

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 1, 2024

AS WE GATHER

The “blame game” has been happening since the fall into sin when Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the serpent for their world-changing transgression. To this day when things go wrong, the “blame game” continues among siblings, spouses, coworkers, elected leaders, and governments around the world. If we are honest, we realize that we often have no one to blame but ourselves, as we are by nature sinful and unclean. In contrast to our “blame game,” we have a blameless Savior who came into this world as one of us. Through Jesus Christ, whose birth we prepare for as we begin this Advent season, we are made holy and blameless in God’s sight. We share Paul’s prayer for the church in Thessalonica to make our hearts blameless: “May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints” (1 Thessalonians 3:12–13).

PRELUDE, BELLS, WELCOME

HYMN “Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come” LSB 350

- 1 Come, Thou precious Ransom, come,
Only hope for sinful mortals!
Come, O Savior of the world!
Open are to Thee all portals.
Come, Thy beauty let us see;
Anxiously we wait for Thee.

- 2 Enter now my waiting heart,
Glorious King and Lord most holy.
Dwell in me and ne’er depart,
Though I am but poor and lowly.
Ah, what riches will be mine
When Thou art my guest divine!

- 3 My hosannas and my palms
Graciously receive, I pray Thee;
Evermore, as best I can,
Savior, I will homage pay Thee,
And in faith I will embrace,
Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.

- 4 Hail! Hosanna, David’s Son!
Jesus, hear our supplication!
Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown,
Bring us blessing and salvation,
That forever we may sing:
Hail! Hosanna to our King.

Text: Johann Gottfried Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.

Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darnstadtisches Gesang-Buch, Darmstadt, 1699; setting: The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941

Text and music: Public domain

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John 1:5, 9; Genesis 3:15; Psalm 33:20–22

P Each week in Advent, we light a candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

C **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

P The first Advent candle is known as the prophecy candle or the candle of hope. We hear again the first promise and prophesy made in the Garden of Eden after the fall into sin: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” The Lord has kept His Word through the mouths of prophets who, for generations, pointed people to the promised Savior to come.

C **The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

P Guided by the light of hope, we respond with the psalmist: “Our soul waits for the Lord;

C **He is our help and our shield.**

P For our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name.

C **Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in You.”**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

1 John 1:8–9; Jeremiah 33:14, 16; 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13; Luke 21:28

P As we begin the Advent season—a time of preparation for the coming of our Savior and a time of pondering God’s great love for us given in His Son—we also prepare ourselves to come before Him in humility and with honesty. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

P The prophet Jeremiah proclaims, “The days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made. . . . And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’”

C **We confess we have not rightly rejoiced in the promises that the Lord made and fulfilled and have instead found our fulfillment in the temporal things of our lives and this world. We have sought our own rightness instead of the Lord’s righteousness. Forgive us.**

P Paul prays, “May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, . . . so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus.”

C **We confess our hearts are full of blame and unholiness. Our love has been misguided and our actions have been self-serving. We have not loved You with our whole heart nor loved our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive us.**

P As Jesus speaks of the time of His return, He calls His followers to “straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

C **We confess we have not remained ready for Your return, nor realized time is short for the work You’ve called us to do. We have prioritized other matters instead of Your Word, relied on other things instead of Your presence, and in our thoughts, words, and actions have chosen to live our way instead of by Your commands. Forgive us.**

P The Lord is our righteousness. He alone establishes hearts blameless in holiness at His coming. Redemption draws near. We are declared righteous, blameless, and redeemed because of the living, dying, and rising of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As a called and ordained 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.**

KYRIE

LSB 152

P In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C **Amen.**

PSALM

P To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.

C **O my God, in you I trust;
let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.**

P Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

C **Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.**

P Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.

C **Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.**

P Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

C **Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.**

P He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.

C **All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

From everlasting to everlasting You are our God, and You come to Your people. In Your Word and in the flesh of Your only-begotten Son, You come that we may know forgiveness, righteousness, and redemption.

C **Prepare us to receive You in this season and always, that our hearts may be made blameless and filled with holiness;**

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Jeremiah 33:14–16

"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

"In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land.

In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness." (NIV)

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

1 Thessalonians 3:9–13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?

Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. (NIV)

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 19:28–40

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

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

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

"Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.' "

Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them.

As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"
They replied, "The Lord needs it."
They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.
As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.
When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:
"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"
"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." (NIV)

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

NICENE CREED

**I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life + of the world to come. Amen.**

HYMN "To Thee My Heart I Offer" TLH 89

- 1 To Thee my heart I offer,
O Christ-child sweet and dear,
Upon Thy love relying;
Oh, be Thou ever near!
Take Thou my heart and give me Thine
And let it be forever mine,
O Jesus, holy, undefiled,
My Savior meek and mild.

- 2 My heart within is glowing,
O Christ-child sweet and dear;
I love Thee, Lord and Savior,
Oh, be Thou ever near!
I see Thee in a manger laid,
Near cattle resting unafraid;
I see Thy deep humility
And lowly bow to Thee.

- 3 What brought Thee to the manger,
O Christ-child sweet and dear?
Thy love for me, a stranger—
Oh, be Thou ever near!
O Lord, how great is this Thy love
That reaches down from heav'n above,
Thy love for us, by sin defiled,
That made Thee, God, a child!

- 4 With all my heart and being,
O Christ-child sweet and dear,
I love Thee, and Thee only;
Oh, be Thou ever near!
My heart I in Thy manger lay;
Let it remain there and for aye
Draw it to Thee that it may be
Secure eternally.

- 5 Let me be Thine forever,
O Christ-child sweet and dear;
Uphold me with Thy mercy,
And be Thou ever near.
From Thee I gladly all receive,
And what is mine to Thee I give,
My heart, my soul, and all I own.
Let these be Thine alone.

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: Lutheran Service Book Hymn License
no. 100013324

Tune: Public domain

SERMON *"All Four Chambers of Your Heart -- Are They, For Jesus, Set Apart?"*

Text: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; John 14:23

OFFERING

HYMN “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” LSB 358

sts. 1, 12–13

- 1 “From heav’n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:
- 12 And so it pleases You to see
This simple truth revealed to me:
That worldly honor, wealth, and might
Are weak and worthless in Your sight.
- 13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Tune: Geistliche lieder, Leipzig, 1539, ed. Valten Schumann; setting: The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941

Text and music: Public domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the people of God in Christ Jesus, for His church, and for all people according to their needs.

Holy Lord, You sent Your Son into this world to be our Savior from sin and death, that through Him our hearts may be established holy and blameless before You, as He will come again in glory to redeem all His people. Be with us this Advent season and always as we wait upon Him and raise our heads, awaiting the redemption to come at the second advent. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Forgiving Lord, as You have granted us the forgiveness of sins, give us the same heart to forgive those who sin against us, that our love may abound for all people. Bless all our relationships in our families, friendships, homes, vocations, and communities, that they would reflect the love You have first shown to us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Compassionate Lord, as You come to Your people in need, grant Your continued presence with those who face trials of mind, body, and spirit. Give comfort to all facing affliction and pain, providing healing according to Your will. We lift up those who have asked us as one people to bring prayers before You, [*including . . .*]. As they wait upon You, give a sure and certain confidence of faith in Your promises made and fulfilled. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Gracious Lord, as we wait upon the redemption of the world at Christ’s second coming, we do so not alone but with Your continued presence until that day. We thank You for the nourishment You provide through Your means of grace, and especially the forgiveness assured through Christ’s body and blood given and shed for us. Be with us as we prepare to receive You in the fellowship of the altar as You come to us still. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

Additional petitions may follow.

- P Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son,
Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

PREFACE

- P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
- P Lift up your hearts.
C **We lift them to the Lord.**
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

- P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and out of perfect love sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. We thank You for all the work of Your hands and for all the words You have spoken and kept, as You come to us still now with Your healing grace through Christ's body and blood given and shed for us.
C **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. Do this 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 covenant in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

LSB 198

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace.

Amen.

HYMN "Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray" LSB 623

- 1 Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly pray
That we may feast on You today;
Beneath these forms of bread and wine
Enrich us with Your grace divine.
- 2 Give us, who share this wondrous food,
Your body broken and Your blood,
The grateful peace of sins forgiv'n,
The certain joys of heirs of heav'n.
- 3 By faith Your Word has made us bold
To seize the gift of love retold;
All that You are we here receive,
And all we are to You we give.
- 4 One bread, one cup, one body, we,
Rejoicing in our unity,
Proclaim Your love until You come
To bring Your scattered loved ones home.
- 5 Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly pray:
O keep us steadfast till that day
When each will be Your welcomed guest
In heaven's high and holy feast.

Text: Henry E. Jacobs, 1844–1932, alt.

Tune: Cationale Germanicum, Gochsheim, 1628; setting: Service Book and Hymnal, 1958

Text and music: Public domain

HYMN “Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart” LSB 708

1 Lord, Thee I love with all my heart;
I pray Thee, ne'er from me depart,
With tender mercy cheer me.
Earth has no pleasure I would share.
Yea, heav'n itself were void and bare
If Thou, Lord, wert not near me.
And should my heart for sorrow break,
My trust in Thee can nothing shake.
Thou art the portion I have sought;
Thy precious blood my soul has bought.
Lord Jesus Christ, my God and Lord, my God and Lord,
Forsake me not! I trust Thy Word.

2 Yea, Lord, 'twas Thy rich bounty gave
My body, soul, and all I have
In this poor life of labor.
Lord, grant that I in ev'ry place
May glorify Thy lavish grace
And help and serve my neighbor.
Let no false doctrine me beguile;
Let Satan not my soul defile.
Give strength and patience unto me
To bear my cross and follow Thee.
Lord Jesus Christ, my God and Lord, my God and Lord,
In death Thy comfort still afford.

3 Lord, let at last Thine angels come,
To Abr'ham's bosom bear me home,
That I may die unfearing;
And in its narrow chamber keep
My body safe in peaceful sleep
Until Thy reappearing.
And then from death awaken me,
That these mine eyes with joy may see,
O Son of God, Thy glorious face,
My Savior and my fount of grace.
Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer attend, my prayer attend,
And I will praise Thee without end.

Text: Martin Schalling, 1532–1608; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Tune: Zwey Bucher... Tabulatur, Strassburg, 1577; setting: Friedrich Zipp, 1914-97

Text and tune: Public domain

HYMN “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” LSB 341

1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!
Behold, the King of glory waits.
The King of kings is drawing near;
The Savior of the world is here.
Life and salvation He doth bring;
Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.
To God the Father raise
Your joyful songs of praise.

- 2 A righteous Helper comes to thee;
His chariot is humility,
His kingly crown is holiness,
His scepter, pity in distress.
The end of all our woe He brings;
Therefore the earth is glad and sings.
To Christ the Savior raise
Your grateful hymns of praise.
- 3 How blest the land, the city blest,
Where Christ the ruler is confessed!
O peaceful hearts and happy homes
To whom this King in triumph comes!
The cloudless sun of joy is He
Who comes to set His people free.
To God the Spirit raise
Your happy shouts of praise.
- 4 Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple set apart
From earthly use for heav'n's employ,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.
So shall your Sov'reign enter in
And new and nobler life begin.
To God alone be praise
For word and deed and grace!
- 5 Redeemer, come and open wide
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
O enter with Thy grace divine;
Thy face of mercy on me shine.
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on
Until our glorious goal is won.
Eternal praise and fame
We offer to Thy name.

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Tune: August Lemke, 1820-1913; setting: The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941

Text and music: Public domain

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Psalm 136:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13, adapt.

P Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,
C **for His steadfast love endures forever.**

P We thank and praise You that as we prepare to celebrate Christ's coming in the flesh and His promised return, You have come to us now through this gift of His body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins and nourishment of faith. Enable us, equip us, and make us, through faith in You, and in fervent love for one another, to
C **increase and abound in love for one another and for all, so that You may establish our hearts blameless in holiness before You, our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

- P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
- C **Amen.**

HYMN “Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring” LSB 353

- 1 Jesus came, the heav’ns adoring,
Came with peace from realms on high;
Jesus came to win redemption,
Lowly came on earth to die;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Came in deep humility.
- 2 Jesus comes again in mercy
When our hearts are worn with care;
Jesus comes again in answer
To an earnest, heartfelt prayer;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Comes to save us from despair.
- 3 Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing,
Bringing news of sins forgiv’n;
Jesus comes with words of gladness,
Leading souls redeemed to heav’n.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Hope to all the world is giv’n.
- 4 Jesus comes in joy and sorrow,
Shares alike our hopes and fears;
Jesus comes, whate’er befalls us,
Cheers our hearts and dries our tears;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Comforts us in failing years.

Text: Godfrey Thring, 1823–1903, alt.

Tune: Geistreiches Gesang-Buch, Darnstadt, 1698; setting: The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941

Text and music: Public domain

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series C, Quarter 1.

Copyright © 2024 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2024 Concordia Publishing House.