

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

God's Gift of Faith

December 6, 2020



AS WE GATHER: What was it that made not only a couple or a few but, as Mark says, “all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem” come out to be baptized by the Baptist and to confess their sins? Well, what is it that made you get up and come to church today? Notice that today not all do come. Though occasionally during wartime or some great catastrophe more tend to come, the catechism explains, “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.” “But,” it continues, “the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel.” Some think believing is impossible for them. But believing is not on you; it is a gift from God, overflowing with forgiveness, life, and salvation. God was with John by the Jordan River. God is here with you by His Word and Sacraments.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

HYMN “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” #338

1 Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
 Born to set Thy people free;
 From our fears and sins release us;
 Let us find our rest in Thee.
 Israel's strength and consolation,
 Hope of all the earth Thou art,
 Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
 Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

2 Born Thy people to deliver;
 Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever,
 Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
 Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
 Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Public domain

INVOCATION

Pastor: 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 2nd Candle lit is known as **The Candle of Peace**
 – This candle reminds us Jesus came to bring us
 spiritual peace and is He is known as the Prince of
 Peace.

HYMN “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #357

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

Public domain

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Prepare the way of the Lord. Recalling our Baptism into Christ, we confess our sins to God in the full assurance of the gift of forgiveness by the mighty sacrifice of His Son.

People: O God, from the wilderness of lives disfigured and crushed by the devil, our own sin, and the sins of others, we cry out to You for the forgiveness of our sins, those that trouble us as well as those of which we are not aware. Restore our life and faith by Your own command for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. 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.

✠ WORD ✠

INTROIT *Psalm 80:1, 8a, 9b, 7; antiphon: v. 3*

Pastor: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!
Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
You brought a vine out of Egypt; it took deep root and filled the land.
Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

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.

Pastor: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.
Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 40:1–11*
(Comfort for God's people)

40 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty¹ is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹ Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.*

Pastor: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.
Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and
having salvation.

Blessèd is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
From the house of the Lord we bless you.

EPISTLE *2 Peter 3:8–14* (The day of the Lord will come.)

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

VERSE *Luke 3:4b, 6*

Pastor: Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight; all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 1:1–8* (John the Baptist prepares the way.)

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

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

(The Gospel is read.)

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, 3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’” 4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

CONFESSIO 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.**

HYMN OF THE DAY “Herald, Sound the Note of
Judgment” #511 v.1, 2

1 Herald, sound the note of judgment,
Warning us of right and wrong,
Turning us from sin and sadness
Till once more we sing the song.

ref Sound the trumpet!
Tell the message:
Christ, the Savior king, is come!

2 Herald, sound the note of gladness;
Tell the news that Christ is here;
Make a pathway through the desert
For the one who brings God near. Refrain

SERMON “The Word of God Stands Forever” - Isaiah 40:1-11

HYMN “Herald, Sound the Note of Judgment” #511 v.3, 4

3 Herald, sound the note of pardon—
Those repenting are forgiv’n;
God receives His wayward children,
And to them new life is giv’n.

ref Sound the trumpet!
Tell the message:
Christ, the Savior king, is come!

4 Herald, sound the note of triumph;
Christ has come to share our life,

Bringing God's own love and power,
Granting vict'ry in our strife. Refrain

© 1977 Moir A. J. Waters. Used by permission: CCAI, no. 660171.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, we give thanks this day for calling us and the whole world to repentance and faith by Your holy prophets, by Your servant John the Baptist, and by Your own Son, whose Spirit calls, gathers, and enlightens everyone through His mighty Word and Sacraments. Grant that we and all who hear His voice remain faithful in the fellowship of Your Holy Church. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Continue to give Your blessing, power, and grace to Your Church, especially all pastors and servants You have called and given to guard, feed, and teach Your flock. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Give stability to our country, supplying all who make, administer, and judge our laws with wisdom and goodwill toward all people. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: By Your Word and Spirit comfort all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or adversity, [*especially . . .*]. Grant them healing and patience in the face of affliction, and never let them forget that You are

with them. Also support all who suffer persecution for the faith. Give Your tender care to all. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

(additional local petitions spoken here . . .)

Pastor: Remembering those who have loved and served You who now rest from their labors, we give You thanks. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joys of Your heavenly kingdom. 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 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord #352 v.
1,2,5,6

1 Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept His word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner's help and friend.

2 What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets' heart inspired,
What they longed for many_a year,
Stands fulfilled in glory here.

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.

