

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 19, 2020

DIVINE SERVICE I

HYMN #14 “Arise, O Christian People”

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 was 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 valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing, His path all even lay.

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, 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.

STAND

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son ☩ and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ I pray: Lord have mercy on me, a sinner.

LORD HAVE MERCY

C: Lord, have mercy on us. Christ have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us. Amen.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

The liturgical song “Glory to God” is omitted during Advent as a season of repentance and preparation. This song of the angels will return on Christmas morning.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Let us pray. Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BE SEATED

THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Deuteronomy 18:15-19: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.” The Lord said to me: “What they say is good. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

M: The Word of the Lord.

PSALM OF THE DAY - Psalm 92

Refrain: Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

How great are your works, O LORD,* how profound your thoughts!
The senseless man does not know,* fools do not understand,
that though the wicked spring up like grass* and all evildoers flourish,
they will be forever destroyed.* But you, O LORD, are exalted forever.

Refrain: Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree,* they will flourish in the courts of our God.
They will still bear fruit in old age,* they will stay fresh and green,
proclaiming, “The LORD is upright;* he is my rock, and there is no wickedness in him.”
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.

Refrain: Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

SECOND LESSON

Philippians 4:4-7: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

M: The Word of the Lord.

VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia. The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel. Alleluia.

STAND

GOSPEL

John 1:19-28: Now this was John’s testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, “I am not the Christ.” They asked him, “Then who are you? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.” Finally they said, “Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’” Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” “I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not

know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.” This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

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.

BE SEATED

HYMN OF THE DAY #23 “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Root of Jesse, free Your own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save, And bring them vict’ry o’er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Dayspring from on high, And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death’s dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, 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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!

SERMON

STAND

C: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold, uphold me with your free Spirit. (Please remain standing)

OFFERING

(We will not pass a plate but one will be available on the table as you leave church.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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.

BE SEATED

HYMN #20 "When All the World Was Cursed"

When all the world was cursed By Moses' condemnation,
Saint John the Baptist came With words of consolation.
With true forerunner's zeal The greater one he named,
And him, as yet unknown, As Savior he proclaimed.

Before Saint John was born, He leaped in joyful meeting,
Confessing him as Lord Whose mother he was greeting.
By Jordan's rolling stream, A new Elijah bold,
He testified of him Whom prophets had foretold.

Behold the Lamb of God, Who bears the world's transgression,
Whose sacrifice removes The devil's dread oppression.
Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away our sin,
Who for our peace and joy Will full atonement win.

Oh, grant, dear Lord of love, That we receive, rejoicing,
The word proclaimed by John, Our true repentance voicing,
That gladly we may walk Upon our Savior's way
Until we live with him In his eternal day.

STAND

M: Almighty God, grant to your church the Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes from above. Let nothing hinder your Word from being freely proclaimed to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, so that we may serve you in steadfast faith and confess your name as long as we live, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

M: 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. Amen.

BE SEATED

HYMN #64 “Let Us All With Gladsome Voice”

Let us all with gladsome voice Praise the God of heaven,
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice, His own Son has given.

To this vale of tears he comes, Here to serve in sadness,
That with him in heav'n's fair homes We may reign in gladness.

We are rich, for he was poor; Is not this a wonder?
Therefore praise God evermore Here on earth and yonder.

O Lord Christ, our Savior dear, Bless us and be near us.
Grant us now a glad new year. Amen, Jesus, hear us!

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Call Returned: Pastor Andrew Leuhring has returned the call to serve as pastor here at Christ. We have scheduled a call meeting for Sunday, January 3rd at 7:00 PM to extend a new call. Everyone is invited to attend and hear about the candidates.

Holiday Schedule: We have several chances to worship the newborn Savior this Christmas season. We will have a midweek Advent service on Wednesday, December 23 at 7:00 PM. On Christmas Eve our children will lead us in a worship service aired on our YouTube channel at 5:30 PM. The candlelight service will remind us of the promises God made to us and how he fulfilled those promises through the Christ Child. Candles will help us see the “Light of the World” Jesus Christ. This service starts at **8:00 PM** at church. Christmas Day we will celebrate the birth of our Savior with a service at **8:00 AM**. You will need to register to attend these special services on our website. The Christmas Day service will be aired live on the radio as well as on our YouTube channel.

Vacancy: Pastor Johann Caauwe from Wood Lake is serving as our vacancy pastor. If you need to contact him please call 507-828-5136 or email him at pastor@stjohnswoodlake.com.

Singing in January: At the church council meeting last week it was decided that we will begin singing as a congregation in our Sunday services starting January 3rd. Masks will still be required.

Organ: A quick update on our offerings given towards our new Organ. As of November 30, 2020, we have been blessed to receive over \$31,800 in contributions. We thank you for all of this support. The total cost of the organ was just over \$50,000, so there are still opportunities to give offerings towards our new Organ, which will be the cornerstone of our church's musical worship for years to come.

God's Gifts: Offerings during the month of December are critical each year in helping reach our church financial budget. All the extra worship opportunities of a typical year make December our best month for offerings, but this year our service count in December is cut nearly in half. Please prayerfully remember your church in your financial support of our ministry. As of November 30, 2020, our general offerings are just under \$305,000. The 2020 General Offerings Budget goal is \$386,000.

Caroling: Come share the joy of Jesus' birth in song! We will meet at church at 2:00 and sing outside of each of the places we stop and we will be finished no later than 5:00. Everyone is welcome to come along!

Snow Removal: We are asking individuals and families to sign up for snow removal at church. Would you be willing to pick a week or two? With pastor gone we need your help! A snow blower and shovels are available for you to use. Please contact our maintenance committee chairman Wes Hoflock to sign up at 829-1612 or whoflock@gmail.com. Thank you!

Offering: Just a reminder that we will not be passing the offering plate. You can leave your offering in the plate on the table as you leave church.

Take Home: Be sure you take your service folder home with you to recycle. Please do not leave it in church.

