



Sunday, December 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Introduction

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

Prelude... "Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light"

Gathering Hymn... "Prepare the Royal Highway"



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

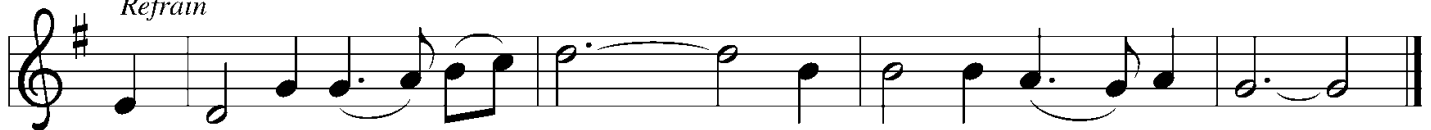


Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,

We confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts. we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises. We confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

We Praise in Hope

A Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Responsive Litany—PRAISE

P: Advent is a time to praise.

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

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

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

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

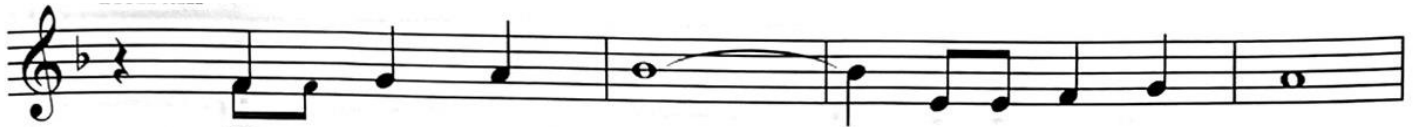
C: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

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

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

Candle Lighting

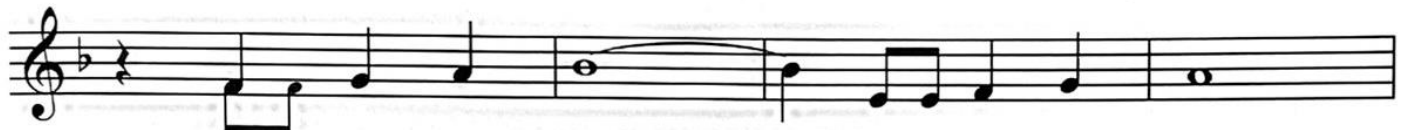
(please join in singing when directed)



(1st Sunday) We wait in
(2nd Sunday) We watch in
(3rd Sunday) We pre - pare in
(4th Sunday) We praise with
(Christmas Eve) We pro - claim with } hope _____ for the morn - ing Light,



for the love of Christ to il - lu - mi - nate _____ the night. _____



We wait with
We watch with
We pre - pare with
We praise with
We pro - claim with } joy _____ for the Sav - ior's birth;



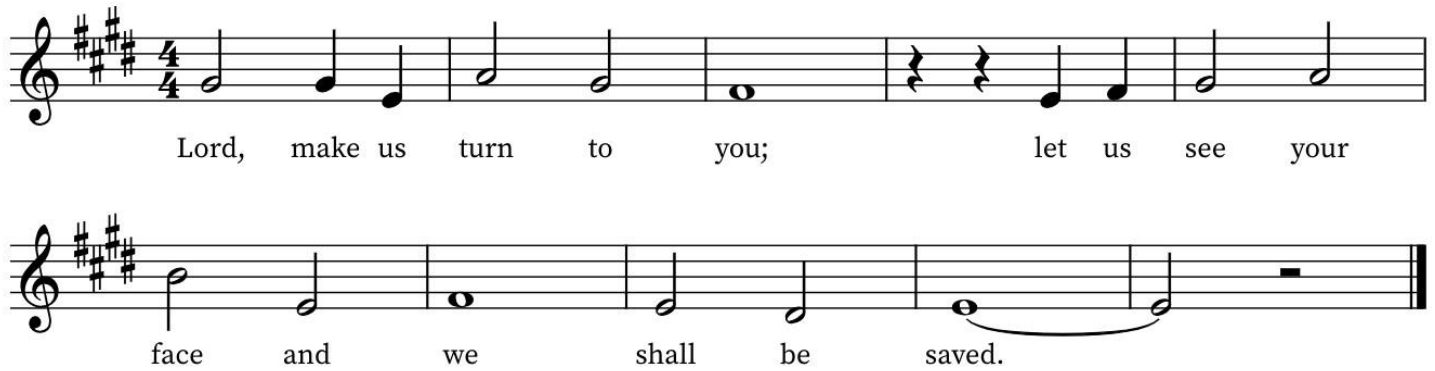
we wait in
we watch in
we pre - pare in
we praise with
we pro - claim with } hope for peace on earth.

Prayer

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.

Psalm 80



Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your
face and we shall be saved.

¹Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
²before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might,
and come to save us!
³Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.
⁴O Lord GOD of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
⁶You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.
⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.
⁸You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
⁹You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
¹⁰The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches;
¹¹it sent out its branches to the sea,
and its shoots to the River.
¹²Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?

¹³The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.

¹⁴Turn again, O God of hosts;
look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,

¹⁵the stock that your right hand planted.

¹⁶They have burned it with fire, they have cut it down;
may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.

¹⁷But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.

¹⁸Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10

The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Through obedient acceptance of God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." [And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 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 powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped

his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”
The Gospel of the Lord.

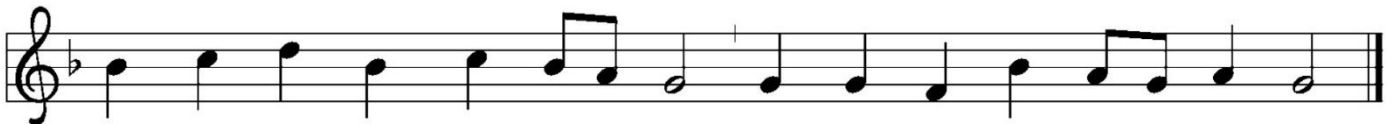
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Sermon Hymn..... “Savior of the Nations, Come”



- 1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
- 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
- 3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child—from his throne, a vir - gin mild!



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!

- 6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340–397; Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. hymnal version
Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Amen

Prayers of Intercession

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence.

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world.

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made.

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored.

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill (*especially Charlie, Eric, Terry, Barbara, Lizzy, Christi, Angelika, Jenna, Dave, Joy, Frank, Carol, Vicki, David, Tyler, Dick, David, Tyler, Dick, Kristin, Tom, Michael, Gabriele, Merle, Prentice, Rebecca, Bonnie, Kathie, Mark, Ruth, Bob, Michael, Peter, Don, Del, Jeff, Eric and Michael*).

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of Living Water. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community.

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history.

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Offering

Offering Hymn..... "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming"

Offering Prayer

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The 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.

Distribution

We will be using the intinction method for distribution. You will be handed bread and asked to dip the bread in the chalice. Gluten-free bread and grape juice are available. Please make your way forward by the center aisle, returning down the side. If mobility is a problem for you, please notify an usher and you will be served at your seat.

Invitation to Communion

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

Communion Song..... "Advent Medley"

Post Communion Prayer

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

Amen.

Blessing

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✝ bless and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

Cantata..... "A New and Glorious Morn" by Lloyd Larson

I.Come, Adore the Newborn King!

II.Prepare for the Coming of the Lord

III.The Promised King of Heaven

IV.Holy Child of Bethlehem

V.All Glory Be to God on High!

VI.Rise Up, Shepherd, Go Tell It!

VII.A Holy, Silent Night

VIII.Arise and Shine, Your Light Had Come!

Chamber Orchestra

VIOLIN I Zihuan An	VIOLIN II Beth Chiarenza Nauman	VIOLA Alexis Pillow	CELLO Sharon
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DOUBLE BASS Lauren Burchell	FLUTE I Lauren Erickson	FLUTE II Nancy Rhoades	OBOE Jami Rivers
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CLARINET Scott Smith	BASSOON Benjamin Kearns	HORN I Brian Alan
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TRUMPET I Dan Reed	TRUMPET II Paul Reid	TROMBONE Daniel Nakazono	PIANO Scott Sims (in house)
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TIMPANI+ Rich Barchman	PERCUSSION Chris Woodward	PERCUSSION Jesse Milhoan
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ASU Singers

SOPRANO Morgan Peoples	ALTO Emma Claus Megann Sala	TENOR Josh Giles Jordan Rakita	BASS Carick Veale
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Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.