

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Return to the Lord? How?

December 8 & 9, 2018

5:00pm & 8:00am

### AS WE GATHER

Sometimes it seems like there are Christians who appreciate the true meaning of Christmas, while others focus on gifts and food and don't even want to be wished a "Merry Christmas." The prophet Malachi reminds us that the day of the Lord's coming is not a day of smiles, but a day of purification, and this purification occurs among God's people. We, the Church, are called to return to the Lord. As we prepare for the Lord's coming, we would look at the plank in our own eye and receive the purification and forgiveness of God with thankfulness.

### WELCOME

"Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn."  
Isaiah 60:1,3

### HANDSHAKES & HUGS

#### ✠ PREPARATION ✠

### OPENING HYMN #349 "Hark the Glad Sound"

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;  
Let every heart prepare a throne And every voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release, In Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before Him burst, The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind, The bleeding soul to cure,  
And with the treasures of His grace To enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, Thy welcome shall proclaim,  
And heav'ns eternal arches ring With Thy beloved name.

(Rise)

### INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

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

People: Amen.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is coming soon!

People: **He is coming soon indeed! Alleluia!**

Pastor: Prepare the way of the Lord.

People: **Make His paths straight.**

Pastor: Every valley shall be filled,

People: **and every mountain and hill made low.**

Pastor: The crooked shall become straight,

People: **and the rough places shall become level ways.**

Pastor: All flesh shall see the salvation of God.

People: **We wait for Christ's return and the resurrection of all flesh.**

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is coming soon!

People: **He is coming soon indeed! Alleluia!**

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Pastor: On the four Sundays in Advent, we light a new candle each week.  
We mark the four candles with these four words: hope, peace, joy,  
and love. Jesus Christ is the hope of the nations.

People: **We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we hope.**

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

People: **We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we rest.**

### HYMN "The King Shall Come to Bring Us Peace"

The King shall come to bring us peace, To straighten ev'ry path.  
He comes to make our suff'ring cease, To shield us from God's wrath.

We light this candle to recall The Baptist's desert cry:

"Prepare the way, the Lord of all, The Prince of Peace is nigh."

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### CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the season of Advent, we prepare for Jesus to come. As we wait for His coming, we consider how unworthy we are to have Jesus in our presence, how crooked our world has become, and how unjust are our relationships. We come before the Lord in humility.

*Silence for reflection.*

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

**People: we confess that we have strayed from your path. We have been selfish and cruel. At times, we have treated our neighbors with injustice and prejudice. At times we have oppressed the weak in order to gain power or simply failed to help those in need. We long to return to you, but how are we to return?**

Pastor: As John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, he said, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." God sent Jesus to bring salvation to the world through His death and resurrection. This salvation is complete, and Christ comes to you once again with forgiveness, life, and salvation. Hear these words of forgiveness, for they are from Christ Himself: As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen. "Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise!"**

#### **SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

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.**

(Be Seated)

#### **✠ WORD ✠**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Malachi 3:1-7b* (God's messenger prepares the way for the day of the Lord.) "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and

as in former years. "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts. "For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *Philippians 1:2-11* (We are all partakers of grace.)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**5:00 BELL ANTHEM**

*"The King of Glory"*

(Rise)

**HOLY GOSPEL** *Luke 3:1-20* (John the Baptist prepares the way.)

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

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

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the

words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages." As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

#### SERMON HYMN #344 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

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.

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

### SERMON

#### *"My Messenger"*

Malachi 3:1-7b

(Rise)

**NICENE CREED** I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(Be seated)

**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.

### 5:00 BELL ANTHEM

*"Gloria"*

(Rise)

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

**Pastor:** Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. Holy God, who prepared the way of our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, by the ministry of John, prepare our hearts by repentant faith for Christ's glorious return.

**People:** **Grant each of us to joyfully receive the forgiveness of sins and serve you in willing obedience.**

**Pastor:** God of the prophets, Malachi was your messenger not only to the people of his age, but to your people of all days and ages, calling people to prepare for your coming.

**People:** **In this Advent season, give us faithful hearts that prepare for Christ's coming through sincere repentance of all sin in our lives and a deep trust in your grace and forgiveness.**

**Pastor:** Almighty God, we give thanks for the unity of faith that makes Your Church one mystical Body of Christ and for the partnership in the Gospel we share with others, including our fellow Lutherans, our Together in Mission partners, the Ferry's and Rachel Meyer, and our brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world.

**People:** **Keep us all steadfast in your Word of truth and the Good News of life and salvation found only in Jesus Christ.**

**Pastor:** Almighty God, our King, whose eyes watch over the nations, we pray for those who rule and govern your people in this and every land. Make them faithful in their vocations as rulers and as your servants for justice.

**People:** **Protect those who serve in the military, and grant your Spirit to guide those who minister to them. Lead each of us faithfully to serve you by fulfilling our duties in our homes, at work and school, in your Church and as citizens.**

**Pastor:** Almighty God and Father, your Son revealed His love in His compassion toward the poor and the forgotten, the despised and the lowly. Look with mercy on those who have no work and cannot provide for themselves and their families.

**People:** **Help them to find gainful employment so that they can rejoice over the fruits of their labor and move us to support them in their time of need.**

**Pastor:** Almighty God and Father, you healed the sick and defeated death by the resurrection of your Son, our Lord. Bless and be with all who suffer affliction and distress, especially Don, Barbara, Larry, Marge, Dolores, Bob, Herb, Cliff, Cindy, LuEva, Dick, Nancy, Shirley, Gladys, Russ, Arlene, John, Jack, Arlene, Shirley, Jonathan, Leonard and Sarah.

**People:** **According to your gracious will, heal the sick and comfort the suffering.**

**Pastor:** God of every blessing, we rejoice with the Baxter family as they celebrate Sam's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday as well as the Graf family, celebrating Erika's 14<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**People:** **Grant us thankfulness for all your blessings of this life.**

**Pastor:** God of comfort and consolation, we pray for Linda Key and her family upon the passing of her Nephew, Craig, as well as the family and friends of Jeannette Sommerfeld.

**People:** **Comfort all who grieve the passing of loved ones and enfold them in your everlasting arms.**

**Pastor:** Almighty God and Father, fill us with your Spirit that our love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, and sincere faith.

**People:** **Help us to discern what is best that we may be pure and blameless until the day of Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

**Pastor:** Lord Jesus, as you gave yourself for the forgiveness of sins, grant that we may receive your body and blood with sincere faith in your Word and promises.

**People:** **As we kneel to receive your precious body and blood, grant us to commune with glad confidence for our soul's well-being.**

**Pastor:** Father, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, 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

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

## THE PEACE OF THE LORD

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

People: Amen.

### HYMN "O Lamb of God, You Take Away"

O Lamb of God, You take away Each sin that leads our hearts astray.  
Have mercy on us, great High Priest, And lead us to Your endless feast.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, Your peace is here, O Israel.

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(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.

### 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.

### 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.

### HYMN #620 "Jesus Comes Today with Healing"

Jesus comes today with healing, Knocking at my door, appealing,  
Off'ring pardon, grace, and peace. He Himself makes preparation,  
And I hear His invitation: "Come and taste the blessed feast."

Christ Himself, the priest presiding, Yet in bread and wine abiding  
In this holy sacrament, Gives the bread of life, once broken,  
And the cup, the precious token Of His sacred covenant.

Under bread and wine, though lowly, I receive the Savior holy,  
Blood and body, giv'n for me, Very Lamb of God from heaven,  
Who to bitter death was given, Hung upon the cursed tree.

God descends with heav'nly power, Gives Himself to me this hour  
In this ordinary sign. On my tongue His pledge receiving,  
I accept His grace, believing That I taste His love divine.

Let me praise God's boundless favor, Whose own feast of love I savor,  
Bidden by His gracious call. Wedding garments He provides me,  
With a robe of white He hides me, Fits me for the royal hall.

Now have I found consolation, Comfort in my tribulation,  
Balm to heal the troubled soul. God, my shield from ev'ry tremor,  
Cleanses me from sin and error, Makes my wounded spirit whole.

## COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

### **POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Gracious God, our heavenly Father, you have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; 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: 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.

**People: Amen.**

### **CLOSING HYMN #512 "At the Name of Jesus" Stanzas 1-3, 5, 7**

At the name of Jesus Ev'ry knee shall bow,  
Ev'ry tongue confess Him King of glory now.  
'Tis the Father's pleasure We should call Him Lord,  
Who from the beginning Was the mighty Word.

At His voice creation Sprang at once to sight,  
All the angel faces, All the hosts of light,  
Thrones and bright dominions, Stars upon their way,  
All the heav'nly orders In their great array.

Humbled for a season, To receive a name  
From the lips of sinners Unto whom He came,  
Faithfully He bore it Spotless to the last,  
Brought it back victorious When from death He passed;

In your hearts enthrone Him; There let Him subdue  
All that is not holy, All that is not true:  
Crown Him as your captain In temptation's hour;  
Let His will enfold you In its light and pow'r.

Glory then to Jesus, Who, the Prince of light,  
To a world in darkness Brought the gift of sight;  
Praise to God the Father; In the Spirit's love  
Praise we all together Him who reigns above.

Preacher  
Liturgist  
Children's Message  
Lectors  
Acolytes  
Organist & Bell Choir Director

Pastor Harold Bender  
Pastor Noah Kegley  
Laurel Privatt  
Carri Halstead, Jane Adams  
Riley Zacharias, Alexis Plumeri  
Michelle Prince

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