



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

HE LIFTS UP THE HUMBLD

The Fourth 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 Lifts Up the Humbled

By this time of the holiday season, people are often weighed down. They feel guilty about presents that are not perfect, or parties that did not go as planned, or year-end projects that did not get completed. To top it all off, now is when it dawns on people how little attention they have given to the spiritual preparation Advent invites. If that is how we feel, perhaps the frenzy of December has actually done us a favor. We have been stretched to our limits. We have been made aware of our shortcomings. We have been humbled. Perfect! For being made aware of our weaknesses does not disqualify us from God's care. It does the opposite. It is what prepares us for the work he does best. He is a God who lifts up the humbled.

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Serving in Worship

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OPENING HYMN

The Angel Gabriel | CW 21 **328** (CW 93 **24**)

1 The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he to meek and lowly Mary,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

2 "I come from heav'n to tell the Lord's decree:
A blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

3 Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
"To me be as it pleases God," she said.
"My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name."
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!

4 Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

Stand

INVOCATION

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

CONFESSION

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 mer - cy.

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



Lord, have mer - cy.

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 mer - cy.

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



Lord, have mer - cy.

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



Glory Be to God

Gloria in Excelsis

A series of eight musical staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a line of lyrics. The lyrics are: "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;"

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.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, 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.

FIRST READING

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel.
His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity.

³Therefore the Lord will give them up,
until the time when the woman who is in labor bears a child.
Then the remaining survivors from his brothers will return to the people of Israel.

⁴He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

They will dwell securely, for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth.


⁵This one will be their peace. (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 85 (CW 93 pg. 97)

Refrain



I will hear what the Lord pro-claims: peace to his peo - ple.

Psalm tone



You showed favor to your land, O LORD;*
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people*
and covered all their sins.

Show us your unfailing love, O LORD,*
and grant us your salvation.

Refrain

I will listen to what God the LORD will say,*
he promises peace to his people, his saints.

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,*
that his glory may dwell in our land.

Love and faithfulness meet together;*
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

SECOND READING

Hebrews 10:5-10

⁵Therefore when he entered the world, Christ said:

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,
but you prepared a body for me.

⁶You were not pleased
with burnt offerings and sin offerings.

⁷Then I said, "Here I am.
I have come to do your will, God.
In the scroll of the book it is written about me."

⁸First he said:

Sacrifices and offerings that were offered according to the law,
both burnt offerings and sin offerings,
you did not desire,
and you were not pleased with them.

⁹Then he said:

Here I am.
I have come to do your will.

He does away with the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰By this will, we have been sanctified once and for all, through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ. (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

CHOIR ANTHEM

Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light

GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-55

³⁹In those days Mary got up and hurried to the hill country, to a town of Judah.
⁴⁰She entered the home of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹Just as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²She called out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴In fact, just now, as soon as the sound of your greeting reached

my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy! ⁴⁵Blessed is she who believed, because the promises spoken to her from the Lord will be fulfilled!”

⁴⁶Then Mary said,

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior,

⁴⁸because he has looked with favor on the humble state of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹because the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm.

He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones.

He has lifted up the lowly.

⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things, but the rich he has sent away empty.

⁵⁴He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, remembering his mercy,

⁵⁵as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his offspring forever. (EHV)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

HYMN OF THE DAY

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel | CW21 **327** (CW 93 **23**)

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

2 O come, O Root of Jesse, free Your own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save, And bring them vict’ry o’er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

3 O come, O Dayspring from on high, And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death’s dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

4 O come, O Key of David, come, And open wide our heav’nly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

SERMON

Stand

CONFESSION OF FAITH

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. 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

HYMN

Magnificat | CW 93 pg. 57-58

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed. The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in ev'ry generation. He has shown the strength of his arm; he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent a way empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise made to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his children forever. Amen.

PRAYER

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart, that being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

C **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.**

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.

Amen

CLOSING HYMN

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding | CW21 **318** (CW 93 **15**)

1 Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding; "Christ is near," we hear it say.
"Cast away the works of darkness; You are children of the day."

2 See, the Lamb, so long-expected, Comes with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow, One and all, to be forgiv'n,

3 So, when next he comes with glory And the world is wrapped in fear,
He will shield us with his mercy And with words of love draw near.

4 Honor, glory, might, dominion To the Father and the Son
With the everlasting Spirit While eternal ages run!