

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Prepare!

December 8 & 9, 2012

AS WE GATHER

Richard, the Bishop of the English town of Chinchester, had no idea when he was writing a prayer in the 13th century that many of us would be quoting him today. Here is Richard's prayer:

Thanks be to Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ,
For all the benefits Thou hast given me,
For all the pains and insults Thou hast borne for me:
O most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother,
May I know Thee more clearly,
May I love Thee more dearly,
May I follow Thee more nearly,
Day by day.

Text: Public domain

Later, these words would be set to music and included in the Anglican Hymnal, later still they were recorded in the Broadway musical "Godspell." A recording of these words hit the *Billboard 100* song list in 1972. Another famous tune from "Godspell" featured the prophet John the Baptist screaming out "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" as the musical began. Many who have seen the musical can never forget John the Baptist jumping around the stage with his one line song! In many ways, the music from "Godspell", drawn as it was from a church hymnal, reflects the theme of this Sunday in the Christian Year - *Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord*; and Richard of Chinchester's prayer describes how we go about preparing.

5:00 PRESERVICE BELL ANTHEM *"Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus"*

WELCOME

+ PREPARATION +

HYMN # 344 *"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"* Rise for the last stanza

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.

We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away Like flowers that wither and decay.

Lay on the sick Thy healing hand And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face Till beauty springs in every place.

All praise, eternal Son, to Thee Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore.

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." *John 8:12* And I will lead the blind in the way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and do Not forsake them. *Isaiah 42:16*

People: Come, Lord Jesus, our Light and Life.

Pastor: Until that day, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

People: Lord, who is worthy to come into your presence even to ask for your forgiveness? We do not have clean hands or pure hearts. Yet you invite us to come into your presence to receive our deliverance. Lift up our heads so we may see you, the King of glory, strong and mighty. Help us to be humbled by your glory and then help us to see that you alone are strong to save.

Pastor: Brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord invites us to come and see what He has done---He has created the world and then redeemed His creatures after we had fallen into sin. Now He is restoring what sin has torn apart, because He truly is strong to save! Therefore as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Our sins are forgiven because God's Son, Jesus Christ, made atonement for our sins, once and for all!

People: Thanks be to God! Amen.

KYRIE

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, for the well being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

People: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: 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. Amen.

(Be seated)

+ WORD +

OLD TESTAMENT Malachi 3:1-7b *(The prophet foretells the mission of the messenger.)*

See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years. "So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty. "I the Lord do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the Lord Almighty.

EPISTLE Philippians 1:2-11 *(The apostle gives thanks for the partnership in the Gospel he shares with this congregation)* Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

HYMN # 336 "Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending"

Choir will sing stanzas 1-3, Congregation joins in singing stanza 4

Lo! He comes with clouds descending, Once for every sinner slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending Swell the triumph of His train:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign.

Every eye shall now behold Him Robed in glorious majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold Him, Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing, Shall their true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of His passion Still His dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation To His ransomed worshipers.
With what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

**Ye, amen, let all adore Thee, High on Thine eternal throne
Savior, take the power and glory, Claim the kingdom as Thine own.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Thou shalt reign, and Thou alone!**

(Rise)

GOSPEL Luke 3:1-14 *(John the Baptist prepares the way for the coming of the Messiah)* In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene— during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation.'" John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." "What should we do then?" the crowd asked. John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY # 839 "O Christ, Our True and Only Light"

O Christ, our true and only light, Enlighten those who sit in night;

Let those afar now hear your voice and in your fold with us rejoice.
Fill with the radiance of your grace The souls now lost in error's maze;
Enlighten those whose inmost minds Some dark delusion haunts and binds.
O gently call those gone astray That they may find the saving way!
Let ev'ry conscience sore oppressed In you find peace and heav'nly rest.
Shine on the darkened and the cold; Recall the wand'ers to your fold.
Unite all those who walk apart; Confirm the weak and doubting heart.
That they with us may evermore Such grace with wond'ring thanks adore
And endless praise to you be giv'n By all your church in earth and heav'n.

SERMON "The Light of Forgiveness and a Life of Repentance" Text: Luke 3:1-14

(Rise)

THE NICENE CREED (as found on the back cover of hymnal)

(Be seated)

OFFERINGS As your offering is collected, please sign our attendance book located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the book along to others in your pew, and return the book to the center aisle.

BELL ANTHEM "Savior of the Nations, Come"

(Rise)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us come before the throne of God's grace and present our petitions with confidence in the Spirit through our Lord Jesus to His heavenly Father, for He is kind and full of compassion. Heavenly King, it is because you do not change that your people are not consumed, for your steadfast love is everlasting. Remember all who have been baptized into the name of your Son.

People: Grant them grace to lead lives of holy fear, filled with the fruit of repentance and faith.

Pastor: Remember, kind Father, the called workers of your Church and grant their love to abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,

People: that they may approve what is excellent and prepare your people by living faith to be blameless on the day of Christ.

Pastor: Lord of all, we commend to you all who hold offices of public trust throughout our land, asking you to bestow upon them wisdom from on high.

People: Grant them to fulfill their callings impartially, remembering that they

shall give account to the King of kings and Lord of lords on the day of His glorious appearing.

Pastor: Father, in great love you sent St. John the Baptist to call all to lives of repentance, that they might welcome your Son and His kingdom.

People: Give us your grace in these Advent days to open our hearts and hands to all in need, expressing in our deeds the faith of our hearts.

Pastor: Lord, your apostle, St. Paul, taught us that we may be sure that you will bring to completion the good work you have begun in us. In such confidence we commend to your merciful hands all who are sick and suffering, grieving or lonely, especially Vince, Russ, Bob, Eleanor, Gil, Nancy, Sarah, Gerald and Joe.

People: Continue to work in them, loving Master, sustaining their faith and providing them comfort until they stand whole and filled with glory before your throne. Comfort those who mourn and remember loved ones including Lucille, Angie and Mae.

Pastor: Father in heaven, your mercies are new every morning and you abundantly provide all good things in our lives. We thank you for your blessings bestowed upon Erika, Doug, Melissa, and Jay.

People: Fill them with hearts of thankfulness that acknowledge you as the giver of all good things.

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Light of the world, and all who follow you will never walk in darkness. Fill us with the light of your love, your grace, your Spirit.

People: Grant us to live daily in repentance and faith, walking according to your holy ways.

Pastor: Holy One, because we in ourselves could not abide the Day of your coming in judgment, your Son gave up His body and blood for our forgiveness and now gives it to us as the very righteousness by which we may stand before you without shame.

People: Stir up in your children faith to receive His coming to us in His Holy Supper, that we may go forth in peace and joy.

Pastor: These things and whatever else you know us to need, most Holy Father, grant us for the sake of Him who will return in glory to judge the living and the dead and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy

Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

Pastor: The peace of the + Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

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Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.

5:00 BELL ANTHEM

“The King of Glory”

HYMN #810 “O God of God, O Light of Light”

O God of God, O Light of Light, O Prince of Peace and King of kings:

To You in heav-en’s glory bright The song of praise forever rings.

To Him who sits upon the throne, The Lamb once slain but raised again,

Be all the glory He has won, All thanks and praise! Amen, amen.

For deep in prophets’ sacred page, And grand in poets’ winged word,

Slowly in type, from age to age The nations saw their coming Lord;

Till through the deep Judean night Rang out the son, “Good-will to men!”

Sung once by first-born sons of light, It echoes now, “Good-will!” Amen.

That life of truth, those deeds of love, That death so steeped in hate and scorn-

These all are past, and now above He reigns, our King once crowned with thorn.

Lift up your heads, O mighty gates! So sang that host beyond our ken.

Lift up your heads, your King awaits. We lift them up. Amen, amen.

Then raise to Christ a mighty song, And shout His name, His mercies tell!

Sing, heav’n-ly host, your praise prolong, And all on earth, your anthem swell!

All hail, O Lamb for sinners slain! Forever let the song ascend!

Worthy the Lamb, enthroned to reign, All glory, pow’r! Amen, amen.

HYMN #334 “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

O Lord, how shall I meet You, How welcome You aright?

Your people long to greet You, My hope, my heart’s delight!

O kindle, Lord most holy, Your lamp within my breast

To do in spirit lowly All that may please You best.

Your Zion strews before You Green boughs and fairest palms;

And I too will adore You With joyous songs and psalms.

My heart shall bloom forever For You with praises new

And from Your name shall never Withhold the honor due.

I lay in fetters, groaning; You came to set me free.

I stood, my shame bemoaning; You came to honor me.

A glorious crown You give me, A treasure safe on high

That will not fail or leave me As earthly riches fly.

Love caused Your incarnation; Love brought You down to me.

Your thirst for my salvation Procured my liberty.

Oh, love beyond all telling, That led You to embrace

In love, all love excelling, Our lost and fallen race.

Sin’s debt, that fearful burden, Cannot His love erase;

Your guilt the Lord will pardon And cover by His grace.

He comes, for you procuring The peace of sin forgiv’n,

His children thus securing Eternal life in heav’n.

He comes to judge the nations, A terror to His foes,

A light of consolations And blessed hope to those

Who love the Lord’s appearing. O glorious Sun, now come,

Send forth Your beams so cheering, And guide us safely home.

HYMN #347 “Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People”

“Comfort, comfort ye My people, Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God;

“Comfort those who sit in darkness, Mourning ‘neath their sorrows’ load.

Speak ye to Jerusalem Of the peace that waits for them;

Tell her that her sins I cover And her warfare now is over.”

Yea, her sins our God will pardon, Blotting out each dark misdeed;

All that well deserved His anger He no more will see or heed.

She hath suffered many a day, Now her griefs have passed away;

God will change her pining sadness Into ever-springing gladness.

Hark, the herald’s voice is crying In the desert far and near,

Calling sinners to repentance, Since the Kingdom now is here.

O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God away;

Let the valleys rise to meet Him and the hills bow down to greet Him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked; Make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble, As befits His holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token That His Word is never broken.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank you that for His sake you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask you not to forsake your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve you; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness. The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD look on you with favor and + give you peace. *Numbers 6:24-26*

People: Amen!

CLOSING HYMN # 331 "The Advent of Our King"

The advent of our King Our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing In strains of holy joy.

The everlasting Son Incarnate deigns to be,
Himself a servant's form puts on To set His servants free.

O Zion's daughter, rise To meet your lowly King,
Nor let your faithless heart despise The peace He comes to bring.

As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come again
And His true members all unite With Him in heav'n to reign.

Before the dawning day Let sin's dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on.

All glory to the Son, Who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever one Through all eternity.

Preacher
Liturgist
Lectors
Acolytes
Organist
Bell Choir Director
Choir Director
Music Coordinator

Pastor Harold Bender, Jr.
Pastor Gregg Stanton
Virginia Sell, Pat Graf
Amanda Crist, Ana Gonzalez-Clark, Nathaniel Gottschalk
Roger Gottschalk
Jan Schneider
Nancy Hoelke
Kim Woller