



Advent 1

December 1, 2024 † 9:00 AM

“Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come!” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks of Advent. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them, we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

*Congregational responses are printed in **indented boldface italics**.*

GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

ENTRANCE HYMN: “The Advent of Our God” *LBW 22*



1	The	ad - vent	of	our	God	shall	be	our	theme	for	prayer;
2	The	ev - er - last - ing	Son	in - car - nate	stoops	to	be,				
3	Come,	Zi - on’s	daugh - ter,	rise	to	meet	your	low - ly	king,		
4	As	judge,	on	clouds	of	light,	he	soon	will	come	a - gain,



come,	let	us	meet	him	on	the	road	and	place	for	him	pre - pare.
him - self	the	ser - vant’s	form	puts	on	to	set	his	peo - ple	free.		
nor	let	your	faith - less	heart	de - spise	the	peace	he	comes	to	bring.	
and	all	his	scat - tered	saints	u - nite	with	him	on	high	to	reign.	

5 Before the dawning day
 let sin be put to flight;
 no longer let the law hold sway,
 but walk in freedom’s light.

6 All glory to the Son,
 who comes to set us free,
 with Father, Spirit, ever one
 through all eternity.

ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING AND PRAYER:

Pr Dave sings a line, we echo it... and we light the Advent candle[s] as we sing...

*As the dark awaits the dawn... so we await Your light...
Star of Promise, scatter night... loving bright, loving bright...
Till shades of fear are gone...*

*As the blue expectant hour... before the silv'ring skies...
We long to see Your day arise... whole and wise, whole and wise...
O lucent Morning Star...*

*As the moon reflects the sun... until the night's decrease...
Let Your healing light release... living peace, living peace...
Unto Your holy dawn...*

*Shine Your future on this place... Enlighten every guest...
Through us stream Your holiness... bright and blest, bright and blest...
Come dawn, O Sun of grace...*

GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY:

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

And also with you.

Then let's pray: Stir up Your power, Lord Christ, and come!
By Your merciful protection, alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins,
and redeem us for Your life of justice,
for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD AND PRAYER

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD:

*Martin Luther once said, "The Bible is the manger in which Christ is laid."
Pr Dave will sing this chant alone the first time; then we'll sing it through two more times:*

*If in your heart you make a manger for His birth,
Then God will once again become a child on earth...*

FIRST READING:**Jeremiah 33.14-16****NRSVUE**

“The days are surely coming,” says the Lord, “when I’ll fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time, I’ll cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’”

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

Thanks be to God!

SECOND READING:**1 Thessalonians 3.9-13****NRSVUE**

St Paul writes: How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever’s lacking in your faith.

¹¹ Now may our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³ And may *the Lord* so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

Thanks be to God!

THE HOLY GOSPEL:**Luke 21.25-36****NRSVUE**

*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!*

The Holy Gospel according to St Luke, the 21st chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord!

Jesus said to His disciples about the consummation of the ages: “There’ll be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what’s coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they’ll see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”



²⁹ Then He told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the Kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly, I tell you, this generation won't pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words won't pass away.

³⁴ "Be on guard so that your hearts aren't weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day doesn't catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵ like a trap. For it'll come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that'll take place and to stand before the Son of Man."

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

*Oh, come, O Branch of Jesse, free Your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Prophets Told Us, 'Pay Attention!'"

*This hymn by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette is sung to the tune REGENT SQUARE
("Angels, from the Realms of Glory")*

*Prophets told us, "Pay attention! God is working in the land.
Lo, the days are surely coming; seek the justice God has planned!
Seek the signs of your redemption; hear God's word and understand!"*

*Christ, You taught us: "Pay attention! Nature's signs are sure and clear:
When the trees grow leaves and blossom, summertime is almost here."
So it is in God's good Kingdom; be alert; God's Reign is near!*

*As we welcome Your salvation, all around we see distress;
There is trouble in the nations; there is greed and wickedness.
As we trust in Your redemption, may we live Your righteousness.*



*May we work for what You call for; may we labor for Your Reign.
Families cry out at the border; children suffer grief and pain.
May Your Church, committed, prayerful, work for justice in Your name.*

*Christ, You taught us: "Pay attention!" So we humbly serve and pray:
May we gladly live Your Kingdom in a world that's gone astray.
May the hope of our salvation guide the things we do and say.*

APOSTLES' CREED:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*

Amen.

PRAYERS AND SHARING OF PEACE:

Then trusting in this God, living in this Hope, let's pray for a world redeemed,
the Church renewed, and all people restored in the Coming One:

Gracious God, we thank You for the words of Your Son, Jesus Christ, which shook the earth and opened our eyes to Your coming Reign, assuring us that even when the world is thrown into chaos, Your tenderness and lasting love remain as our sure hope. Equip Your Church and secure our roots in the soil of Your eternal Word; ease our worries and remove our shame; and let Your steadfast love blossom among us. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

Increase our joy, plant thanksgiving in our hearts, and multiply the good fruit of our outreach ministries. Guide us in our service to local and global neighbors. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

Guide us as a shepherd throughout this Advent season. Turn us away from the temptations and false promises of consumerism, and lead us to see and respond to the needs of those in our congregation and community. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

Awaken us to the majesty and beauty of Your good creation— sun, moon, stars, and all living things— and teach us to be good stewards of these gifts. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

Stir up Your might and bring Your justice to all lands. Where there's war, bring Your peace; where there's ethnic strife, bring reconciliation; where there's hunger, provide food; where there's oppression, bring freedom. Plant Your peace in every place where violence now holds sway, and healing where people's lives have been torn asunder by that violence. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

As we remember today the millions of our neighbors living with HIV and AIDS, particularly the children who've been infected or orphaned by the disease, bring them Your healing and peace; make us a safe haven for those who are abandoned, discriminated against, or rejected on account of their illness; and inspire us to speak out for a just distribution of health care and medical aid for those struggling under the weight of this epidemic in this land and overseas. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

Bring Your healing to all those who are broken in body, mind, or spirit, that they may know Your presence near, Your new day dawning in their own experience, and Your Holy Spirit renewing them in strength and life. We especially seek Your healing for those we remember before You now... Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

Come to us with a new dawn of Your grace, though our sinful failures in love and life have wounded our neighbors, damaged our communities, and broken Your heart. Forgive us our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, and transform our lives by Your Holy Spirit. Hear us, O God; ***Your mercy is great!***

For into Your hands, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Christ Jesus our Lord. ***Amen.***

Hear the Good News, my friends: In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ has given His life for you, and in † Him, you're forgiven! Now reconciled to God and to one another, let's walk in Christ in newness of life.

The peace of the Lord is with you always. ***And also with you.***

Reconciled to God and to one another, we share a sign of Christ's peace.

MEAL

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

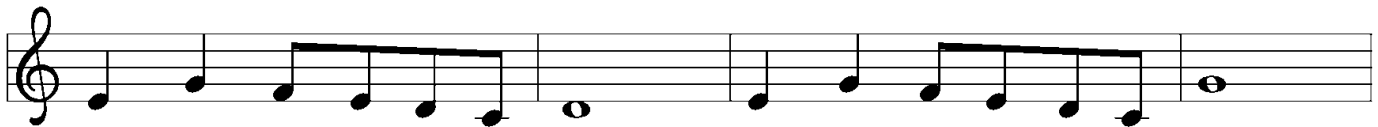
“Advent Canon”

-- Lyrics and Music by Michael Sharp

OFFERTORY HYMN:

ELW 814

We'll sing this through three times:



Take, oh, take me as I am; sum - mon out what I shall be;



set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

Music: TAKE ME AS I AM, John L. Bell

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EUCHARISTIC PRAYER:

Blest are You, holy, mighty, and merciful Lord!
You bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence!
We worship You for our lives and for the world You give us.
We thank You for the world to come, and for the love that'll rule all in all.
We praise You for the grace shown to Israel, the people of Your promise:
the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land,
the memory of the ancestors, the homecoming from exile,
and the prophets' words that won't be in vain.
In all this we bless You for Your Son, Christ Jesus our Lord,
who fulfilled and will fulfill all Your promises.
Living out Your death-defying love in word and deed,
He gave His life for us even unto death on the cross,
that filled with the Spirit of His resurrection, we might have eternal life in Him.



In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat. This is My body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of Me." Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all of them to drink, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of Me."

And so, remembering His life given for us, rejoicing in His rising from the grave, we await His final appearing when all things will be restored in Him. Now pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us, that held and nourished by You, we who share the Lord's body and blood may live as His body in the world, shining with the light of Your Son. All this we pray with joy through our Lord Jesus Christ, who's taught us to pray:

***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.***

THE HOLY COMMUNION

*Now we share God's consecrated gifts among God's consecrated people, knowing that our living Lord Jesus is fully present with us in His Supper, giving Himself to us in bread and wine and forgiving love. Today, we'll share the sacrament by "stations". Come forward via the left-hand aisle, take an empty glass from the tray by the front pew [or a glass of grape juice, if you prefer]; receive the bread from the pastor, receive the wine from our communion assistant [or drink the grape juice as s/he says to you, "The blood of Christ, shed for you"], and return to your seat, returning your glass en route. (We're **not** dipping the wafer into the wine). If you can't come forward, let the usher know and we'll bring the Sacrament to you! Those not receiving may come forward for a blessing. Once we've all shared in the body and blood of Christ, we continue in blessing and prayer:*

SENDING

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER:

May the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

Amen.

Most High God, You've come among us at this Table, and for that we give You thanks.
By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of Your Word,
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all through Christ Jesus, our Host and our Guest.

Amen.

BENEDICTION:

Now may God our Creator make you increase in love for one another;
may Christ Jesus teach you to live in God's ways;
may the Holy Spirit strengthen your hearts in holiness;
and Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN:

"The King Shall Come"

ELW 260



1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,
2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, to bear and fight and die,
3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn when Christ, vic - to - rious, rose
4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race
5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.



when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.
but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn-ing sky.
and left the lone - some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes.
the day when Christ in splen - dor comes, and we shall see his face.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick - ly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1859–1925

Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davison, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816

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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DISMISSAL:

God has a plan.

What's our part in God's plan?

Then let's go in peace, live in joy, and serve the Lord!

We're it!

Sharing God's love in joyful service!

Thanks be to God!

Waiting

I don't know any other passage in the Gospels that's harder to understand, to feel our way into, to know how to respond to, than these words of Jesus about the Second Coming. He's speaking about the end of the world and about the coming of the Kingdom of God as the climactic last act of history, and He's speaking in words and images as foreign to our whole way of thinking as His subject itself. As the day approaches, there'll be a great cosmic upheaval, He says, with signs in the sun and moon and stars, and the powers of the heavens themselves shaken. Is He speaking literally or simply in poetic hyperbole? Does He mean there'll be real eclipses and strange comets that've never been seen before, maybe a reordering of the constellations themselves to scrawl some fateful starlit message across the night sky? Or is He speaking symbolically of some upheaval not of the world without, but of the world within— an upheaval of the hearts and minds and spirits of the human race? The seas will go wild, He says, and at their roaring the nations will be terrified by whatever it is that's happening or about to happen, and then, most extraordinary of all— as the cause and climax of everything that's preceded it— the Son of Man will appear, He says, in a cloud, "with power and great glory" ...

I think we're waiting. That's what's at the heart of it. Even when we don't know that we're waiting, I think we're waiting. Even when we can't find words for what we're waiting for, I think we're waiting. An ancient Advent prayer supplies us with the words. "Give us grace," it says, "that we may cast off the works of darkness and put upon us the armor of light." We who live much of the time in the darkness are waiting not just at Advent, but at all times for the advent of light, of that ultimate Light that's redemptive and terrifying at the same time. It's redemptive because it puts an end to the darkness— and that's also why it's terrifying, because for so long, for all our lives, the darkness has been home, and because to leave home is always cause for terror...

So to wait for Christ to come in His fullness isn't just a passive thing, a pious, prayerful, churchly thing. On the contrary, to wait for Christ to come in His fullness is above all else to act in Christ's stead as fully as we know how. To wait for Christ is as best we can to be Christ to those who need us to be Christ to them most and to bring them the most we have of Christ's healing and hope, because unless we bring it, it may never be brought at all...

- *Frederick Buechner, "Secrets in the Dark"*