

PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE LORD,

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS

THE SEASON OF ADVENT



MAKE STRAIGHT PATHS FOR HIM.

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**Online Worship Service**  
**December 6, 2020**

**WELCOME**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: *Peace***

**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, Desire of nations, bind  
In one the hearts of all mankind;  
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,  
And be Thyself our King of Peace.

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

**INTROIT: *Psalm 80, selected verses***

PASTOR: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your salvation comes." The Lord will cause his majestic voice to be heard, and you shall have gladness of heart. Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved! Turn again, O God of hosts! Look down from heaven, and see. But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!

**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: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your salvation comes." The Lord will cause his majestic voice to be heard, and you shall have gladness of heart.

## **God with Us**

Oh, You've come to bring peace,  
To be Love, to be nearer to us.  
You've come to bring life, to be Light,  
To shine brighter in us.  
Oh, Emmanuel, God with us.

Our Deliverer, You are Savior.  
In Your presence, we find our strength  
Over everything, our Redemption,  
God with us. You are God with us.

Oh, You've come to be Hope  
To this world, for Your honor and name.  
And You've come to take sin, to bear shame,  
And to conquer the grave.  
Oh, Emmanuel, God with us.

Our Deliverer, You are Savior.  
In Your presence, we find our strength  
Over everything, our Redemption,  
God with us. You are God with us.

You are here. You are holy.  
We are standing in Your glory.

You are here. You are holy.  
We are standing in Your glory.

You are here. You are holy.  
We are standing in Your glory, Lord.

Our Deliverer, You are Savior.  
In Your presence, we find our strength  
Over everything, our Redemption,  
God with us.

**Our Deliverer, You are Savior.  
In Your presence, we find our strength  
Over everything, our Redemption,  
God with us. You are God with us.  
Oh, God with us. You are God with us.**

'God With Us' by Jason Ingram & Leslie Jordan  
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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: 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.

**ALL: Amen.**

## **OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: *Isaiah 40:1-11***

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

PASTOR: This is the Word of the Lord.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

## **EPISTLE LESSON: *2 Peter 3:8-14***

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

PASTOR: This is the Word of the Lord.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

PASTOR: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-first chapter.

**ALL: Glory to You, O Lord.**

## **HOLY GOSPEL: *Mark 1:1-8***

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"—"a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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.

## **Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,  
Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us,  
Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,  
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,  
Born a child and yet a king;  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all-sufficient merit  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

## **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.

Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved! As You led Joseph like a flock, so now by Your Son lead us into straight paths. Bring us out of the bondage of our sins and plant us securely in Your eternal promises. Lord, in Your mercy,

**ALL:** **hear our prayer.**

**PASTOR:** Almighty God, in Your blessed patience, You send Your prophets and apostles, that sinners would not perish but rather reach repentance and find comfort in Your Word, which alone will stand forever. Give to our congregation and all congregations an increase of hope, that we may await the revealing of the new heavens and new earth in lives of holiness and godliness, diligent to be found without spot or blemish and at peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

**ALL:** **hear our prayer.**

**PASTOR:** Holy Lord, preserve Your gift of marriage and family against the ravages of sin, the schemes of the devil and the raging of the world. Bless the couples and families of our congregation [\_\_\_\_\_]. Strengthen them in love and care for one another and establish them on the foundation of Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy,

**ALL:** **hear our prayer.**

**PASTOR:** God of all comfort, Your Word alone endures forever. The nations of the world come and go before You. Give us leaders who will rule after Your good pleasure, keeping order and protecting life, that we may live in godly quietness and honesty. Lord, in Your mercy,

**ALL:** **hear our prayer.**

**PASTOR:** Lord of hosts, graciously regard all for whom we pray [*especially* \_\_\_\_\_]. Lord, in Your mercy,

**ALL:** **hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: 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.  
**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.**

## **It Came upon the Midnight Clear**

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old.  
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King":  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

**And ye beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low.  
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow.  
Look now! For glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:  
O rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing.**

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.**