

Advent Midweek 3

December 15, 2021

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP (From selected verses in Micah 4:1–5)

Pastor: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: It shall come to pass, in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the highest of the mountains.

People: Then many nations will say—

Pastor: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob.”

People: “That he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”

Pastor: They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.

People: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Pastor: God’s fierce judgment—

All: Gives way to final grace!

HYMN “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” sts. 1-4 *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!

Text: Public domain

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Lord God, merciful Father, pour out your Holy Spirit and deliver us from all evil. Open our eyes so we see our sin and selfishness. Inspire our repentance so we return to you.

All: Amen.

Pastor: Returning to our gracious Lord, let us confess our sins.

Silence for reflection and confession.

Pastor: Almighty God, we approach You, standing on the life and work of Jesus, and ask:

People: Have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

Pastor: Our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love! Out of that love he sent Jesus to shed his blood for us. By faith we stand forgiven, restored and empowered to live new lives. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

HYMN "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" st. 5 LSB 341

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: Public domain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore you to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by your gracious visitation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT Micah 6:1-8

Hear what the Lord says: Arise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the Lord has an indictment against his people, and he will contend with Israel. "O my people, what have I done to you? How have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord. With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God

on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

EPISTLE *Philippians 2:1-11*

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

GOSPEL *John 1:1-14*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

APOSTLES' CREED

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.

SERMON

SERIES HYMN "Savior of the Nations, Come" sts. 1, 6-8 *LSB* 332

- 1 Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.

- 6 For You are the Father's Son
Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
By Your mighty pow'r make whole
All our ills of flesh and soul.

7 From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides.

△ 8 Glory to the Father sing,
Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be
Now and through eternity.

Text (sts. 6–7): © 2006 Concordia Publishing House; (st. 8): © 1978 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110003136. Text (st. 1): Public domain

OFFERING (*We offer our gifts to the Lord as we use this time in our service for contemplation. Offerings can be placed in the plates at the back entrance doors as you leave the sanctuary.*)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: We see our mighty God in the most unlikely places—a child in a stable, a Man upon a cross, the Risen One bursting forth from an empty tomb. May God hear our prayers, because of Christ Jesus.

A brief silence

Pastor: Creator God, stretch out your hand in healing and protection over all that you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Just God, grant your Spirit to the nations and send your light to the dark places of the world. Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Suffering God, inspire all people by Christ's cross and bring forth resurrection and life. Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Saving God, sustain all who suffer and release those imprisoned by pain or disease. Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Renewing God, take us and empower us to live according to your will, making us shine with the love of Jesus. Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Additional Prayers

Pastor: Arriving God, keep us steadfastly trusting your Word, just as you kept your powerful prophet Micah. Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Give us ears to hear, O God, and eyes to watch that we may know your presence in our midst during this holy season of joy as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

THE 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.

BENEDICTION (From Micah 7:18–20)

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

HYMN “Angels We Have Heard on High” *LSB* 368

1 Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav’nly song? *Refrain*

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain*

Text: Public domain

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS DECORATION DONATIONS: Sanctuary Christmas decoration donation slips are available in the narthex. Please indicate your willingness to help defray decoration costs by using the donation slip. Place in the offering plate or hand to an usher. Donation slips will be available through December 25.

CHRISTMAS EVE worship will be held at Emmaus at 5 p.m. (lessons and carols, candlelight) and 10 p.m. (Communion, choir, candlelight).