

Sunday, December 9, 2018
Second Sunday of Advent

***WELCOMING SONG**

"Prepare Ye"

Stephen Schwartz

Prepare ye, the way of the Lord
Prepare ye, the way of the Lord
Prepare ye, the way of the Lord
Prepare ye, the way of the Lord

***GATHERING SONG**

"Rise Up and Praise Him"

Let the heavens rejoice
let the earth be glad
Let the people of God
sing His praise
all over the land
Ev'ryone in the valley
come and lift your voice
All those on the mountaintop
Be glad and shout for joy

Rise up and praise Him
He deserves our love
Rise up and praise Him
Worship the Holy One
With all your heart
With all your soul
With all your might
Rise up and praise Him *(repeat)*

***LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

☐ *We praise you, O God, for this circle of light*
☑ that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
kindle within us the fire of your Spirit,
that we may be light shining in the darkness.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen!

Kindle this flame of peace.
May it burn bright and true.
Lighting the way that is of God,
the journey we pursue.

God's realm is our desire,
where peace and justice reign.
Heaven and earth combined as one,
when Christ shall come again.

***GREETING**

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

G **And also with you.**

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE**

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" vs. 7

ELW 257

O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
refresh the hearts that long for you;
restore the broken, make us new.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P *Stir up our hearts, Lord God,*

G **to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen!**

TRIPLE T GROWTH MOMENT

"Talent"

Phil and Nancy Lewis

FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1-4

The Lord announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means "my messenger") shall prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God's people, as silver and gold are refined.

¹See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Reflection

Who is coming? (verse 1) Who is sending the messenger? Is this messenger someone to look forward to? (verse 2) To what is the messenger compared? What happens to silver and gold

when they are refined? Fuller's soap is used to get all the impurities out of wool when it is clipped from the sheep or goat and to whiten it. Neither a refiner's fire or fuller's soap are gentle. What would it be like to be treated and purified in this way? "Who can endure the day of his coming" indeed! What is the purpose of refining the "descendants of Levi"? Who are the Levites? (See Numbers 18) They were responsible for making sure the offerings brought to the Lord were pure and worthy. (verse 4) As you reflect on this text, what makes your offering pleasing to the Lord?

Psalm

Luke 1:68-79

⁶⁸Blessed are you, Lord, the | God of Israel,
you have come to your people and | set them free.
⁶⁹**You have raised up for us a | mighty Savior,**
born of the house of your | servant David.
⁷⁰Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us | from our enemies,
⁷¹from the hands of | all who hate us,
⁷²**to show mercy | to our forebears,**
and to remember your | holy covenant.
⁷³This was the oath you swore to our | father Abraham:
⁷⁴to set us free from the hands of our | enemies,
free to worship you | without fear,
⁷⁵**holy and righteous before you, all the days | of our life.**
⁷⁶And you, child, shall be called the prophet of | the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare the way,
⁷⁷**to give God's people knowledge | of salvation**
by the forgiveness | of their sins.
⁷⁸In the tender compassion | of our God
the dawn from on high shall | break upon us,
⁷⁹**to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shad- | ow of death,**
and to guide our feet into the | way of peace.

Reflection

The psalm for this Sunday is the song of Zechariah. Who is Zechariah? (See Luke 1:5-23; 57-66) Although he was skeptical when the angel came to him to announce that John the Baptist would be born, what does his song convey after John's birth? What is John's role, as his father prophesied? (verses 76-79) How has this prophetic song been proven true? How are we, as Christians, related to John and his father Zechariah? How is our message similar?

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:3-11

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

³I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me

in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Reflection

This text is Paul's prayer for the Christians in Philippi. What is his prayer to God for them? (verses 3-4) Why does he pray thus for them? (verse 5) Is it their own doing that they are a source of joy for Paul? (verse 6) How do they reciprocate Paul's prayers? (verses 7-8) He continues his prayer in verse 9. What does he pray for? (verses 9-11) As you reflect on the sisters and brothers in Christ that we worship with every Sunday, what do you see to pray for? What is our "harvest of righteousness"?

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

"Words of Life"

Steven B. Eulberg

Where can we go
to hear the Truth be told?
You have the Words of Life;
Who has the word
that makes our hearts be bold?
You have the Words of Life.
Alleluia! Allelu!
Alleluia! Allelu!
Alleluia!
You are the One,
Alleluia! Allelu!
Alleluia! Allelu!
Alleluia!
You are the One, O Christ.

***GOSPEL**

Luke 3:1-6

John the Baptist is a herald of the saving Lord, whose way is prepared by "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He 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 the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out 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 be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

Reflection

Luke places the story he tells firmly in the time. Who are the men he mentions and what is their role in this story? (verses 1-2) It is notable that none of them are the ones to whom the word of God came. Are you surprised? To whom does the word come? What does he do with that word? (verse 3) Evidently everyone who knows the story of God’s people was expecting him! How? (verses 4-6) As we read further, we find that John is preaching baptism for the repentance of sin. It’s worth considering, with all these people streaming out to hear him, what that means for them and for us. When we think of sins, we usually look inward and either remember things we have done wrong as individuals (like eating the plums that were in the refrigerator that someone else was saving for breakfast). But as we will see, individual things like that were not the root of what John was proclaiming we need to repent of. The names of those in verses 1-2 remind us that although the Roman Empire did good things, often they ran roughshod over those who were not privileged. Pontius Pilate, Herod, and Philip were guilty of murder on a grand scale. Annas and Caiaphas were running a scam in the temple. What do you think it means for the way the world works that God’s way is to fill up valleys and make sure mountains and hills are not in the way, that the crooked (literally and figuratively) are made straight, and the rough ways that trip innocents up are made smooth. (verses 4-6) Will Tiberius, Pontius Pilate, Herod and Philip, Annas and Caiaphas still be the rulers in the Lord’s new way? What is John’s message to us today?

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

“Peace”

Rev. Roger Lenander

SONG OF THE DAY

“When Peace Like a River”

ELW 785

**When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.**

Refrain

**It is well (it is well)
with my soul, (with my soul,)
it is well, it is well with my soul.**

**Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed his own blood for my soul. *Refrain***

He lives--oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
my sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! *Refrain*

Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul. *Refrain*

***APOSTLES' CREED**

☑ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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!

***PRAYER SONG** *"Let My Prayer Be a Fragrant Offering"*

Let my prayer be a fragrant offering,
as incense to you arise.
Let my prayer be a fragrant offering,
my hands lifted up in praise.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Prepare your church to share the good news, life-giving God. Put your word within us and dwell among us. Send us out to proclaim the mercy and salvation that abides in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Protect the creation, life-giving God. Sustain the mountains and hills. Restore the rivers. Give us wisdom and compassion to care for wilderness areas and urban ecosystems. Move us to care for your creation in all its forms and richness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Purify the hearts of all people, life-giving God. Remove the hate that lives within us and among us. Mold us into peacemakers. Raise up leaders rooted in your love and fed by your word. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort all who hurt, life-giving God. Wrap them in your tender care. Remember the forgotten and send us out to share your love with them. Be with the wandering, the worried, and the woeful *especially Linda, Verna, Elaine, Jim, Lisa and her baby Lara*, and for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (pause for 10 seconds). . Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bless this congregation, life-giving God. Give strength and joy to worship leaders, musicians, and our altar guild as they prepare the way for the celebration of the Christ child's coming among us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We remember the generations who have shown us your faithfulness, life-giving God. Shine your light on those who mourn and prepare us for that day when we will see you face-to-face. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen!

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

P *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

C **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

"Advent Cry"

Joseph Martin

Chancel Choir

Phil Lewis, soloist

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P *God of abundance,*

C **we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

***DIALOGUE**

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 our thanks and praise.**

***PREFACE**

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Steve Eulberg

Holy Holy

Holy is the One, who Is,

Was, and Is To Come

Blessed is the One who comes

In the name of God!

Blessed is the One who comes

In the name of God!

Hosanna, Hosanna,

Hosanna sanna sann!

Hosanna, Hosanna,

Hosanna sanna sann!

Hosanna, Hosanna,

Hosanna sanna sann!

Hosanna

Hosanna

Hosanna

Hosanna

Holy Holy

Holy is the One, who Is,

Was, and Is To Come

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:*

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

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 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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C **Christ has died.**

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

P *With this bread and cup*

we remember your Word dwelling among us,

full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P *Holy God, we long for your Spirit.*

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C **Come, Holy Spirit.**

P *All praise and glory are yours,*

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever.

☞ Amen!

***LORD'S PRAYER**

ℙ *Gathered in hope as one, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

**☞ Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen!**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

ℙ *God fills the hungry with good things. Taste and see that the Lord is good.*

***BLESSING**

ℙ *The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

☞ Amen!

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

ℙ *Holy One,*

☞ we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen!

***BENEDICTION**

ℙ *May God direct your ways in peace,
make you abound in love for one another and for all,
and strengthen your hearts
until the coming of our Lord Jesus.
Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.*

☞ Amen!

***SENDING SONG**

"Shout to the North"

Men of faith rise up and sing
Of the great and glorious King
You are strong when you feel weak
In your brokenness complete

Refrain

Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is Savior to all
Lord of heaven and earth

Rise up women of the truth
Stand and sing to broken hearts
Who can know the healing pow'r
Of our awesome King of love *Refrain*

Rise up church with broken wings
Fill this place with songs again
Of our God who reigns on high
By His grace again we'll fly *Refrain*

We've been through fire
We've been through rain
We've been refined
By the pow'r of His name
We've fallen deeper
In love with You
You've burned
The truth on our lips *Refrain*

Lord of heaven and earth
Lord of heaven and earth
Lord of heaven and earth

***DISMISSAL**

☞ *Go in peace. Christ is with you.*

☞ **Thanks be to God!**