



ADVENT MIDWEEK 2
Jesus Christ is the Same
Yesterday, Today, and Forever
December 13, 2017

AS WE GATHER

As Christmas approaches, you may feel like you are doing everything alone, that the stress and struggle of the season will overwhelm your flickering, fading energy and endurance. Or you may be dreading the potential conflict that will come when you gather with family and friends for Christmas celebrations in only a few short days. The apostle Paul writes that our God is the God of endurance and encouragement. You may be tired. You may be discouraged. But Christ has visited His people, and He gathers us all so that we may shine more brightly together in this world of darkness and discouragement. As you continue to prepare for Christmas, may you be encouraged by your brothers and sisters in Christ who shine alongside you.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

HYMN SING

OPENING HYMN #342 “What Hope! An Eden Prophesied”

What hope! An Eden prophesied Where tame live with the wild;
The lamb and lion side by side, Led by a little child!

A shoot will sprout from Jesse’s stem, A branch from David’s line,
A Prince of Peace in Bethlehem: The fruit of God’s design.

As banner of God’s love unfurled, Christ came to suffer loss,
That by His death a dying world Would rally to the cross.

Come, Jesus, come, Messiah Lord, Lost Paradise restore;
Lead past the angel’s flaming sword – Come, open heaven’s door.

(Rise)

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

People: God’s faithfulness continues through all generations.

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: Let your abiding presence warm our hearts and fill our souls.

People: For our Lord Jesus is Immanuel, God with us!

All: Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord God, Creator of the universe, you have given us the Holy Scriptures for our encouragement. Fill us with your Spirit, strengthen our faith, and empower our witness, that we may reflect the light of Christ into the darkness of this world, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 11:1–11* (In Him all nations, peoples, and creatures find perfect rest, harmony, and peace.) There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of

him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

Lector: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Hebrews 3:7-13* (Today is the day to hear the voice of Jesus; today is the day of salvation) Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’ As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’” Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Lector: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 14:15-24* (Jesus promises not to leave us as orphans, but to come and make His home with us) “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

Pastor: In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

People: But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #354 “Arise, O Christian People”

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.

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.

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.

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

SERMON “Jesus Christ is the Same . . . Today” Hebrews 3:7-13

OFFERING 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. You may check the register to see the names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

LITANY

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For peace and salvation, and for true Christian fellowship and unity, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For endurance and encouragement, that we might face these difficult days with the boldness of God's Spirit and the conviction of sincere faith, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For pastors, teachers, and all ministers and leaders in Christ's Church, that they would stand on God's Word and proclaim and teach His truth in all its purity, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For those who labor in difficult or dangerous vocations, including firefighters, EMT's, police officers, and the men and women of our armed services, that they would serve with integrity and be protected by our God, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For favorable weather and the nourishment of your creation, that we may enjoy it's fruits with thankfulness and praise, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For those who have not known the light of Christ or have fallen away into the darkness of the world, that through Christ's holy people and the mission of His church they would hear the good news of Jesus and come to faith, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: For all those who suffer illness and grief, trials and troubles, and strained and broken relationships, that there might be healing, peace, and reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord,

People: who is with us and hears us today!

Pastor: O Lord God, almighty, today is the day of salvation, today is the day to repent and believe the good news, today and every day is filled with opportunities to glorify you and shine the light of Christ in our lives. Hear our prayers and answer us according to your good and gracious will; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

COLLECT FOR PEACE

Pastor: O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

People: Amen.

HYMN #353 "Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring"

Jesus came, the heav'ns adoring, Came with peace from realms on high;
Jesus came to win redemption, Lowly came on earth to die;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Came in deep humility.

Jesus comes again in mercy When our hearts are worn with care;
Jesus comes again in answer To an earnest, heartfelt prayer;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Comes to save us from despair.

Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing, Brining news of sins forgiv'n;
Jesus comes with words of gladness, Leading souls redeemed to heav'n.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Hope to all the world is giv'n.

Jesus comes in joy and sorrow, Shares alike our hopes and fears;
Jesus comes, whate'er befalls us, Cheers our hearts and dries our tears;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Comforts us in failing years.

Worship Leader
Lector
Acolyte
Organist
String Quartet

Pastor Harold Bender
Bob Reynolds
Laura Quigley
Michelle Prince
Crystal Barry, Kristin Kadolph,
Stacey Kukor, Laurel Privatt

Advent Mid Week Worship - 10:00am & 6:00pm

December 20th

Jesus Christ is the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever

School Children's Christmas Program

Sr. High Youth Fundraiser

*Dinner: Pulled pork sandwiches, baked macaroni & cheese, veggies & dip,
chicken nuggets, Christmas Cookie Bars*