



“Prepare Ye: Proclaim”
Sunday, December 20, 2020 9:00AM
Worship Service

AS WE GATHER

Welcome to our Advent worship series, Prepare Ye. Each week we will contemplate the many ways we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ Child on Christmas. In our worship for today we will contemplate how we can prepare ourselves and others for the arrival of Jesus through our proclaiming. John the Baptist stands as the forerunner of all future proclaimers of Christ and gives us the courage to use our own voices to proclaim our devotion to the One who is born to save.

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“This Is the Day the Lord Has Made”

LSB 903

- 1 This is the day the Lord has made;
He calls the hours His own.
Let heav’n rejoice, let earth be glad
And praise surround the throne.
- 2 Today He rose and left the dead,
And Satan’s empire fell;
Today the saints His triumphs spread
And all His wonders tell.
- 3 Hosanna to the anointed King,
To David’s holy Son!
Help us, O Lord; descend and bring
Salvation from Your throne.
- 4 Blessèd is He who comes to us
With messages of grace;
He, in the Lord’s name, comes to us
To save our fallen race.
- 5 Hosanna in the highest strains
The Church on earth can raise.
The highest heav’ns, in which He reigns,
Shall give Him nobler praise.

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Stand

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

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

C Amen.

P Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

C Let us proclaim the name of the Lord and ascribe greatness to our God!

P He is the Rock, his work is perfect and all his ways are just.

C He is the God of faithfulness who does no wrong.

P John came proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

C As it is written in the book of Isaiah the prophet—all flesh shall see the salvation of our God!

DEUTERONOMY 32:2–4

P A reading from Deuteronomy, chapter 32.

²May my teaching drop as the rain,
my speech distill as the dew,
like gentle rain upon the tender grass,
and like showers upon the herb.

³For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;
ascribe greatness to our God!

⁴“The Rock, his work is perfect,
for all his ways are justice.

A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
just and upright is he.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P In the reading we just heard, Moses wrote, “I will proclaim the name of the Lord; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect and all his ways are just. He is the God of faithfulness who does no wrong.” Therefore, with contrite and broken hearts, we confess our sin.

C Heavenly Father, we come to you because you are faithful and your ways are just.

P But we are soiled by sin.

C Dirty from misdeeds.

P Grimy from guilt.

C Lost in a cesspool of selfishness.

P Though you are faithful.

C We are faithless.

P Though you are just and upright.

C We can be unjust and dishonest. Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

P John the Baptist came proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. He pointed to the one who is mightier—Christ Jesus our Lord. Jesus loves you. Jesus died for you. Jesus lives for you. And Jesus forgives your every sin. And so we say to the world—

C All flesh shall see the salvation of our God!

HYMN of PRAISE

“Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us”

LSB 851 st 4

4 Lord of glory, You have bought us
With Your lifeblood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones
That tremendous sacrifice.
Give us faith to trust You boldly,

Hope, to stay our souls on You;
But, oh, best of all Your graces,
With Your love our love renew.

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Almighty and everlasting God, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus whose birth, baptism, teaching, miracles, death and resurrection empower us to see your mighty salvation. With the open eyes of faith we thank, praise, serve and obey you; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Sit

HYMN of the DAY

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

LSB 344

- 1 On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!
- 2 Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin;
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.
- 3 We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away
Like flow’rs that wither and decay.
- 4 Lay on the sick Thy healing hand
And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face
Till beauty springs in ev’ry place.

- △ 5 All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit evermore.

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SERMON

“Prepare Ye: Proclaim”

- P** A reading from St. Luke, the third chapter.

²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall become straight,

and the rough places shall become level ways,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

⁷He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” ¹¹And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Stand

THE SIXTH PETITION

P “And lead us not into temptation.” *What does this mean?*

C God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P Lord Jesus Christ, you are our Divine Warrior who fights for us. Whether it’s a mere skirmish or an all-out assault, the battle belongs to you, Lord. Fear and discouragement are not the order of the day; faith and hope are. This gift is for all people and so we confess—

C All flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

P Lord Jesus Christ, often we feel like Gideon taking on the Midianite army; like David standing before Goliath; like Elijah facing 400 prophets of Baal; like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in a fiery furnace; like Esther against the Persian government. It’s not our competence but your presence that matters. This gift is for all people and so we confess—

C All flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

P Lord Jesus Christ, when it seems like evil and terror will triumph, give us eyes to see your power and your might. When we’re under attack by the seducer, accuser and condemner, let us see your scars, your resurrection triumph and your all-sufficient grace. This gift is for all people and so we confess—

C All flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

P Lord Jesus Christ, when we have to confront darkness in broken people and broken situations, protect us and empower us through the gospel. When our divided hearts wage war inside us and we’re tempted to look for another savior, come to us and fight, Jesus, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

INVITATION TO THE MEAL

P Jesus Christ, who in love gave His life for us, invites us to share in the meal He has given to His disciples with His words, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

C We remember His love for us in His death and we remember and celebrate His rising from the grave for our salvation.

P Jesus says, "Whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven."

C We publicly acknowledge You, Jesus, as our Savior from sin and we come before You now in oneness of faith and spirit to receive Your grace in this meal.

P Let us then approach the Table of the Lord with confidence so that we may receive mercy, grace and strength to live as His people.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My † body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My † blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Your Table I Approach"

LSB 628

- 1 Your table I approach;
Dear Savior, hear my prayer.
Let not an unrepentant heart
Prove hurtful to me there.
- 2 Lord, I confess my sins
And mourn their wretched bands;
A contrite heart is sure to find
Forgiveness at Your hands.

- 3 Your body and Your blood,
Once slain and shed for me,
Are taken at Your table, Lord,
In blest reality.
- 4 Search not how this takes place,
This wondrous mystery;
God can accomplish vastly more
Than what we think could be.
- 5 O grant, most blessed Lord,
That earth and hell combined
May not about this sacrament
Raise doubt within my mind.
- 6 Oh, may I never fail
To thank You day and night
For Your true body and true blood,
O God, my peace and light.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

LSB 332

- 1 Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin’s Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav’n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.
- 2 Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh—
Woman’s offspring, pure and fresh.
- 3 Here a maid was found with child,
Yet remained a virgin mild.
In her womb this truth was shown:
God was there upon His throne.
- 4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all
From His pure and kingly hall;
God of God, yet fully man,
His heroic course began.
- 5 God the Father was His source,
Back to God He ran His course.
Into hell His road went down,
Back then to His throne and crown.
- 6 For You are the Father’s Son
Who in flesh the vict’ry won.
By Your mighty pow’r make whole
All our ills of flesh and soul.

7 From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides.

△ 8 Glory to the Father sing,
Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be
Now and through eternity.

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Stand

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

You once proclaimed Your saving promise through the prophets, and by the apostles and evangelists You published the good news of Your saving promise fulfilled in the birth and life, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Grant that by Your Word our eyes, ears, and hearts be filled and strengthened with sure faith, that being instructed in the doctrine of the blessed prophets, apostles, and evangelists we faithfully eat the body and drink of the blood of our Lord Jesus and declare His salvation to all the world.

C Amen.

BENEDICTION

P Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

C For what was delivered to us was of first importance—

P That Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

C That he was buried,

P That he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

C To the end that—all flesh shall see the salvation of our God!

Sit

CLOSING HYMN

“A Great and Mighty Wonder”

LSB 383

1 A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure! Refrain

ref Proclaim the Savior’s birth:
“To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!”

2 The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky. Refrain

3 While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains,
And oceans, clap your hands. Refrain

4 Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Bethl'em,
The Savior and the Lord. Refrain

5 All idols then shall perish
And Satan's lying cease,
And Christ shall raise His scepter,
Decreeing endless peace. Refrain

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