



Third Sunday in Advent

The Order of Worship

Pre-Service Music & Greeting

The Invocation

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

Prepare My Heart, Lord Jesus!”

Opening Hymn

“Arise, O Christian People”
Christian Worship 14 st. 1-3

Arise, O Christian people! Prepare yourselves today.
Prepare to greet the Savior, who takes your sins away.
To us, by grace alone the truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven to all the world is shown.

Prepare the way before him; prepare for him the best.
Cast out what would offend him, this great, this heav’nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way; the lowly valley’s raising,
The heights of pride abasing, his path all even lay.

The Congregation will stand

The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
Beneath his feet in terror the haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, that heeds God’s invitation
And makes true preparation — it is the Lord’s delight.

Prepare My Heart through Righteousness

P: “There is no one who is righteous, not even one. There is no one who understands. There is no one who searches for God” (*Romans 3:10*). The very thing which would make it possible for us to stand before the Lord does not exist in us, or in

our lives. It is for this reason we must humbly confess “that no one will be declared righteous in his sight by the works of the law, for through the law we become conscious of sin” (*Romans 3:20*). With truly repent hearts and grieving hearts, we plead:

C: Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a troubled and repentant sinner, confess that I have sinned against you in my thoughts, my words, and my actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I am distressed by the sins that trouble me and am deeply sorry for them.

Prepare My Heart through Righteousness

P: God has heard and answered your plea for mercy, and has given his one and only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for your sins. Be assured nothing can separate you from the undeserved love of God. Be confident of God’s powerful rescue in Christ Jesus. Be at peace for all your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Because of God’s undeserved love for us in his Son, Jesus Christ, we can live with the confidence of which the Apostle Paul wrote:

But now, completely apart from the Law, a righteousness from God has been made known. The Law and the Prophets testify to it. This righteousness from God comes through faith to all and over all who believe.

(Romans 3:21-22).

P: Praise be to the Lord, our God, he has declared us righteous through faith. It is through this precious gift, we live ever confident in the knowledge we are prepared to welcome our coming Savior.

As the third candle of the Advent wreath is lit, rejoice because righteousness has come into the world. Rejoice because the

righteousness we need is ours through faith. Rejoice, because Jesus is our righteousness.

Hymn verse

“Arise, O Christian People”
Christian Worship 14 st. 4

Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive you this blessed Adventide.
From stall and manger low come now to dwell within me;
I’ll sing your praises gladly and forth your glory show.

Prayer of the Day

P: O gracious Lord, when we hear the words, “there is no one who is righteous, no not one,” we are tempted to believe this does not apply to us. Humbly we must confess we can not attain the righteousness you desire or demand. Our lives are filled with unrighteousness. While we deserve only justice, you had mercy on us, and sent your Son to secure what we lacked. By your Holy Spirit lead us to confess our sins and look to Jesus for forgiveness. Also, through your undeserved love keep us living the righteous life you desire so that we will be ready to welcome your Son at his coming. Be with us. Comfort us. Strengthen us so we can be confident of life in heaven where we will live with you and praise as our good and gracious God—Father, Son, and Spirit—the God of all righteousness and our salvation.



C: A — — men!

The Lessons from God’s Word

“The Lord is Our Righteousness!”

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11

¹The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me

to preach good news to the afflicted.
 He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim freedom for the captives
 and release for those who are bound,
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
 and the day of vengeance for our God,
 to comfort all who mourn,
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion,
 to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,
 the oil of joy instead of mourning,
 a cloak of praise instead of a faint spirit,
 so that they will be called oaks of righteousness,
 a planting of the LORD to display his beauty.

¹⁰I will rejoice greatly in the LORD. My soul will celebrate because of my God, for he has clothed me in garments of salvation. With a robe of righteousness he covered me, like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress like a priest, and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.

¹¹For as the earth produces its growth, and as a garden causes what has been sown to sprout up, so God the LORD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up in the presence of all the nations.

Psalm of the Day

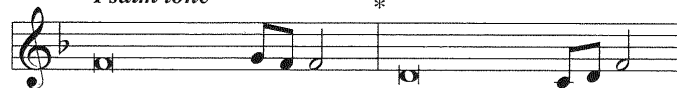
Psalm 71

Refrain



Bless-ed are they who hope, who hope in the Lord.

Psalm tone



In you, O LORD, I have taken | refuge; *
 let me never be | put to shame.

Rescue me and deliver me in your | righteousness; *
turn your ear to me and | save me.

Be my rock of refuge to which I can | always go; *
for you are my rock and my | fortress.

Refrain

Since my youth, O God, you have | taught me; *
and to this day I declare your mar- | velous deeds.

Even when I am | old and gray, *
do not forsake | me, O God.

Till I declare your power to the next gener- | ation, *
your might to all who | are to come.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son, *
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning, *
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Refrain

Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always. ¹⁷Pray without ceasing. ¹⁸In everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹Do not extinguish the Spirit. ²⁰Do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹But test everything. Hold on to the good. ²²Keep away from every kind of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Children's Message

"What God Wants at Christmas"

Theme for the Day

(printed on next page)

P: The LORD reigns. Let the earth celebrate. For you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth. You are raised up far above all gods. He guards the lives of his favored ones. He delivers them from the hand of the wicked. Light rises for the righteous and joy for the upright in heaven. Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, and give thanks as you remember his holiness.

Handbells

“Oh, Come, Oh, Come Emmanuel”

Arranged by Jason Krug

Published by Agape / Hope Publishing

Gospel

John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?”

²⁰He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, “I am not the Christ.”

²¹And they asked him, “Who are you then? Are you Elijah?”

He said, “I am not.”

“Are you the Prophet?”

“No,” he answered.

²²Then they asked him, “Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ just as Isaiah the prophet said.”

²⁴They had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵So they asked John, “Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?”

²⁶“I baptize with water,” John answered. “Among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.”

²⁸These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

P: This is the Word of our God!

Congregation responds

“Blest Be the God of Israel”
Christian Worship 275 st. 1

Blest be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free;
He visits and redeems us; he grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill his promise and bring his people peace.

Hymn of the Day

“Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”
Christian Worship 28

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.

What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets’ heart inspired,
What they longed for many a year
Stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram’s promised great reward,
Zion’s helper, Jacob’s Lord —
Him of two-fold race behold —
Truly came, as long foretold.

Welcome, O my Savior, now!
Joyful, Lord, to you I bow.
Come into my heart, I pray;
Oh, prepare yourself a way.

Crush 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.

And, when you shall come again
As a glorious king to reign,
I with joy may see your face,
Freely ransomed by your grace.

Prepare, My Heart, Lord Jesus! _____

Sermon

Isaiah 61:10

“The Lord is My Righteousness!”

With which I am clothed
By which I am prepared

The Confession of Faith

(We join in the words of the Apostles Creed)

**C: 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.

Pray, Praise, and Give Thanks!

Prayers for the Day

Special Prayers and requests

The Lord's Prayer

(spoken with the pastor)

C: Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory

are yours now and forever. Amen!

Hymn

“Jesus, Your Blood and Righteousness”

Christian Worship 376

Jesus, your blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Mid flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great day —
Who can a word against me say?
Fully through you absolved I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

Lord, I believe your precious blood,
Which at the very throne of God
Forever will for sinners plead,
For me — e'en for my soul — was shed.

Lord, I believe we're sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
You have for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
E'en then this shall be all my plea:
Jesus has lived and died for me.

Jesus, be worshiped endlessly!
Your boundless mercy has for me,
For me and all your hands have made,
An everlasting ransom paid.

Closing Prayer

P: O gracious Lord, the psalmist confessed: "If you should keep track of our sins, who could stand." He also confessed: "but with you there is forgiveness." How blessed we are that you have heard our desperate cry and provided a Savior. He has brought mercy and forgiveness. He has also secured the righteousness we need to stand before you as a holy God. Keep us always in this grace. When we stray, return us. When we rebel, forgive us. When we despair, comfort us. By means of your undeserved love you have given us obedience for this life, as well as a life of righteousness by which we can stand before you and welcome you. Sustain by your mercy, so we can always rejoice in knowing and confessing you as the Lord our righteousness—Father, Son and Spirit.



C: A ——— men.

The Benediction:

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one

another. Serve the Lord with gladness.
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.



C: A — men. A — men. A — men.

Closing Hymn

“God’s Own Son Most Holy”

Christian Worship 17

God’s own Son most holy
Came a servant lowly
Came to live among us,
Came to suffer for us,
Bore the cross to save us,
Hope and freedom gave us.

Still he comes within us;
Still his voice would win us
From the sins that hurt us,
Would to truth convert us
From our foolish errors
Ere he comes in terrors.

Thus, if we have know him
And will not disown him
Now have loved him coldly
But will trust him boldly,
He will then receive us,
Heal us, and forgive us.

Those who then are loyal
Find a welcome royal.
Come, then, O Lord Jesus,
From our sins release us.

Let us here confess you
Till in heav'n we bless you.

Silent Prayer

Announcements

Today—*Welcome in Name of our promised and coming Savior, Jesus Christ!* How blessed we are to know the righteousness, which excluded us from standing before God, has been provided by our Savior, Jesus Christ.

- If you are visiting today, please sign the guest book or a guest card, and worship again, soon!
- Following the service there will be time for snacks, a cup of coffee, and the gift of fellowship in the Lord.
- Bible Class will begin at 11:00 am to review Paul's letter to the Christians in Thessalonica where he exhorts them to live a life of constant preparation to receive the Lord.
- Decorating, Chili & Fellowship will begin at 3:30 pm. The schedule for the afternoon is printed on the next page.

Monday—Handbell Choir practice at 7:00 pm.

Wednesday—There will be no Bible Class until the New Year. On January 10th we will begin a "Primer on the Passion," which reviews the prophecies regarding Jesus.

Friday—Office Hours from 10:30—2:30 pm

Saturday—Church Cleaning: Todd

- Lawn beginning December 24th—L. Schroeder

Sunday, December 24th—Sunday Worship and Live Streaming at 9:30 am. This Sunday concludes the Advent theme: Prepare My Heart, Lord Jesus. Through the prophet Samuel we come to know God is faithful and keeps his promise. It is that faithfulness which encourages us to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming.

- The Lord's Supper will also be offered in this service. You may register to receive it today.
- There will be no Bible Class following the morning service.
- **Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 pm.** This evening we will

take the time to rejoice in the birth of our Savior, and his coming into the world to rescue us from the curse of sin, the dominion of the devil, and the control of our sinful flesh.

Coming Events

Church Decorating and Chili

This afternoon we will prepare the church for the celebration of Jesus' birth on **December 17th**. The schedule will be as follows —

- ◇ Decorating at 3:30 pm
- ◇ Chili dinner at 5:30 pm
- ◇ Fellowship at Karolyn Hanna's home at 7:00 pm.

Please note there is a sign-up sheet for the dinner and desserts. You can bring chili, corn bread, salads, cheese, and of course, desserts for the fellowship at Karolyn's home. Also, the more help we receive, the quicker we will complete the decoration of the sanctuary. Thanks!

The Birth of our Savior.

In celebration of our Savior's birth, we will hold two services. Our **Christmas Eve** service will be Sunday, December 24th at 7:00 pm.

Our **Christmas Day** service will be Monday, December 25th at 9:30 am. Make sure you include both services as part of your Christmas plans. There will be a time for fellowship after both services.



OUR REDEEMER
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