

St. John's Lutheran Church

**Aitkin, Minnesota
November 29, 2020
First Sunday in Advent
Order of Worship (Online)**

- P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C **Amen.**
- P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.
- P Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- C **who made heaven and earth.**
- P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
- C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**
- P O almighty God, merciful Father,
- C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**
- P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the

grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Introit

Ps. 25:1–3; antiphon: Zech. 9:9b, alt.

Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

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

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

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

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

Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

Collect of the Day

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 64:1–9

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
and that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome things that we did not look for,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your
presence.

From of old no one has heard
or perceived by the ear,
no eye has seen a God besides you,
who acts for those who wait for him.

You meet him who joyfully works righteousness,
those who remember you in your ways.

Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be
saved?

We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.

We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.

But now, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;

we are all the work of your hand.
Be not so terribly angry, O LORD,
and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

1 Corinthians 1:3–9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

Mark 11:1–10

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside

in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

C **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 Text – Mark 11:1-10

Sermon Theme – “Disappointed?”

Well, today is the 1st Sunday in Advent. That means we have entered yet another new church year. Do you know what? In this past church year which just ended with readings emphasizing the fact that Jesus is going to come again, Jesus didn't come again! We are still waiting.

The question I have for you is this: “Are you disappointed about that?” I'm guessing most of us aren't disappointed. If the truth be told, we really don't want this world to come to an end. As bad as it is, this world is still home to us. The thought of it coming to an end frightens us. Besides that, we have things we want to do and people we want to see. Maybe we want to have a chance to enjoy retirement; maybe we want to be able to see our kids or grandkids grow up. Besides that: Christmas is coming. We don't want to miss that! As much as we talk about Jesus' coming, especially this time of year, we really expect things to continue as they have for so many years.

While most of us don't really want the end to come, evidently from what we hear in our Old Testament lesson for today, the people then must have wanted the end to come. Otherwise, why would Isaiah write: **“Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down”** (Is. 64:1).

So what would it take for us to be truly disappointed because another church year has come and gone without Jesus coming? If you were in prison, on death row, would Jesus' coming seem like a relief to you? Or, if you have a disease that isn't going to kill you, but just make your life miserable, then might you want Jesus to come and take you out of your misery? What if you owed a huge debt, a debt you could not possibly pay, knowing that Jesus' coming would wipe that debt off the books, might you then be OK with Jesus coming again?

Or, see if you can imagine this one. You are dealing with a pandemic and you have to wear a mask out in public and you can't get close to people, then might you pray: "Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly! Come now!" and really mean it?

Wait a minute; I guess that last "what if" is true! And, if we think about the other "what ifs," we have to admit that they are true for us, spiritually, whether we realize it or not. We all owe God a huge debt because of our sin. It is a debt we could never possibly pay. We all have a disease called sin that is eating away at us, making us miserable. One more thing: because of our sin, we are all on death row.

When are things going to get better? Things are really going to get better when Jesus comes again. For that reason, once again, in this season of Advent, we turn our eyes on the one who can make all things better. Of course, all year round we have been looking to Jesus for things like: forgiveness and strength, wisdom and other things we need.

But Advent is different. Advent means "Come!" This is the season we especially pray: "Come, Lord Jesus! Come

quickly! Come now!" We did that earlier in the collect for the day, when we prayed: "Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance." We also pray, "Come, Lord Jesus!" when we sing hymns like: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" and "Savior of the Nations, Come."

As we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus," we remember how when Jesus came the first time, He rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. He was riding into Jerusalem so that He could take our place on death row. He came so that He could go to the cross to pay in full the debt of our sin. He came to heal us of the disease of sin. In other words He came to "Hosanna" us, that is "save us." The word, "Hosanna" which we hear the people shouting on Palm Sunday means "Save us, now!"

The people there on Palm Sunday didn't understand the significance of what Jesus was doing. Just like us today, most of them were probably looking to be saved from the things and problems and fears of this world, not from their sins. They probably were shouting "**Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!**" because they wanted Jesus to restore the kingdom of Israel and free it from Roman rule and be that kind of king. Just as we often want a Jesus who will be that kind of king who will stop the wars, stop the hatred, so we can live in this world in peace.

Now, it's not wrong or bad to want those things, but Jesus didn't come to be that kind of king or to give that kind

of peace. His chosen mode of transportation made that obvious! Kings and warriors don't ride young, untamed colts or donkeys, they ride strong, well-trained stallions. His honor guard showed that, too – not soldiers but common people and children with coats and tree branches. But it was His chosen throne that shouted it the loudest. Earthly kings rule from bejeweled thrones, they don't reign from a cross. And so with colt, coats, and cross, we see that Jesus has come to do something quite different, something much better. To provide for us a peace and salvation not just for a time, for the short time we have on this earth, but peace and salvation forever.

And so in the midst of this world of trouble we sing our Hosannas, too - to our King who comes to us in just as unlikely a way as on colt, coats, and cross - as He comes to us in the simple bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. It's not even really good bread and wine; it's ordinary at best. But whether it's on the donkey's colt or in the bread and wine it is, your King is coming to you, righteous and having salvation, your King with His forgiveness and with His life for you. So that in the midst of the troubles, and hatred of this world, we have hope and we have peace - a peace that surpasses understanding and supersedes time and space. A peace with God to have now and that lasts forever.

So Advent proclaims: Behold, your King is coming to you -- now! - just as He promised. And He is coming again - He will! - just as He promised. For He came, just as He promised. He is faithful.

Bring your sins for your King to take away and let Him "Hosanna" you, that is "save" you. And as you do that, this

season, and every season, look to your King and prepare for the end, for that day when Jesus comes again, as He promised. And as you do that, you are looking, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, to the One who enriches, supplies, and sustains you to live now, to live in your vocations, to serve and to love until He comes again. It is all so that you will be ready, if this be the year, if this be your final Advent. He will come. And when He does, you will not be disappointed.
AMEN

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

C **Amen.**

Prayer of the Church

To You, O Lord, we lift up our souls and in You we put our trust. Do not let us be ashamed of our hope but come quickly. Sustain us by Your Holy Spirit, that we may have joy at the advent of Christ, our Savior

Gracious Lord, enrich Your saints in every way as we enter another Church Year. Encourage the preachers of Your Word and all who hear, that the testimony about Christ may be confirmed again among us. Give boldness and faithfulness to our Synod president; our district president; and all pastors in Christ. As You have called us into the fellowship of Your Son, so sustain us as we wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, preserve and bless all Christian households, that husbands and wives would live in love and service to each other, that fathers and mothers would diligently bring up their children in Your fear, and that

children would honor their parents and be well equipped for service to their neighbors in this life.

Almighty God, be with the governing authorities and enable them to preserve peace and order in our nation. Hear our prayers for our president; our governor; our military and police; and other civil servants as well as all newly elected officials. Increase a spirit of unity and cooperation among the people of our land and the nations of the world.

Compassionate Lord, behold in mercy all who are in any danger, trouble, sickness or need. Hear our prayers for the sick and suffering [*especially _____*]. Give health to our world and bring the pandemic to an end. Comfort all who mourn, [*especially _____,*] and sustain them with a confident hope in the resurrection.

Eternal Lord, as Your Son once entered humbly into Jerusalem to cries of "Hosanna," so send Him to us according to His promise through Word and Sacraments.

Into Your hands, Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **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.

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 T give you peace.
- C **Amen**

Acknowledgments

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