

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.

Amen.

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

God of all time,

we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of justice and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. In ☩ Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!

Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

“Light of Hope, Light of Peace”

Mark Patterson

See Insert

Litany *(responsively)*

During Advent, God’s light illuminates a weary world.

For any who have grown weary of waiting:

God speaks, “Peace, be still.”

For any who are anxious about the worries of tomorrow:

God speaks, “Peace, be still.”

For any whose lips have been silenced:

God speaks, “Peace, be still.”

Candle Lighting

Prayer

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Kyrie

Prayer of the Day

(Together) **Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

Teaching Moment

Children's Sermon

First Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-10

¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

(After the reading:) The word of the Lord. **R/ Thanks be to God.**

Advent Carol

“Hark, the Glad Sound”

Hymn No.239

Reading Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 *(Responsively, Lector and People)*

¹Give the king your justice, O God,

and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

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⁶**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;

And let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁸Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel; you alone do wondrous deeds!

¹⁹**And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.**

Second Lesson

Romans 15:4-13

⁴Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; ¹⁰and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; ¹¹and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; ¹²and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." ¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(After the reading) **The Word of the Lord** R/Thanks be to God

Alleluia

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**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 3:1-12

(Spoken after the announcement) **R/ Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" ⁴Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to

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yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

(Spoken after the reading) The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor David Echelbarger

Hymn of the Day

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

Hymn No. 249

Nicene Creed

(Together) **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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic 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.

Prayers of Intercession

As we anticipate the fullness of Christ, we join with the church throughout the world, praying for all who are in need.

(After each petition:) let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, those spoken aloud and those known only to you, and grant us peace through Jesus Christ, our coming Savior.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

Choir Anthem

“Pacem”

arr. Patrick Liebergen

Great Thanksgiving

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Eucharistic Prayer

Holy God, the Beginning and the End ...

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again ...

Through him, all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord’s Prayer

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Invitation

Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you. Share in the feast of salvation. All are welcome.

Distribution

We invite all baptized Christians and visitors of all denominations, even the youngest, to the table of the Lord. Children who desire a blessing rather than receiving the bread and the wine should stand with folded hands to indicate their preference. Please follow the ushers’ directions to one of several communion stations in the sanctuary. If you need to have the sacrament brought to your pew, please inform an usher. Receive the wine or indicate a preference for grape juice by asking the server or pointing to the center of the tray. *Gluten free wafers available upon request.*

Lamb of God

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Distribution Hymn

“Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”

Hymn No. 244

Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

(Together) **God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SENDING

Benediction

God most high, God with us, God poured out on us, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

Hymn No. 264

Vs 1,3,4

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude



At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the light of Christ's coming. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.



John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter, died around 749

Sunday, December 04, 2016

*A monk in an abbey near Jerusalem, John wrote many hymns as well as theological works. One of his works, *The Fount of Wisdom*, remained influential for centuries.*