer of the Church

Lord's Prayer

C 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.

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Thanksgiving

P Let us pray.

O God the Father, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh for our redemption, we thank You that for His sake You have pardoned us of our sins, and have redeemed us to be Your own, so to live with you in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as Jesus has risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

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.

515 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

- 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing,
And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising
And soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
At midnight comes the cry.
- 2 The watchers on the mountain
Proclaim the Bridegroom near;
Go forth as He approaches
With alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting;
The gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory;
The Bridegroom is at hand.
- 3 The saints, who here in patience
Their cross and suff'rings bore,
Shall live and reign forever
When sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory
The Lamb they shall behold;
In triumph cast before Him
Their diadems of gold.
- 4 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, O Sun so longed for,
O'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption
That sets Your people free!

✠ Soli Deo Gloria ✠

To God Alone Be Glory

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 2.
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