



# The King Shall Come

**PREPARE TO MEET HIM**

*Second Sunday in Advent*

# **BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** | York, Nebraska

*December 10, 2023*

## **SERIES THEME: THE KING SHALL COME**

The Church Year begins with the season of Advent, which means “coming.” When someone is coming over, what do you do? It depends on who is coming and why they are coming. If it’s a good friend popping in for a quick visit, you don’t worry too much about how the house looks or serving a meal. But imagine the governor is coming over for an evening to give you some sort of citizen’s award. That’s a big deal. There is work to be done: deep cleaning, planning a menu, getting the yard looking its best, etc. So, is Advent a big deal? It depends on who is coming and why they are coming. In this worship series, we get the answer to those questions. We see that the King shall come. We see why the King came on that first Christmas and why he shall come again on judgment day. In this season, we also cherish the way our King comes to us today in Word and sacrament, establishing his reign in our hearts.

## **THEME OF THE DAY: PREPARE TO MEET HIM**

Scriptures teach that King Jesus is the Son of God in flesh and the only hope for salvation. Jesus himself claimed that he is the only way into the glorious kingdom of heaven. You do not approach meeting someone like that casually or carelessly. You prepare meticulously. What does that mean? What does a life of readiness—ready to meet such a King—look like? In one word: repentance. If we insist on hanging onto our sins, how can we receive the One who came for the very purpose of taking those sins away? Throughout history, God has raised up called servants—like John the Baptist—to preach a message of repentance. This repentance is central to our preparation for the Lord’s coming. Without repentance, the King’s coming only terrifies. But all those who believe and repent look forward to the coming of the King and the consummation of his everlasting kingdom.

**Worship Leader**  
**Organist/Pianist**

Pastor Justin Wilkens  
Timothy Richert

## **Acknowledgments**

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## **The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)**

*Stand*

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

**Amen.**

### **Confession**

*CW 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**

*CW 213*

Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful and answer me.

**Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

*Be seated*

## Hymn: 495 The King Shall Come

### THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. By his coming, give us strength in our conflicts, and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### First Reading

*Isaiah 40:1–11*

*Isaiah prophesies about one who could come to prepare people to meet their sovereign Lord. This prophecy is fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist.*

### Comfort for God's People

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call out to her.

Her warfare really is over.

Her guilt is fully paid for.

Yes, she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice is calling out:

In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord.

In the wasteland make a level highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley will be raised up,

and every mountain and hill will be made low.

The rugged ground will become level,

and the rough places will become a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed,

and all flesh together will see it.

Yes, the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

<sup>6</sup> A voice was saying, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry out?"

All flesh is grass,

and all its beauty is like a wildflower in the countryside.

<sup>7</sup> Grass withers, flowers fade,

when the breath of the Lord blows on them.

Yes, the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup> Grass withers, flowers fade,

but the Word of our God endures forever.

<sup>9</sup> Get up on a high mountain,

O Zion, you herald of good news.

Lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, you herald of good news.

Lift it up! Do not be afraid!

Say to the cities of Judah,

"Here is your God!"

<sup>10</sup> Look, God the Lord will come with strength,

and his arm is ruling for him.

Look, his reward is with him.

The result of his work is in front of him.

<sup>11</sup> Like a shepherd he will care for his flock.

With his arm he will gather the lambs.

He will lift them up on his lap.

He will gently lead the nursing mothers.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Second Reading**

*2 Peter 3:8–14*

*St. Peter reminds us that judgment day will come at an unexpected time. So prepare with daily repentance.*

<sup>8</sup> But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: For the Lord, one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to do what he promised, as some consider slowness. Instead, he is patient for your sakes, not wanting anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will pass away with a roar, the elements will be dissolved as they burn with great heat, and the earth and what was done on it will be burned up. <sup>11</sup> Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed, what kind of people ought you to be, living in holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> as you look forward to

and hasten the coming of the day of God? That day will cause the heavens to be set on fire and destroyed, and the elements to melt as they burn with great heat. <sup>13</sup> But according to his promise we look forward to new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, dear friends, as you look forward to these things, make every effort to be found in peace, spotless and blameless in his sight.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Luke 3:4,6*

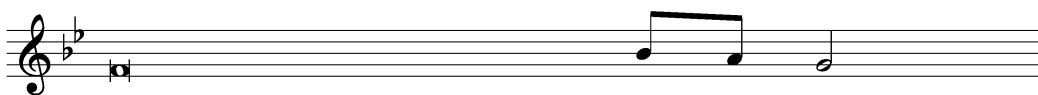


*Refrain*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Tone*



Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.



And all people will see God's sal - va - tion.

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### Gospel

*Mark 1:1-8*

*God raised us John the Baptist to preach a message of repentance and forgiveness, preparing people to meet their Lord and King.*

### John the Baptist Prepares the Way

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <sup>2</sup> This is how it is written in the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare the way for you.

<sup>3</sup> A voice of one calling out in the wilderness,  
"Prepare the way of the Lord.

Make his paths straight."

<sup>4</sup> John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>5</sup> The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. <sup>6</sup> John was clothed in camel's hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He preached, "One more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals! <sup>8</sup> I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

## **Hymn of the Day: 316 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry**

**Sermon:** 2 Peter 3:8-14

*Stand*

### **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 truly 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**

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.*

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 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.**

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical and emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless... *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Pour out your compassion on the grieving and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

**Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

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

**Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

## **Offering**

**Offering Hymn: 325 My Soul in Stillness Waits**

*sts. Ref-3*

## **THE SACRAMENT**

*Stand*

### **Preface**

*CW 165*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

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**

*CW 167*

The musical score is written on five staves in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: "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." The score ends with a double bar line.

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, unite 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.**

## O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169

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.

*Be seated*

### Distribution

**Close Communion** We ask that only those who have previously spoken to our pastor or are members in good standing of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to Holy Communion today. Our practice of Close Communion (which has been the practice of the Christian Church throughout the ages) is in no way trying to judge anyone's faith. What we are trying to do is follow the Bible's clear teaching (I Corinthians 11) to first study God's Word together. As we do so, we can share with/review with you what the Lord's Supper is all about. You, then, also have an opportunity to examine what we believe and teach before you come to the Lord's Supper and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.

**Distribution Hymn: 660 Here, O My Lord, I See You Face to Face**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures 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.

**Amen.**

### **Hymn: 302 Prepare the Royal Highway**



## ***NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS***

**Today:** 9:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School, 10:30 AM Worship and Communion

**Sunday:** 9:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School, 10:30 AM Worship

**CONNECTION CARDS:** Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at [www.bethelyork.com](http://www.bethelyork.com) on the member connect tab or scan this code.



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Personal assisted listening devices are available.

**Given to the Lord:** Attendance: Worship 62, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,854.90, Given \$2,365.25. **To God be the glory!**

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