

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 1, 2019

Worship Focus

**“COME, LORD JESUS”:
Keep Watch, for the Lord will come again... unexpectedly**

Come,
LORD JESUS

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Order of Service for
FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

✠ Gathering ✠

OPENING HYMN

9 - Jesus, Your Church with Longing Eyes



1 Je - sus, your Church with long - ing eyes For your ex -
 2 E'en now, when tem - pests round us fall And win - try
 3 Come, gra - cious Lord, our hearts re - new, Our sins for -
 4 Oh, come and reign o'er ev - 'ry land; Let Sa - tan
 5 Teach us in watch - ful - ness and prayer To wait for



pect - ed com - ing waits. When will the prom - ised
 clouds o'er - cast the sky, Your words with plea - sure
 give, our foes sup - press, Our root - ed en - mi -
 from his throne be hurled. Let na - tions bow to
 your ap - point - ed hour, And fit us by your



light a - rise And glo - ry beam from heav - en's gates?
 we re - call And know that our re - demp - tion's nigh.
 ty sub - due, And crown your gos - pel with suc - cess.
 your com - mand; Let grace re - vive a dy - ing world.
 grace to share The tri - umphs of your con - qu'ring pow'r.

Text: William H. Bathurst, 1796–1877, abr., alt.

Tune: O JESU CHRISTE, WAHRES LICHT (LM) *Andächtige Haus-Kirche*, Nürnberg, 1676, alt.

INVOCATION

Minister

The grace of our Lord (+) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation And also with you.

CONFESSION OF SINS and ABSOLUTION

M God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

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.**

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.**

THE GREAT LITANY¹

Prayer of Approach to God

M O God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth,

C **Have mercy on us.**

M O God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

C **Have mercy on us.**

M O God the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide,

C **Have mercy on us.**

M Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God,

C **Have mercy on us.**

Prayer for Deliverance

M Remember not, Lord Christ, our offenses nor the offenses of our forebears. Spare us, good Lord; spare your people, whom you have redeemed with your precious blood.

¹ *The Great Litany is the most ancient of services of the Church except for the service of Holy Communion. It expresses the fundamental needs of all people yet provides the individual an opportunity for private concentration. With its penitential character, it is not uncommon to speak the Great Litany at the beginning of the Church's preparatory seasons, such as Advent or Lent.*

C Spare us, good Lord.

M From all spiritual blindness; from pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and malice; and from all lack of charity,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M From all deadly sin and from the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart and contempt for your Word and your will,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M From earthquake and tempest; from drought, fire, and flood; from civil strife and violence; from war and murder; and from dying suddenly and unprepared,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

Prayer Recalling Christ's Saving Work

M By the mystery of your holy incarnation; by your baptism, fasting, and temptation; and by your proclamation of the kingdom,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M By your bloody sweat and bitter grief, by your cross and suffering, and by your precious death and burial,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M By your mighty resurrection, your glorious ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Spirit,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M In times of trouble or prosperity, in the hour of death, and on the day of judgment,

C Good Lord, deliver us.

M Receive our prayers, O Lord our God.

C Hear us, good Lord.

Prayer for the Church

M Govern and direct your holy Church, fill it with love and truth, and grant it that unity which is according to your will.

C Hear us, good Lord.

M Enlighten all ministers with true knowledge and understanding of your Word, that by their preaching and living they may declare it clearly and show its truth.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Encourage and prosper your servants who spread the gospel in all the world, and send out laborers into the harvest.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Bless and keep your people, that all may follow their true vocation and ministry.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Give us hearts to love and revere you, that we may live according to your commandments.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M To all your people, give grace to receive your Word and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Strengthen those who stand firm in the faith, encourage the fainthearted, raise up those who fall, and finally give us the victory.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

Prayer for Our Country

M Rule the hearts of your servants, the president of the United States, and all others in authority, that they may do justice, love mercy, and walk in the ways of truth.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Bless and defend all who strive for our safety and protection, and shield them in all dangers and adversities.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Grant wisdom and insight to those who govern us and to judges and magistrates the grace to execute justice with mercy.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

Prayer for All People

M To all nations grant unity and peace, and to all people give clothing, food, and shelter.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Grant us abundant harvests, strength and skill to conserve the resources of the earth, and wisdom to use them well.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Enlighten with your Spirit all who teach and all who learn.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Come to the help of all who are in danger, necessity, and trouble; protect all who travel by land, air, or water; and show your pity on all prisoners and captives.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Strengthen and preserve all women who are in childbirth and all young children, and comfort the aged, the bereaved, and the lonely.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Defend and provide for the widowed and the orphaned, the refugees and the homeless, the unemployed, and all who are desolate and oppressed.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Heal the sick in body or mind, and give skill and compassion to all who care for them.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

M Grant us true repentance, forgive our sins, and strengthen us by your Holy Spirit to amend our lives according to your Holy Word.

C **Hear us, good Lord.**

Concluding Prayer

M Son of God, we ask you to hear us.

C **Son of God, we ask you to hear us.**

M Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

C **Have mercy on us.**

M Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

C **Have mercy on us.**

M Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

C **Grant us peace.**

M Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Christ, have mercy on us.**

M Lord, have mercy on us. Let us pray.
Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Protect us by your strength and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



✠ The Word ✠

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 2:1-5

Isaiah sees a different picture in chapter 2 from what he saw in in chapter 1. In the last days, amid the unexpected judgment, God comes with unexpected grace for his people.

ISAIAH 2:1 This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: ² In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. ³ Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. ⁵ Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

PSALM

Psalm 18

Refrain Tune: Dale Wood. From Seasonal Psalms. © 1978 Augsburg Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.

Refrain



The might-y Lord is with us; the God of Ja-cob is our for-tress.

Psalm tone



The LORD is my rock, my fortress and by de | liverer;*
my God is my rock, in whom I take | refuge.

He reached down from on high and took | hold of me;*
he rescued me from my powerful | enemy.

He brought me out into a | spacious place;*
he rescued me because he delight | ed in me.

Refrain

You, O LORD, keep my lamp | burning;*
my God turns my darkness | into light.

You save the | humble*
but bring low those whose eyes are | haughty.

You give me your shield of | victory,*
and your right hand sus | tains me.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit,
as it was in the be | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Refrain

SECOND LESSON

Romans 13:11-14

Understanding the present time means working and walking in love because the coming of our Lord is near. Notice the words Paul chooses: nearer, nearly, and almost. The certainty of Christ's coming is never in question, only his timing.

ROMANS 13:11 And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹²The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

M We light one Advent candle, remembering Jesus, who is coming again. He will come to gather his people from everywhere, both the living and the dead.

C **We remember Jesus, who will come at the end of time. None of us know what day that will be.**

M We hear his call to watch.

C **We light one Advent candle as a sign of our watchfulness and waiting.**

M Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C **Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.**

One advent candle is lit.

GOSPEL

Matthew 24:36-44

So unexpected is the coming of Christ, that neither the Church, nor the angels, nor even the Son knows the day or time. Warnings are spoken; promises are made; signs are given. But the great day will come unexpectedly.

MATTHEW 24:36^c“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴²“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

After the reading of the Gospel the congregation responds:

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

2 - Savior of the Nations, Come

1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; Vir - gin's
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the
 3 Won - drous birth! O won - drous Child Of the
 4 From the Fa - ther's throne he came And as -
 5 Praise to God the Fa - ther sing, Praise to

Son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, O
 Spir - it of our God Was the Word of
 vir - gin un - de - filed, Though by all the
 cend - ed to the same, Cap - tive lead - ing
 God the Son, our King, Praise to God the

heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.
 God made flesh, Wo - man's off - spring, pure and fresh.
 world dis - owned, Yet to be in heav'n en - throned!
 death and hell— High the song of tri - umph swell!
 Spir - it be Ev - er and e - ter - nal - ly.

Text: Ambrose, 340–97, abr.; German version, Martin Luther, 1483–1546, abr.; tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812–76, alt.
 Tune: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND (77 77) *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn*, Wittenberg, 1524.

✠ Sermon ✠

Matthew 24:36-44

Jesus' Final Advent Doesn't Have a Calendar

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

**C We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

FRIENDSHIP REGISTER and GATHERING OF OFFERINGS

✠ Prayers ✠

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Knowing that we are now nearer to the day of salvation than before, let us come with even greater urgency and plead on behalf of all of God's people and everyone according to their needs.

Brief silence

O Lord, You have made us glad to enter into Your presence to hear the good news of our Savior and to receive Your gifts. Preserve Your Church against all her enemies, and lead us to walk in Your ways and to follow Your paths, that when Jesus returns in His glory we may welcome Him with glad hosannas. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Mighty Lord, You hold in Your hand all the might of man. Bless those who have the responsibility of leadership within our government, that they may be guided by Your Law and work in accordance with Your will and purpose. Grant to us the gift of peace, an end to violence and deliverance from terror and threat. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy Lord, You have clothed us with Christ's righteousness in our Baptism. Grant to us Your Spirit, that we may have both the will and the desire to seek that which is good, right, holy and good and to resist temptation to evil. Help us to bear in our daily lives the good fruit of Your Spirit and so glorify You in all we do and say. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Loving Lord, You have given to us Your Son to bear the burdens of our sin and to grant us healing and hope. Hear us on behalf of those in great need, those afflicted with physical and mental ills, those whose hearts are touched by grief, and those in their last days on earth [*especially* _____]. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, You give to us all good gifts and all things needful for this body and life. Give to us grateful hearts, that we may receive Your gifts with thanksgiving and wisdom and use all things wisely and well. Accept now the tithes and offerings we bring as part of our song of praise and the worship of our lives. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Everlasting God, Your Son has given us a place at His table and the food of His supper for the life of the world. Grant us faith to recognize His body in this bread and His blood in this cup and to receive this blessed communion with joy and thanksgiving. Unite Your people, that we may confess with one voice the truth of Your Word and live together in love and anticipation for that day when Christ shall return in triumph. Bring us with all the saints into Your eternal presence and to the marriage feast of the Lamb without end. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy and mighty God, You have shown to us more mercy than we deserve, and in Your great love You have redeemed us from all our sins. Make glad the hearts of Your people, that we who know Your salvation may live in peace and quietness all our days. All these things and all other things which we need, we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

C 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.



✠ The Sacrament ✠

PREFACE and PROPER PREFACES

M The Lord be with you.



C: And al - so with you.

M Lift up your hearts.



C: We lift them up to the Lord.

M Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Through his holy prophets, he promised a King to bring light to those living in darkness and in the shadow of death. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (*Sanctus*) and WORDS OF INSTITUTION



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.



You are my God, and I will ex - alt you.



I will give you thanks, for you have be - come my sal -



va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

M 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, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C: A - men.

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD (*Agnus Dei*)



1 "Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing,"
 2 Zi - on hears the watch - men sing - ing,
 3 Now let all the heav'ns a - dore you;



The watch - men on the heights are cry - ing, "A - wake, Je -
 And all her heart with joy is spring - ing; She wakes, she
 Let saints and an - gels sing be - fore you With harp and



ru - sa - lem, a - rise!" Mid - night hears the
 ris - es from her gloom, For her Lord comes
 cym - bal's clear - est tone. Of one pearl each



wel - come voic - es And at the thrill - ing
 down all - glo - rious, The strong in grace, in
 shin - ing por - tal, Where, dwell - ing with the



cry re - joic - es: "Oh, where are all you vir - gins wise?
 truth vic - to - rious; Her Star is ris'n, her Light is come.
 choir im - mor - tal, We gath - er round your ra - diant throne.



The Bride - groom comes— a - wake! Your lamps with
 "Now come, O Bless - ed One, Christ Je - sus,
 No vi - sion ev - er brought, No ear has



glad - ness take! Al - le - lu - ia! With bri - dal care
 God's own Son. Hail! Ho - san - na! The joy - ful call
 ev - er caught Such great glo - ry; There - fore will we



Your-selves pre - pare To meet the Bride-groom who is near.”
We an - swer all And fol - low to the wed - ding hall.”
In vic - to - ry Sing hymns of praise e - ter - nal - ly.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
Tune: WACHET AUF (898 898 664 448) Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608, alt.

✘ Sending ✘

THANK THE LORD



C: Thank the Lord and sing his praise. Tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-news his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

PRAYER

M Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

BLESSING

M Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

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.



CLOSING HYMN

15 - Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing; "Christ is
2 Lo, the Lamb, so long - ex - pect - ed, Comes with
3 That, when next he comes with glo - ry And the
4 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the



near," we hear it say, "Cast a - way the
par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
world is wrapped in fear, He may shield us
Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -



works of dark - ness; You are chil - dren of the day."
tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n,
with his mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
last - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 6th century, abr.; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–78, alt.
Tune: MERTON (87 87) William H. Monk, 1823–89.

After worship, please feel free to stay and greet your neighbors.



Keep
awake
therefore,
for you
do not know
on what day
your
Lord
is coming.

Matthew 24:42, NRSV

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Advent is a season of preparation and anticipation. The Church looks for the coming of her Savior in this threefold advent: his coming in the flesh; his return in judgment; his daily coming in Word and Sacrament. The Church encompasses all these facets of the season in the single word that defines Advent worship: “Come!” Throughout the prayers, verses, and lessons that single word is our invitation, our anticipation, our sure and certain hope. Come, Lord Jesus!

With Advent comes the beginning of a new Church Year. Each of the three years of the Church Year cycle emphasizes one of the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) with readings from John interspersed throughout each of the years. The Church Year 2019/2020 follows the readings appointed for Year A (confer *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*, page 163) with Gospel lessons predominantly from Matthew.

As a devotional preparation for your Church Year journey, read through the Gospel of Matthew in the coming weeks.

OUR WORSHIP SERIES: “COME, LORD JESUS”

This Advent season our worship will focus on the theme, “**Come, Lord Jesus!**” as the Word of God prepares our hearts to celebrate Jesus’ first advent, give thanks for his present advent, and rejoice in his advent yet to come.

OUR THEME FOR TODAY:

KEEP WATCH, FOR THE LORD WILL COME AGAIN... UNEXPECTEDLY

Advent invites some familiar faces into our lives: Zechariah, Elizabeth, and their son, John the Baptist... Mary, Joseph, and their “baby revealer”, the angel Gabriel. But today’s Gospel lesson doesn’t mention any of those characters. Today’s Advent actor is Noah!

What does Noah have to do with Advent? It’s not so much Noah as much as the times in which Noah lived that connect with Advent. World-wide tragedy struck in the days of Noah when God flooded the earth from above and below for one month plus one week plus three days. Most of the inhabitants of the earth were unaware of the impending doom. It caught them unexpectedly (even though God had warned anyone who dared pay attention to Noah’s preaching).

This is how it will be for the generations alive when the final world-wide tragedy strikes – the return of Jesus for judgment. Most will be oblivious to his coming... and by the time Jesus returns, it will too late. Jesus has given us fair warning that we be ready at all times for his final return. Those who are ready in faith do not view Jesus’ return as a tragedy but look forward to his advent to take us home. For that reason, we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus”.