



GOD PREPARES YOU FOR HIS COMING

Sunday Series in Advent

**GOD PREPARES YOU FOR HIS COMING
2) THROUGH HIS MESSANGERS**

9:00 & 11:15 am December 6, 2020



ROCK OF AGES

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Reaching Out in Rim Country with Rock-Solid Hope in Jesus

Welcome!

- May the message you hear today will fill your heart with the peace and joy we have in knowing that Jesus Christ is our Savior from sin.
- **Our mission** is to share the rock-solid hope of Jesus with today's world through timeless truths found in the Holy Scriptures.
- **Large print** service folders and **hearing assistance** devices are available.
- **Restrooms** are located at the far ends of the entry area.
- Thank you for respecting your fellow worshippers by practicing **social distancing**. Volunteers are sanitizing the shared touch points between services.
- **Children's** activity bags, quiet toys, and a changing table are available from the nursery in entry area.
- We are part of a world-wide Christian body and support the gospel ministry of the WELS. We'd love to share more with you. Contact our pastor today. You can also visit wels.net





Service of the Word

This service focuses on the proclamation of God's Word. Believers respond to this divine gift with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

Greeting

Hymn

O Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel

Christian Worship 23

♪ Oh, come, oh, 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. Oh, 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. Oh, 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. Oh, 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!

Invocation

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

Amen.

Confession & Absolution

We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

God our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

Amen.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Response of Praise

Peace Came to Earth

Christian Worship Supplement 707:1,4

First stanza by soloist or choir

♪ Peace came to earth at last that chosen night
When angels clove the sky with song and light
And God embodied love and sheathed his might—
Who could but gasp: Immanuel!
Who could but sing: Immanuel!

**4. How else could I have known you, O my God!
How else could I have loved you, O my God!
How else could I embrace you, O my God!
Who could but pray: Immanuel!
Who could but praise: Immanuel!**

Prayer of the Day

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.

THE WORD

First Lesson

Isaiah 40:1-11

God sends his messengers to proclaim his good news

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak 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.

³A voice is calling out: In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord. In the wasteland make a level highway for our God. ⁴Every 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. ⁵Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh together will see it. Yes, the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

⁶A 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. ⁷Grass withers, flowers fade, when the breath of the Lord blows on them. Yes, the people are grass. ⁸Grass withers, flowers fade, but the Word of our God endures forever.

⁹Get 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!"

¹⁰Look, 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. ¹¹Like 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.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 14

Christian Worship Supplement

Refrain



Come, Lord Je - sus, come. Come, Lord Je - sus,



come. Re - store your peo-ple and bless them.

Psalm Tone



The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.

The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men

to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt;

there is no one who does good, not even one. **Refrain.**

Will evildoers never learn—

those who devour my people and do not call on the LORD?

You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor,

but the LORD is their refuge.

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!

When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,

let Israel rejoice and be glad!

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 Lesson

2 Peter 3:8-14

We look forward to the coming day of God.

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. ⁹The 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.

¹⁰But 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. ¹¹Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed, what kind of people ought you to be, living in holiness and godliness, ¹²as 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. ¹³But according to his promise we look forward to new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

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

Children's Message

All children 5th grade and under are invited to come to the front area. Helpers or parents are welcome to join them.

Verse of the Day

(Luke 3:4,6)

Alleluia. Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. All mankind will see God's salvation. Alleluia.

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

God sends his messengers to prepare the world for his coming.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²This 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. ³A voice of one calling out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight."

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The 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. ⁶John was clothed in camel's hair, and he

wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He preached, "One more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals! ⁸I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

After the gospel reading:

The words and works of our King!

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Christian Worship 16

♪ **On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Come, then, and listen, for he brings
Good news about the King of kings.**

**2. Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin And furnished for a guest within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.**

**3. We hail you as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward.
Without your grace we waste away Like flow'rs that wither and decay.**

**4. Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
And lift us up to fall no more.
Oh, make your face on us to shine,
And fill the world with love divine.**

**5. All praise to you, eternal Son, Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore.**

Sermon

Mark 1:1-8

Advent 2020

God Prepares You For His Coming

- Nov 29 With His Cleansing He Saves (*1 Peter 3:18-22*)
Dec 6 With His Messengers He Calls (*Mark 1:1-8*)
Dec 13 With His Spirit He Sanctifies (*1 Thes. 5:16-24*)
Dec 20 With His Gospel He Strengthens (*Ro. 16:25-27*)

Hymn of Response

The Advent of Our King
Christian Worship 1

♪ The advent of our King Our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing In strains of holy joy.

2. The everlasting Son Incarnate deigns to be,
Himself a servant's form puts on To set his servants free.

3. O Zion's Daughter, rise To meet your lowly King,
Nor let a faithless heart despise The peace he comes to bring.

4. As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come again
And his true members all unite With him in heav'n to reign.

5. Before the dawning Day Let sin's dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on.

6. All glory to the Son, Who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever one Through all eternity.

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.

Offerings Gathered

Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. Our offerings go to support the gospel ministry of our congregation and our national church body, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). Today's offering can be placed on the entry table as you enter or exit.

Prayer of the Church

Christian Worship page 123

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.

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions. (*Silent prayer.*)

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

Closing Prayer

Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Amen.

Advent Benediction

♪ 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.
peace, and give you peace...

♪ **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.**

Hymn

Once In Royal David's City
Christian Worship 50:2-4

♪ **He came down to earth from heaven Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, And his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly Lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**3. But our eyes at last shall see him Through his own redeeming love,
For that child, so dear and gentle, Is our Lord in heav'n above,
And he leads his children on To the place where he is gone.**

**4. Not in that poor, lowly stable With the oxen standing by
Shall we see him, but in heaven, Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars his children crowned, All in white, his praise will sound.**

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remember with Prayer

- Mary Strong & Wanda Sitz who will both be having heart procedures this month; that God gives success and a good recovery.
- Miriam, Tom & Bethany's niece; that God be with her this week as she undergoes surgery.
- Doris, Marsha Wente's sister, who is battling cancer; that God provide strength and healing.
- Ruth, Kevin Wente's mother who is diagnosed with COVID-19 and is in a care facility in Tucson; that God comforts her and blesses her.
- Erica, friend of Jeni Strickland; she is fighting an infection; that God give her healing and hope.

Attendance

11/19 Starting Point: 2
11/22 Sunday Worship: 61
11/22 Sunday Bible Class: 20
11/22 Confirmation Class: 2
11/26 Thanksgiving Day: 45
11/29 Sunday Worship: 53
11/29 Sunday Bible Class: 22
11/29 Confirmation Class: 2

God's Creation Calendars

Contact Jeni Strickland. All funds raised will go to the summer "Making Music" program.

Christmas Caroling

Join our group as we social distance outdoors to share Christmas carols in our community. We'll begin by meeting at church 3pm on Dec 15 & 17.

Received in November \$11,495.67 (as of Nov, 23)

Acknowledgments

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CALENDAR

rockofages-payson.com/calendar

Sunday, December 6 Advent 2

9:00am Service
10:05am Bible Study
11:15am Service
12:30pm Youth Confirmation Class

Wednesday, December 9

6:00pm Midweek Advent Service

Thursday, December 10

10:00am Starting Point Class

Sunday, December 13 Advent 3

9:00am Service with Lord's Supper
10:05am Bible Study
11:15am Service with Lord's Supper
12:30pm Youth Confirmation Class

Tuesday, December 15

3:00pm Christmas Caroling (round 1)

Wednesday, December 16

11:00am Mary & Martha Christmas Lunch
6:00pm Midweek Advent Service

Serving This Week

Flowers, Communion Setup: Marsha Wente
Music: Keyboard, Jeni Strickland; 4 For Christ
Presiding Minister: Tom Barthel
Ushers: Creig Solomon



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