

*First Sunday of Advent*



# *The First Sunday of Advent*

ELW Service of the Word

St. Paul Lutheran Church – November 29th, 2020– 10:00 A.M.

## **Introduction to the day**

Stir up your power and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

## **PRELUDE**

*Sleepers, Wake!*

*Savior of the Nations, Come*

*Veni Emmanuel*

Alec Wyton

Andreas Nikolaus Vetter

David Smart and Flor Peeters

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown  
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.  
As we light the first candle on this wreath,  
rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord  
when he comes with all the saints and angels.  
Enlighten us with your grace,  
and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord,  
who's coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.

## **WELCOME**

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,  
whose steadfast love is everlasting,  
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**  
Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

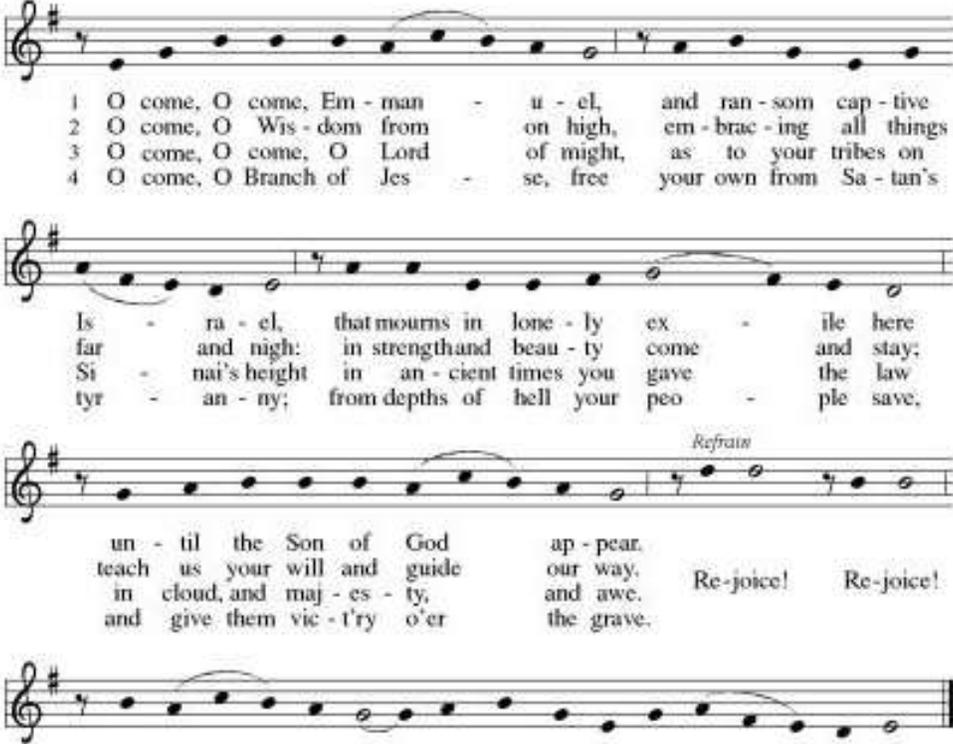
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God,  
**we confess that we do not trust your abundance,  
and we deny your presence in our lives.  
We place our hope in ourselves  
and rely on our own efforts.  
We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.  
We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.  
We fear difference and do not welcome others**

as you have welcomed us.  
We sin in thought, word, and deed.  
By your grace, forgive us;  
through your love, renew us;  
and in your Spirit, lead us;  
so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. **Amen.**

Beloved of God,  
by the radical abundance of divine mercy  
we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus,  
through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.  
Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope.  
For hope does not disappoint,  
because God's love has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things  
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on  
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
 and night: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law  
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,

*Refrain*

un - til the Son of God ap - pear,  
 teach us your will and guide our way, Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe, the grave.  
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- 5 O 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. *Refrain*
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;  
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,  
 O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
 refresh the hearts that long for you;  
 restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
 and ransom captive Israel,  
 that mourns in lonely exile here  
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Text: Psalterium Christianum Catholicorum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
 Music: VEIL EMMANUEL, French procession, 15th cent.  
 Text: st. 2, 6, 7-8; 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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## GREETING

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

**And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## FIRST READING

### Isaiah 64:1-9

*This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account – to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

<sup>1</sup>O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence –  
<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil –  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
<sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
<sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
<sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
<sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

Word of God, Word of Life



## Psalm 80:7

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- <sup>1</sup>Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on the cherubim.
- <sup>2</sup>**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and | come to help us.**
- <sup>3</sup>Restore | us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.
- <sup>4</sup>**O LORD | God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume when your | people pray? R**
- <sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the | bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.
- <sup>6</sup>**You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.**
- <sup>7</sup>Restore us, O | God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.
- <sup>17</sup>**Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong | for yourself. R**
- <sup>18</sup>And so will we never turn a- | way from you;  
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.
- <sup>19</sup>**Restore us, O LORD | God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved. R**

## SECOND READING

## 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

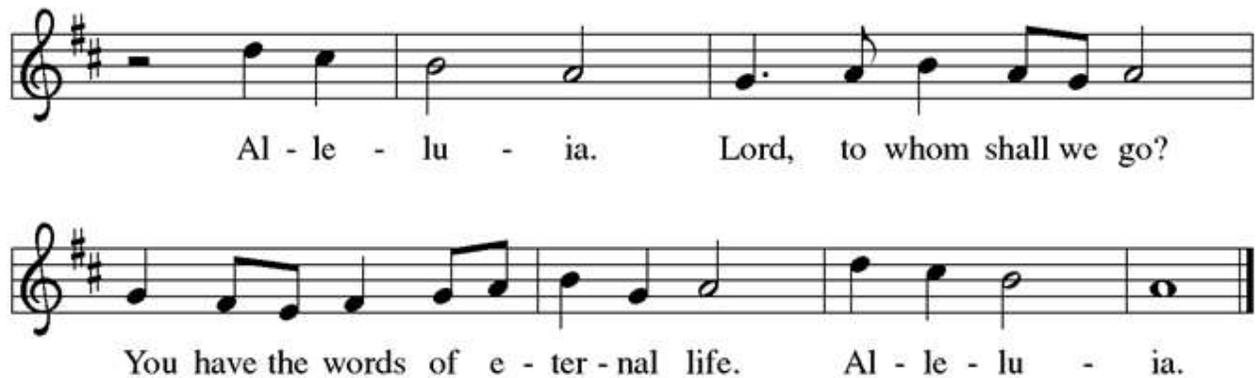
*As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.*

<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind – <sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you – <sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Word of God, Word of Life

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (from setting 4)



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## THE GOSPEL

## Mark 13:24-37

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>24</sup>“In those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
<sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

The Reverend Luther Zeigler

## Creator of the Stars of Night



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -  
 2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in  
 3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all  
 4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -  
 5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,



last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,  
 splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child  
 hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,  
 ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low  
 Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



we pray you hear us when we call.  
 of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.  
 like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.  
 from all as - saults of our dread foe.  
 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. *Hymnal* 1940, alt.

Music: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM, plainsong mode IV

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## NICENE CREED

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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.

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,\*  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who 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

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for people who are in crisis as the seasons change: for those without homes facing severe weather, for those who are unemployed or underemployed, and for those in poverty or facing food insecurity. Relieve their burdens, sustain their bodies, and ease their minds. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We also pray for The Open Door, Action Inc., The Grace Center, Wellspring House, Family Promise, Pathways for Children, and all other ministries near and far seeking to serve those in need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the people in our families and congregation who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and other invisible illnesses especially those on our prayer list and those whose names we offer now, aloud or in our hearts... Ease their suffering and support them when they struggle. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know and those whose names are known only to you. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

## OFFERTORY SONG

### Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system of music has the lyrics: "Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be-low;". The second system of music has the lyrics: "praise him a-bove, ye heav'n-ly host; praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost." The music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with block chords and single notes.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711  
Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. *Hymnal* 1940, alt.  
Music: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM, plainsong mode IV  
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## THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, rich in love, we bless your name and give you thanks. In our need, you make haste to help us. You plant us beside streams of your wisdom, teach us in pastures greenening with truth, and guide us on the path of your promise. By your Spirit awaken our faith, that, feasting on your Word, we may love you more fully and serve our neighbor more faithfully; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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.

## BLESSING

Life is short.

We haven't much time to gladden the hearts of those with whom we walk this earth.

So be swift to love.

Make haste to be kind.

And may the blessing of Almighty God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

be with you and all those you love now and forever. **Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

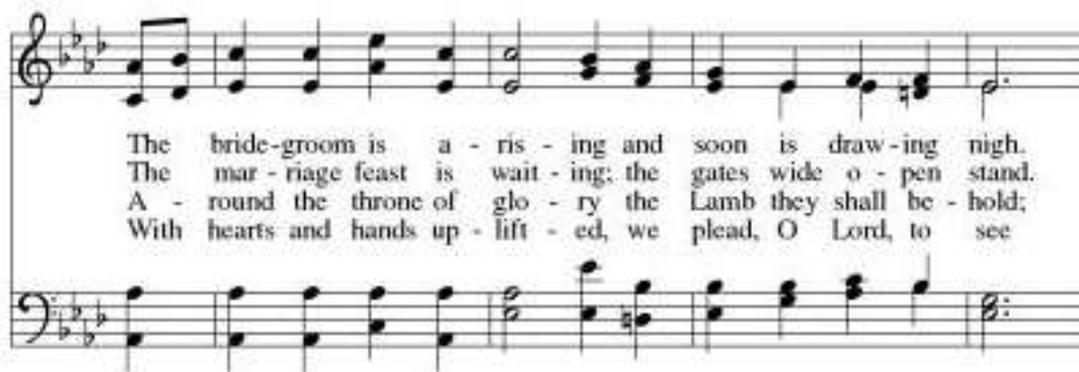
## Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



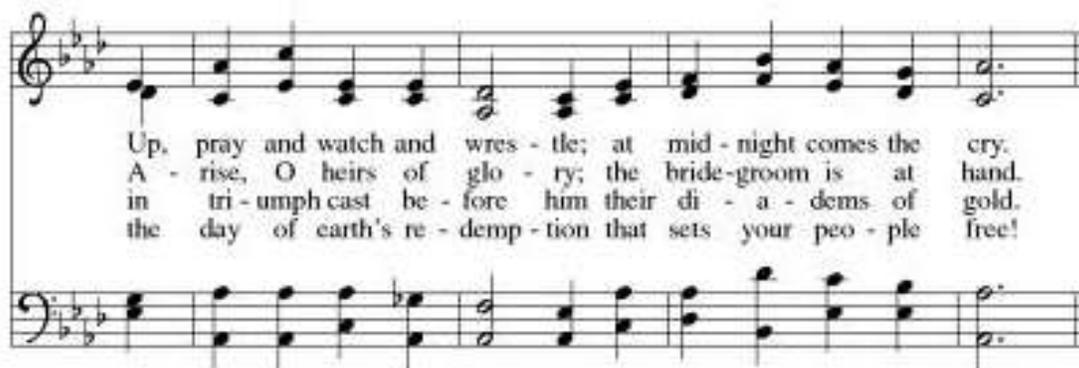
1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;  
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;  
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore;  
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.  
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.  
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.  
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.  
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.  
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;  
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.  
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.  
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.  
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

