



GREAT EXPECTATIONS

THE SEASON OF ADVENT



“I BAPTIZE WITH WATER, BUT AMONG YOU
STANDS ONE YOU DO NOT KNOW,
EVEN HE WHO COMES AFTER ME,
THE STRAP OF WHOSE SANDAL
I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNTIE.”

**Zion Lutheran Church
Online Worship Service
December 13, 2020**

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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 thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

INTROIT: *Psalm 84:1, 9-12*

PASTOR: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob. You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin. Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

ALL: 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.

PASTOR: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.

Hear Our Praises

May our homes be filled with dancing,
May our streets be filled with joy;
May injustice bow to Jesus
As the people turn to pray.

From the mountain to the valley,
Hear our praises rise to you;
From the heavens to the nations,
Hear our singing fill the air.

May a light shine in the darkness,
As we walk before the cross;
May Your glory fill the whole earth
As the water o'er the seas.

From the mountain to the valley,
Hear our praises rise to you;
From the heavens to the nations,
Hear our singing fill the air.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

From the mountain to the valley,
Hear our praises rise to you;
From the heavens to the nations,
Hear our singing fill the air.

'Hear Our Praises' by Rueben Morgan
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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

PASTOR: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

PASTOR: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

ALL: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

PASTOR: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

ALL: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

PASTOR: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. 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.

All: Amen.

KYRIE (spoken)

PASTOR: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

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

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

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

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

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

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

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

ALL: Amen.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

PASTOR: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

PASTOR: Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING: *Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

“For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed.” I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

PASTOR: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE LESSON: *I Thessalonians 5:16-24*

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil. May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

PASTOR: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PASTOR: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

ALL: Glory to You, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL: *John 1:6-8, 19-28*

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" Now the Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

PASTOR: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED (spoken in unison)

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

And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

Hark the Glad Sound

**Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry 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'n's eternal arches ring
With Thy beloved name.

SERMON

SONG OF THE SEASON

Behold Him

He who was before there was light,
Walked across the pages of time.
He who made ev'ry living thing, behold Him.
He who heard humanity's cry,
Left His throne to wake as a child.
He became like the least of us. Behold Him.

Jesus, Son of God, Messiah,
The Lamb, the roaring Lion.
Oh, be still and behold Him.

He who dined with sinners and saints,
Healed the blind, the lost and the lame,
Even now He is in our midst. Behold Him.
He who chose a criminal's end,
Paid with blood to settle our debt,
Buried death as He rose to life, behold Him.

Jesus, Son of God, Messiah,
The Lamb, the roaring Lion.
Oh, be still and behold Him.

**Jesus, Alpha and Omega,
Our God the risen Savior.
Oh, be still and behold Him.**

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.
Worthy, worthy, worthy to receive all praise.**

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.
Worthy, worthy, worthy to receive all praise.**

**Jesus, Son of God, Messiah,
The Lamb, the roaring Lion.
Oh, be still and behold Him.**

**Jesus, Alpha and Omega,
Our God the risen Savior.
Oh, be still and behold Him.**

“Behold Him” by Paul Baloche and Mitch Wong
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PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

PASTOR: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Show us Your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us Your salvation!
Keep Your saints from every folly that would turn them from Your words of peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: **hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: You sent John to proclaim the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Richly and daily forgive our sins and the sins of all believers. Gather and preserve Your Holy Christian Church by Your voice and send us faithful preachers who will not deny but confess Your truth. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: **hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: Dear Father, be the source of strength and comfort in every home. Bless the children of our families, that every darkness would be lightened by Your Son's gracious visitation. Sanctify them completely, that their whole spirit, soul and body may be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

PASTOR: Give wisdom and success to our nation and its leaders. Behold in mercy all who are in authority over us and those newly elected. Preserve our land and its citizens in peace and harmony and protect all who serve in harm's way. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

PASTOR: Give us faith to believe the New Testament in Your blood, and to confess Your truth with honest hearts. Into Your hands, Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (spoken in unison)

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed by 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.

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.

All: Amen.

Joy to the World

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.**