

# FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Mystery of the Word Made Flesh

December 20, 2020



**AS WE GATHER:** God told King David by the prophet Nathan that He would build him a house. The mystery, however, was that He didn't mean a structure of wood and stone but an inheritance and a kingdom—the house and lineage of David. The mystery

of salvation is made known only and alone through “the prophetic writings” and living Word of God in the Holy Scriptures. As we prepare to celebrate the greatest mystery of the Word made flesh, the incarnation and birth of the Son of God, Jesus, the Savior of the world, the best mystery is that God through the very telling of this story in our ears gives, works, and builds the gift of faith in the heart so that we believe it. We believe that Jesus was born for us, for me. He came down from heaven to be the only acceptable sacrifice for my sin, to redeem me, and give me eternal life through the forgiveness of my sins. O come, Emmanuel, God with us. O come, let us adore Him.

**HYMN**            “379 O Come, All Ye Faithful        #379 v.1-3

1            O come, all ye faithful,  
              Joyful and triumphant!  
              O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
              Come and behold Him  
              Born the king of angels: Refrain

ref            O come, let us adore Him,  
              O come, let us adore Him,

O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord!

2 Highest, most holy,  
Light of Light eternal,  
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;  
Son of the Father  
Now in flesh appearing! Refrain

3 Sing, choirs of angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God  
In the highest: Refrain

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## ✠ PREPARATION ✠

### INVOCATION

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and  
of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**Pastor:** That our eyes and our ears may be open to  
receive the mystery of God's love, let us first  
empty ourselves of everything that has closed  
our hearts to God, confessing our sin and need of  
forgiveness and life.

**People:** **At the Lord's own invitation and command, I  
confess all my sins to God, the very thoughts,  
words, and deeds with which I have offended  
Him and hurt my neighbor. I come now in the**

**sincere hope and faith of the forgiveness of God made known to the whole world in the mystery of His Son, Jesus Christ, who has sacrificed His own flesh and blood for me. Remove my sin and guilt for His sake, and restore a right spirit within me. Amen.**

Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

## **LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE**

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,  
**People: the light no darkness can overcome.**

Pastor: Let Your light scatter the darkness  
**People: and illumine Your Church.**

Pastor: The 4<sup>th</sup> Candle lit on the Advent wreath is known as **The Candle of love** – This candle represents the love of God. It was out of His incredible love that God sent His only Son Jesus.

**HYMN** “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #357 v.1–4

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear. Refrain

- ref Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!
- 2 O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
Who ord'rest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And teach us in her ways to go. Refrain
- 3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,  
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times didst give the Law  
In cloud and majesty and awe. Refrain
- 4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,  
Free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain

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## ✠ WORD ✠

**INTROIT** *Psalm 19:1, 4c, 5–6; antiphon: Isaiah 45:8a, b*

Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

**People:**       **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**

Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the  
clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth  
open, that salvation and righteousness may bear  
fruit.

## **KYRIE**

**People:**       **Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord,  
have mercy.**

## **SALUTATION**

**Pastor:**       The Lord be with you.

**People:**       **And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**Pastor:**       Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help  
us by Your might, that the sins which 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.

**People:**       **Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16*  
(The Lord's covenant with David)

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given  
him rest from all his surrounding enemies, <sup>2</sup>the king said to  
Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but

the ark of God dwells in a tent.”<sup>3</sup> And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, 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: Would you build me a house to dwell 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 for my dwelling. <sup>7</sup>In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges 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, that you should 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 dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men 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>And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *Romans 16:25–27* (Doxology)

<sup>25</sup>Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup>but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic

writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup>to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** *Luke 1:26–38*(The birth of Jesus foretold)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name 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 father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

<sup>34</sup>And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth

month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup>And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

**Pastor:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:** Praise to You, O Christ.

**CONFESSION OF FAITH:** The Apostle’s Creed

**People:** 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.**

**SERMON HYMN “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness”**

#563 v.1, 2

1 Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head.





Your living Word ever call us and all sinners to repentance and faith in Your only-begotten Son. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Keep all You have called to preach and teach and care for Your people in true faith, guard them against the attacks of the evil one, and give them health and joy in their ministry. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Send Your Spirit over the whole world that those who lead in the authority of government acknowledge Your laws and will, making for times of peace that we may live faithfully in safety. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: By Your Holy Word and Sacrament, strengthen us to obedient living. Send Your grace, mercy, peace, and love to surround our families, inspire those of various vocations in the world, comfort, defend, and heal all those in times of illness or distress. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

*Individual petitions may be added here.*

Pastor: By the mystery of our Lord's incarnation, His life of obedient faith, and His substitutionary death on the cross, establish us in the one true faith, and strengthen us in lives obedient to Your holy will. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**LORD'S PRAYER**                      *Matthew 6:9–13*

**People: 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.**

**BENEDICTION**

Pastor: 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.                      *Numbers 6:24–26*

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN**                      “Joy to the World” #387

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 men 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 sins and sorrows 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.

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