



***“Prepare Ye: Ponder”***  
***Sunday, December 6, 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 think about ways in which we can take more time during this season to communicate to our God through prayer as we wait for Christ. Zechariah, who went to the temple to pray, serves as an example for us of how hard that waiting in prayer can be.

**WELCOME**

**OPENING HYMN (Sung to the tune of “Once He Came in Blessing” LSB 333)**

- 1 Once he came in blessing, all our sins redressing;  
Came in likeness lowly, Son of God most holy;  
Bore the cross to save us; hope and freedom gave us.
- 2 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 error ere he comes in terror.
- 3 Thus, if we have known him, not ashamed to own him,  
Nor have spurned him coldly but will trust him boldly,  
He will then receive us, heal us, and forgive us.
- 4 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.

*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** God promises to be with us and keep us wherever we go.
- P** He will not leave us until he has done what he has promised.
- C** Surely the Lord is in this place!
- P** This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.
- C** For God sent John the Baptist—
- P** To turn the hearts of parents to their children.
- C** To make ready a people prepared!

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**P** Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry—

**C** **Too real to hide, and too deep to undo.**

**P** Forgive what our lips tremble to name.

**C** **What our hearts can no longer bear.**

**P** And what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment.

**C** **As parents, we have not fully loved our children.**

**P** As children, we have not fully loved our parents.

**C** **Set us free from a past that we cannot change.**

**P** Open to us a future where we can be changed.

**C** **And grant us grace to grow more and more in the image and likeness of Jesus. Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!**

**P** Surely the Lord is in this place as the God of love and kindness who forgives you, frees you, heals you, strengthens you and raises you up to new life in Christ Jesus our Lord. He also sends his Holy Spirit to turn the hearts of parents to their children.

**C** **To make ready a people prepared!**

*Sit*

## HYMN of PRAISE

## “Christ Be My Leader”

LSB 861

1 Christ be my Leader by night as by day;  
Safe through the darkness, for He is the way.  
Gladly I follow, my future His care,  
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.

2 Christ be my Teacher in age as in youth,  
Drifting or doubting, for He is the truth.  
Grant me to trust Him; though shifting as sand,  
Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.

3 Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;  
Death cannot hold me, for He is the life.  
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain  
Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Almighty God, we thank you that in your providence you sent John the Baptist to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents to make ready a people prepared for the coming of our Savior; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 40:1–11

**P** The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 40.

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,  
that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,  
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades  
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get 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!”

<sup>10</sup>Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
behold, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup>He 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.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## **EPISTLE READING**

**P** The Epistle is from 1 Timothy, chapter 2.

**1 Timothy 2:1–6**

<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,  
<sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

**GOSPEL READING**

**Luke 1:5–25**

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

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>5</sup>In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup>And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. <sup>7</sup>But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

<sup>8</sup>Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, <sup>9</sup>according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. <sup>10</sup>And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. <sup>11</sup>And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup>And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. <sup>13</sup>But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup>And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup>for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. <sup>16</sup>And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, <sup>17</sup>and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

<sup>18</sup>And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” <sup>19</sup>And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. <sup>20</sup>And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.” <sup>21</sup>And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. <sup>22</sup>And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. <sup>23</sup>And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

<sup>24</sup>After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, <sup>25</sup>“Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

**CREED**

**C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

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.

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.**

*Sit*

**HYMN of the DAY**

**“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”**

**LSB 357**

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear. Refrain
- ref Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!
- 2 O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
Who ord’rest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And teach us in her ways to go. Refrain
- 3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,  
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai’s height  
In ancient times didst give the Law  
In cloud and majesty and awe. Refrain
- 4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree,  
Free them from Satan’s tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow’r to save,  
And give them vict’ry o’er the grave. Refrain
- 5 O come, Thou 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, Thou Dayspring from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death’s dark shadows put to flight. Refrain
- 7 O come, Desire of nations, bind  
In one the hearts of all mankind;  
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,  
And be Thyself our King of Peace. Refrain

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**SERMON**

**“Prepare Ye: Pray”**

*Stand*

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

- P** St. Paul writes, “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and

holiness” (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Compassionate Father, today we bring before you those with whom we share the closest relationships—members of our families. How we long for you to be gracious on behalf of our children, our parents, our siblings and our extended families. We believe that you will—

**C Turn the hearts of parents to their children.**

**P** Merciful Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon the people we cherish. For our children, siblings and parents who don’t know you, bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus. For our family members who are living destructive lives, save them from themselves. In the meandering of their madness, bring the grandeur of your goodness. We believe that you will—

**C Turn the hearts of children to their parents.**

**P** Tender Father, for family members who are having failing health, financial stress, emotional stress or mental illness, marital meltdown or relational disconnect, pour forth your life-giving Spirit. Where there is weariness, bring your presence; where there is hopelessness, bring encouragement; where there is despair, be a mighty and merciful God. We believe that you will—

**C Turn the hearts of children to their parents.**

**P** To make ready a people prepared. We pray in the matchless and merciful name of Jesus who also taught us to pray:

#### **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.**

#### **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  $\text{†}$  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  $\text{H}$  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*

### **DISTRIBUTUION HYMN**

### **"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"**

**LSB 347**

- 1 "Comfort, comfort ye My people,  
Speak ye peace," thus saith our God;  
"Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.  
Speak ye to Jerusalem  
Of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell her that her sins I cover  
And her warfare now is over."
- 2 Yea, her sins our God will pardon,  
Blotting out each dark misdeed;  
All that well deserved His anger  
He no more will see or heed.  
She hath suffered many\_a day,  
Now her griefs have passed away;  
God will change her pining sadness  
Into ever-springing gladness.
- 3 Hark, the herald's voice is crying  
In the desert far and near,  
Calling sinners to repentance,  
Since the Kingdom now is here.  
O that warning cry obey!  
Now prepare for God a way;  
Let the valleys rise to meet Him  
And the hills bow down to greet Him.
- 4 Make ye straight what long was crooked;  
Make the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits His holy reign.  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o'er earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That His Word is never broken.

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### **DISTRIBUTUION HYMN**

### **"The Lamb"**

**LSB 547**

- 1 The Lamb, the Lamb,  
O Father, where's the sacrifice?  
Faith sees, believes  
God will provide the Lamb of price! Refrain

ref Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me His own!  
The Lamb is reigning on His throne!

2 The Lamb, the Lamb,  
One perfect final offering.  
The Lamb, the Lamb,  
Let earth join heav'n His praise to sing. Refrain

3 The Lamb, the Lamb,  
As wayward sheep their shepherd kill  
So still, His will  
On our behalf the Law to fill. Refrain

4 He sighs, He dies,  
He takes my sin and wretchedness.  
He lives, forgives,  
He gives me His own righteousness. Refrain

5 He rose, He rose,  
My heart with thanks now overflows.  
His song prolong  
Till ev'ry heart to Him belong. Refrain

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## **BENEDICTION**

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

**C** God heard Zechariah's prayer!

**P** His wife Elizabeth bore a son named John.

**C** Who turns the children of Israel to the Lord their God,

**P** And goes before Jesus in the spirit and power of Elijah.

**C** To turn the hearts of the parents to the children to make ready a people prepared!

## **CLOSING HYMN**

### **“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”**

**LSB 922**

1 Go, My children, with My blessing,  
Never alone.

Waking, sleeping, I am with you;  
You are My own.

In My love's baptismal river  
I have made you Mine forever.

Go, My children, with My blessing—  
You are My own.

2 Go, My children, sins forgiven,  
At peace and pure.

Here you learned how much I love you,  
What I can cure.

Here you heard My dear Son's story;  
Here you touched Him, saw His glory.

Go, My children, sins forgiven,  
At peace and pure.



3 Go, My children, fed and nourished,  
Closer to Me;  
Grow in love and love by serving,  
Joyful and free.  
Here My Spirit's power filled you;  
Here His tender comfort stilled you.  
Go, My children, fed and nourished,  
Joyful and free.

4 I the Lord will bless and keep you  
And give you peace;  
I the Lord will smile upon you  
And give you peace:  
I the Lord will be your Father,  
Savior, Comforter, and Brother.  
Go, My children; I will keep you  
And give you peace.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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