

MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 2

THE LORD SETS UP HIS TENT AMONG US

One custom of the Advent and Christmas season in years gone by was the setting aside for a period of days of a room in the house as a special place that would be seen again on Christmas Eve, when it was revealed to the family, having been beautifully decorated. There was a palpable sense of wonder to the Christmas room. It was a fitting place for the celebration of the Savior's coming to earth as Emmanuel in His birth at Bethlehem. *Emmanuel* means "God with us." The presence of Jesus among us makes every room in every Christian home a special place. It also blesses this space where we bring our prayers and praise to Him in this holy season.

+ PREPARATION +

HYMN "The Advent of Our King" (*LSB* 331)

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** Our help is in the name of the LORD,
C who made heaven and earth.

- P** In this season of penitence and reflection, let us think of our unworthiness and confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, asking for His merciful forgiveness.
C God Almighty, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting. Amen.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son, our Emmanuel, to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. May 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.

C Amen.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

OPENING COLLECT

P Let us pray.

Almighty Father, by the advent of Your Son into the world, the kingdom of heaven now is open to all who believe in Him. Grant us Your Holy Spirit so that we may believe in Him with our whole heart and serve Him in our daily lives, so that when He comes again in glory, we may, by Your mercy, be gathered into His eternal courts with all the faithful. This we ask in His blessed name.

C Amen.

P The theme for our Advent services in this season is “Symbols of Salvation: Foretelling Christ’s Birth.” That wondrous birth has been portrayed beautifully in the “winged words” of poets and hymnwriters. Together, we sing some of those words in our next hymn.

HYMN “O God of God, O Light of Light” (*LSB* 810:1–3)

+ WORD +

FIRST READING *Exodus 40:17–21, 34–38*

P A reading from Exodus, the fortieth chapter.

¹⁷In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected. ¹⁸Moses erected the tabernacle. He laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars. ¹⁹And he spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent over it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁰He took the testimony and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark and set the mercy seat above on the ark. ²¹And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the screen, and screened the ark of the testimony, as the LORD had commanded Moses. . . .

³⁴Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁶Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. ³⁷But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

P Incline Your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.

C **Preserve my life, for I am godly; save Your servant, who trusts in You—You are my God.**

P Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to You do I cry all the day. Gladden the soul of Your servant, for to You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

C **For You, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon You.**

P Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace. In the day of my trouble I call upon You, for You answer me.

- C** There is none like You among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like Yours.
- P** All the nations You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name. For You are great and do wondrous things; You alone are God.
- C** Teach me Your way, O LORD, that I may walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.
- P** I give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify Your name forever.
- C** For great is Your steadfast love toward me; You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
- P** O God, insolent men have risen up against me; a band of ruthless men seek my life, and they do not set You before them.
- C** But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.
- P** Turn to me and be gracious to me; give Your strength to Your servant, and save the son of Your maidservant.
- C** Show me a sign of Your favor, that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

**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.**

SECOND READING

- P** A reading from Isaiah, the fortieth chapter.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Behold your God!”

¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,

and His arm rules for Him;
behold, His reward is with Him,
and His recompense before Him.

¹¹He will tend His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs in His arms;
He will carry them in His bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

¹²Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand
and marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure
and weighed the mountains in scales
and the hills in a balance?

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

VERSE

P I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.

C And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him;

P His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,

C and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

HOLY GOSPEL

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about Him, and cried out, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me.’”) ¹⁶And from His fullness we have all received,

grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN "When All the World Was Cursed" (LSB 346)

SERMON

CATECHISM *The Second Article*

C 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.

P What does this mean?

C I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord,

who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,

that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,

just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

This is most certainly true.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- P** Almighty God, because You have committed to Your people the ministry of intercession, hear us as we pray for ourselves and for others, and grant that our hearts be filled with peace and love.

We pray for Your Holy Church throughout all the world, that You would bestow on the ministers of Your Word and Sacraments Your grace and truth and confirm Your people in the faith of the Gospel, that Christ may be exalted as head over all.

- C** We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

- P** We pray for Your people here and everywhere, that You would inspire them with love for Your house, zeal in Your service, and joy in the advancement of Your Kingdom; and that in this season of Advent, we rejoice together in the coming of Emmanuel, God with us.

- C** We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

- P** We pray for the nations of the earth, that peace and mutual understanding would flourish; and for those in authority, that they would be led by the Spirit to a true desire for peace and love of concord.

- C** We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

- P** We pray for all our schools, colleges, and seminaries, and for all who teach in them and all who learn, that as they grow in knowledge and ability they look to You, the fountain of all wisdom.

- C** We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

- P** We pray for all in sickness and distress, that You would give strength to the weary, relief to the suffering, and comfort to the dying; and we pray for medical workers and researchers as they seek to bring an increase of health throughout the world.

- C** We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

- P** And in this season of reflection, we remember with thanks Your servants who have departed this life in Your faith and fear, and we pray

You to give us grace to follow them as they followed Christ. This we ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus, our Emmanuel.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**C 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.**

HYMN

“In Holy Conversation” (*LSB 772*)

OFFERING

ADVENT ANTIPHON

P O Root of Jesse, standing as an ensign before the peoples, before whom all kings are mute, to whom the nations will do homage:

C Come quickly to deliver us.

P O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, You open and no one can close, You close and no one can open:

C Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the shadow of death.

PRAYER

P Let us pray.

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in Your mercy, grant us a safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

BLESSING

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

C Amen.

HYMN “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” (*LSB* 348)