



W H E N T H E
L O R D
C O M E S N E A R

HE HUMBLER HIS ENEMIES

The Third Sunday of Advent

Worship Series: When the Lord Comes Near

“Advent” is a Latin word that means “coming.” The season of Advent is the four-week period before Christmas that the Church uses to connect the two “comings” of Christ. The first time the Lord came into our world it was as a tiny, helpless baby, born in a manger in Bethlehem. However, when Jesus comes again, it will be in all his power and glory with his angelic army behind him. He will be coming as judge at the end of time. Let us use these four weeks to see how the events of Jesus’ first coming remove all our fears about his second coming. We can hold our heads high when the Lord comes near.

Today’s Theme: He Humbles Himself

Last week we saw that the Lord sends messengers to call us to repentance. This week we learn that those who refuse to heed that call to humble themselves will be humbled anyway. The Lord who once came near in flesh and now comes near in Word and sacrament will one day come near with consuming fire and judgment. The Lord will humble his enemies. This truth does two important things. First, it adds urgency to God’s Advent call to repentance. Second, it gives us comfort when we, as God’s people, experience opposition from the world. Those who oppress and harm God’s people will face justice.

Communion

We are celebrating the Lord’s Supper today. Scripture tells us that we need to examine ourselves before we receive the Lord’s Supper so that we do not take it in a harmful manner. (1 Cor. 11:27-29) For help in preparation see page 156 in the front of the hymnal.

Visitors: Because we do not want you to receive the Lord’s Supper in a harmful manner we ask that you do not come forward for the Lord’s Supper today if you are not members of a WELS or ELS church. The pastor will be happy to share with you the Biblical basis for this practice.

Serving in Worship**Pastor**

Mark A. Haefner

Organist/Pianist

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THE SERVICE

OPENING HYMN

Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates | CW 21 **306**

1 Lift up your heads, you mighty gates!
Behold, the King of glory waits.
The King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here.

2 How blest the land, the city blest,
where Christ the ruler is confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes
to whom this King in triumph comes!

3 Fling wide the gates; prepare your heart
to be a temple set apart
from earthly use for heav'n's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

4 Redeemer, come! We open wide
our hearts to you; here, Lord abide!
O enter with your grace divine
and cause your face on us to shine.

5 Eternal praise, unending fame
we offer to your saving name.
Your Holy Spirit guide us on
until our glorious goal is won.

Stand

INVOCATION

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

Amen.

CONFESSION (CW 21 pg 154)

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,
I am sinful by nature
and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.
I have not loved you with my whole heart;
I have not loved others as I should.
I deserve your punishment both now and forever.
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins
with his innocent suffering and death.
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Kyrie

In peace let us pray to the Lord

Lord, have mercy.

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

Lord, have mercy.

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

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

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

Amen



C: **Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**



We praise you, we bless you, we wor-ship you, we glorify you,



we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther al - mighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the



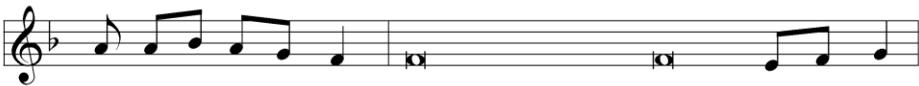
sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the



sin of the world; re - ceive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of



God the Father; have mercy on us. For you on-ly are holy;



you on - ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Spirit,



are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14–17

¹⁴Sing out, daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, you daughter of Jerusalem. ¹⁵The LORD has removed the judgment against you. He has turned back your enemy. Israel's king, the LORD, is in your midst! You no longer need to fear disaster. ¹⁶In that day Jerusalem will be told, "Do not be afraid, O Zion. Do not give up. ¹⁷The LORD your God is with you as a hero who will save you. He takes great delight in you. He will quiet you with his love. He will rejoice over you with singing." (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM OF THE DAY 130G "I will wait for you

All Sing

LORD, from the depths I call to you;
in your pres - ence who can stand,
Lord, hear me from on high
if you our sins re - cord?

and give at - ten - tion to my voice
But yet for - give - ness is with you,
when I for mer - cy cry. Lord,
that we may fear you, Lord.

Vs 1 - Cantor
Out of the depths I cry to You
In darkest places I will call
Incline Your ear to me anew
And hear my cry for mercy, Lord

Vs 2 - Cantor
Were You to count my sinful ways
How could I come before Your throne?
Yet full forgiveness meets my gaze
I stand redeemed by grace alone

All Sing

Chorus

I will wait for you, I will wait for you; on your
word, I will re - ly. I will wait for you, sure - ly
wait for you, till my soul is sat - is - fied.

Vs 3 - Cantor

So put your hope in God alone
Take courage in His power to save
Completely and forever won
By Christ emerging from the grave

CHORUS – All Sing

Vs 4 - Cantor

Now He has come to make a way
And God Himself has paid the price
That all who trust in Him today
Find healing in His sacrifice

CHORUS – All Sing

Outro – All Sing

Outro (repeat is optional)

I wait— my soul waits— for the Lord;
Is - rael, put your hope in God,
my hope is in his word.
for mer - cy is with him
More than the watch - man waits for dawn
and full re - demp - tion. From their sins
Fine
my soul waits for the Lord.
his peo - ple he'll re - deem. 0

SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4–7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always! I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.
Alleluia*

GOSPEL

Luke 3:7–18

⁷So John kept saying to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Therefore produce fruits in keeping with repentance! Do not even think of saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' because I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ⁹Even now the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰The crowds began to ask him, "What should we do then?"

¹¹He answered them, "Whoever has two shirts should share with the person who has none, and whoever has food should do the same."

¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized. They said, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³To them he said, "Collect no more than what you were authorized to."

¹⁴Soldiers were also asking him, "And what should we do?"

He told them, "Do not extort money from anyone by force or false accusation. Be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might be the Christ. ¹⁶John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But someone mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and

he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸Then with many other words, he appealed to them and was preaching good news to the people. (EHV)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

HYMN OF THE DAY

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You | CW21 **324**

1 O Lord, how shall I meet you,
how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you,
my hope, my heart's delight.
O Jesus, let your Word be
a lamp to light my way,
to show me how to please you,
to guide me ev'ry day.

2 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!

3 Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
who sit in deepest gloom,
who mourn o'er joys departed
and tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you,
he's standing at the door
who best can help and cheer you
and bids you weep no more.

4 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
let not your souls distress;
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.

5 He comes to judge the nations,
a terror to his foes,
a light of consolation
and blessèd hope to those
who love the Lord's appearing.
O glorious Sun, now come,
send forth your beams most cheering,
and guide us safely home.

SERMON

Stand

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

**He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Be seated

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.

We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.

Move us to take to heart the words of John: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.

Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.

Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

OFFERING (CW21 748 v. 1)

1 Brothers, sisters, let us gladly
Give to God our all, our best—
Service hearty, thorough, honest,
With a living love impressed.
All our duty, all our striving,
All our time to him belong;
Praise him, then, with true devotion;
Come before him with a song.

The Sacrament

A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 1Co 11:28-29 (NIV1984)

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M The Lord be with you.



M Lift up your hearts.



M Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



M It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of

the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, untie us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my ✝ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my ✝ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen

LAMB OF GOD



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

Your Body Given for Me, O Savior | CW21 671

1 You body, giv'n for me, O Savior,
Your blood, which you for me have shed—
These are my life and strength forever;
By them my hungry soul is fed.
O Jesus, may your body and your blood
Be for my soul the highest good.

2 With you, Lord, I am now united;
I live in you and you in me.
In you my soul will be delighted,
As joys increase and sorrows flee.
O Jesus, may your body and your blood
Be for my soul the highest good.

3 Who can condemn me now? For surely
the Lord is near, who justifies.
No hell I fear, and thus securely
With Jesus I to heaven rise.
O Jesus, may your body and your blood
Be for my soul the highest good.

4 Tho' death may threaten with disaster,
It cannot rob me of my cheer,
For he who is of death the master
With help and strength is always near.
O Jesus, may your body and your blood
Be for my soul the highest good.

5 Thus ev'ry pain is disappearing;
One taste my heart has come to know—
Of Jesus and his love endearing,
The taste that sweetens ev'ry woe
O Jesus, may your body and your blood
Be for my soul the highest good.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good:

His mercy endues forever

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

BLESSING

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.

CLOSING HYMN

Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace | CW21 950

1 Lord, bid your servant go in peace,
Your word is now fulfilled,
These eyes have seen salvation's dawn,
This child so long foretold.

2 This is the Savior of the world,
The Gentiles' promised light,
God's glory dwelling in our midst,
The joy of Israel.

3 With saints of old, with saints to come,
To you we lift our voice;
To Father, Son, and Spirit blest
be honor, love, and praise.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 9:30 AM Sunday School and Bible Class, 10:30 AM Worship with Communion, 11:30 AM Choir Practice

Monday: 9:30 AM Blue River Pastors' Circuit Meeting at St. Mark

Wednesday: 6:00 PM Trinity Christmas Service NELHS South Gym

Sunday: NO Sunday School or Bible Class, 10:30 AM, 11:30 AM Choir Practice

If you want to order a new hymnal for yourself or for the church contact Bill Glisson. Orders will be placed in December this week. Deadline is TODAY.

The Trinity Christmas Service will be on December 15 (this Wednesday) at 6 PM at NELHS.

Everyone Outreach is our Mission Festival seminar for this year. We would like as many members as possible to attend. January 22 Session 1 at Grace, January 23 Session 2 at Bethel. Please sign up online using this code.



Christmas Treat Bags – A container is available on the bureau in the entry to collect donations for Christmas Treat Bags. If you would like to donate fruit, nuts or candy speak with Judy Remmers.

Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve

5:30 PM at Bethel

7:30 PM at Grace

Christmas Day

8:45 AM at Grace

10:30 AM at Bethel

Invitations cards are still available and there is still time to invite friends and neighbors to worship with you on Christmas!

If you have any Meditations from this past year please bring them to the church office. We will get them to the WELS Prison Ministry for distribution to prisons across the country.

Parish Status/Pastoral Needs Assessment (from District President Hirsch)

The servant/leadership of our congregations is asking for the thoughts of the brothers and sisters of our congregations at this time. This information will help our District President assist us in the task of asking the Lord for another pastor to serve us. Of course, we realize that the various parts of the body of Christ can have different observations or opinions. It is our privilege to work together under our head, which is Christ. God bless our labors together in Jesus' name.

You can access the survey online by clicking the link below. A paper version of the survey is also available in the narthex.

[Parish Status/Pastoral Needs Assessment Survey](#)

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (Eph 1:18-23)

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (2 Co 4:4-7)



The link to the online form is too long to publish here so use the QR Code, or you can click on the link that will be sent out in the weekly email announcements.



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Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Worship 75, Facebook live 5, clicks 31. Audio/YouTube 14, Bible Class 32. Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,583.54, Given, 2,560.40, Hymnals 24.00. Advent Service: Attendance: , Offerings . **To God be the glory!**

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