

Fourth Sunday of Advent ❖ December 20, 2020

***WELCOME!** God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and respond too.*



THE PASTORAL GREETING

THE OPENING HYMN – “Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”

LSB 352

- 1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has truly kept His word
And at last to us did send Christ, the sinner's help and friend.
- 2 What the fathers most desired, What the prophets' heart inspired,
What they longed for many_a year, Stands fulfilled in glory here.
- 3 Abram's promised great reward, Zion's helper, Jacob's Lord—
Him of twofold race behold— Truly came, as long foretold.
- 4 As Your coming was in peace, Quiet, full of gentleness,
Let the same mind dwell in me Which is Yours eternally.
- 5 Bruise for me the serpent's head That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith, Safely kept through life and death.
- 6 Then when You will come again As the glorious king to reign,
I with joy will see Your face, Freely ransomed by Your grace.

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THE INVOCATION AND CONFESSION

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

C: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in our thoughts, our words, and our behavior—through things we have done and things we have failed to do. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved those around us as we ought. Turn us again to you and uphold us by your Holy Spirit, so that we may live and serve you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: **Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

THE HYMN OF PRAISE – “From East to West”

(Vs. 1-4)

LSB 385

- 1 From east to west, from shore to shore Let ev'ry heart awake and sing
The holy child whom Mary bore, The Christ, the everlasting king.
- 2 Behold, the world's creator wears The form and fashion of a slave;
Our very flesh our maker shares, His fallen creatures all to save.
- 3 For this how wondrously He wrought! A maiden, in her lowly place,
Became, in ways beyond all thought, The chosen vessel of His grace.
- 4 And while the angels in the sky Sang praise above the silent field,
To shepherds poor the Lord Most High, The one great Shepherd, was revealed.

Text: Public domain

✠ THE WORD ✠

THE FIRST READING – 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, NIV

Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the Messiah, God's anointed.

After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.”

Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.”

But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying:

“Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’”

“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: ... Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

THE EPISTLE READING – Romans 16:25-27, NIV

Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised divine plan of salvation for humanity. Paul proclaims this Gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.

Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith—to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

THE HYMN – “From East to West”

(Vs. 5)

LSB 385

- 5 All glory for this blessed morn To God the Father ever be;
All praise to You, O Virgin-born, And Holy Ghost eternally.

Text: Public domain

THE HOLY GOSPEL READING – Luke 1:26-38, NIV

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “Let it be to me according to your word.” Then the angel left her.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

THE HYMN – “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

LSB 356

- 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 thee, O Israel!
- 5 O come, Thou 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 thee, O Israel!
- 6 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!

- 7 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!

Text: Public domain

THE MESSAGE

✕ THE RESPONSE ✕

THE HYMN – “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

LSB 359

- 1 Lo, how a rose e’er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse’s lineage coming As prophets long have sung,
It came, a flow’ret bright, Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.
- 2 Isaiah ’twas foretold it, The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.
To show God’s love aright, She bore to us a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.
- 3 This flow’r, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness ev’rywhere.
True man, yet very God, From sin and death He saves us
And lightens ev’ry load.
- 4 O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, Who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length we pray To the bright courts of heaven,
And to the endless day.

Text: Public domain

THE APOSTLES’ CREED

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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Each petition will end with the words: Lord, in Your mercy, **C: hear our prayer.**

Hear us Heavenly Father, as we pray the prayer that Christ gave us:

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.

THE BLESSING

P: May almighty God: Father, Son ✠ and Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

C: Amen.

THE HYMN – “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

(V.s. 5)

LSB 367

5 All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising To the_ eternal Three in One.

Come and worship, come and worship; Worship Christ the newborn King.

Text: Public domain

✠ **May God bless you and yours.** ✠

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