

# **The Season of Advent**

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version<sup>®</sup>  
following the Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Revised January 23, 2017*

# The First Sunday in Advent

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*  
*Evangelical Heritage Version*<sup>®</sup>

## Old Testament / First Reading

### Isaiah 2:1-5

This is the message that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>It shall happen in the latter days,  
that the mountain of the LORD's house will be established  
as the chief of the mountains.  
It will be raised above the hills,  
and all nations will flow to it.

<sup>3</sup>Many peoples will come and say,  
“Come, let's go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
Then he will teach us from his ways,  
and we will walk in his paths.”  
For from Zion the law shall go out,  
and the LORD's word shall go out from Jerusalem.  
<sup>4</sup>He will judge between the nations,  
and he will mediate for many peoples.  
Then they will beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
and they shall not learn war any more.  
<sup>5</sup>O house of Jacob, come,  
and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

## Epistle / Second Reading

### Romans 13:(8-10) 11-14

<sup>8</sup>Do not owe anyone anything except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>For the commandments—do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet (and if there is any other commandment)—are summed up in this statement: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup>Love does no harm to a neighbor, so love is the fulfillment of the law.

<sup>11</sup>And do this since you understand the present time. It is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup>The night is almost over, and the day is drawing near. So let us put away the deeds of darkness and put on the weapons of light. <sup>13</sup>Let us walk decently as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual sin

and wild living, not in strife and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not give any thought to satisfying the desires of your sinful flesh.

## Holy Gospel

### Matthew 21:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>telling them, “Go to the village ahead of you. Immediately you will find a donkey tied there along with her colt. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.”

<sup>4</sup>This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup>Tell the daughter of Zion: Look, your King comes to you, humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

<sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did just as Jesus commanded them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their outer clothing on them, and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup>A very large crowd spread their outer clothing on the road. Others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them out on the road. <sup>9</sup>The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed kept shouting,

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest!

<sup>10</sup>When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, asking, “Who is this?” <sup>11</sup>And the crowds were saying, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

*or*

### Matthew 24:36-44

<sup>36</sup>“No one knows when that day and hour will be, not the angels of heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father. <sup>37</sup>Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be when the Son of Man returns. <sup>38</sup>In fact, in the days before the flood people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the very day that Noah entered the ark. <sup>39</sup>And they did not realize what was coming until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man returns.

<sup>40</sup>“At that time two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>41</sup>Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>42</sup>So be alert, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup>But understand this: If the master of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup>You also need to be ready for this reason: The Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect him.”

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# The Second Sunday in Advent

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*  
*Evangelical Heritage Version*®

## Old Testament / First Reading

### Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse,  
and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit.

<sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him:  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>He will delight in the fear of the LORD.  
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
nor will he render decisions based on what his ears hear,  
<sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he will judge the poor,  
and he will render fair decisions in favor of the humble of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
and with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked.

<sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be the belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt around his hips.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf will dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat,  
the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together;  
and a little child will lead them.

<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear will graze.  
Their young ones will lie down together.  
The lion will eat straw like the cattle.

<sup>8</sup>The nursing child will play near a cobra's hole,  
and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.

<sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD,  
as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>10</sup>It will happen in that day that the peoples will seek the Root of Jesse, who will be standing like a banner for the peoples, and his resting place will be glorious.

## Epistle / Second Reading

### Romans 15:4-13

<sup>4</sup>Indeed, whatever was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that, through patient endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we would have hope. <sup>5</sup>And may God, the source of patient endurance and encouragement, grant that you agree with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>so that with one mind, in one voice, you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>For this reason, accept one another as Christ also accepted you to the glory of God. <sup>8</sup>For I am saying that Christ became a servant of those who are circumcised for the sake of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs. <sup>9</sup>He also did this so that the Gentiles would glorify God for his mercy, as it is written:

For this reason I will praise you among the Gentiles,  
and I will sing to your name.

<sup>10</sup>And again it says:

Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.

<sup>11</sup>And again:

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,  
and let all the peoples give him praise.

<sup>12</sup>And again Isaiah says:

There will be a Root of Jesse,  
and he is the one who will rise up to rule the Gentiles;  
on him the Gentiles will place their hope.

<sup>13</sup>Now may the God of hope fill you with complete joy and peace as you continue to believe, so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Holy Gospel

### Matthew 3:1-12

In those days, John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, <sup>2</sup>“Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is near!” <sup>3</sup>Yes, this is he of whom this was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness,  
“Prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight.”

<sup>4</sup>John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>Then Jerusalem, all of Judea, and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him. <sup>6</sup>They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. <sup>7</sup>But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup>Therefore produce fruit in keeping with repentance! <sup>9</sup>Do not think of saying to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup>Already the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup>I baptize you with water for repentance. But the one who comes after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup>His

winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather his wheat into the barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

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# The Third Sunday in Advent

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*  
*Evangelical Heritage Version*<sup>®</sup>

## Old Testament / First Reading

### Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land will be glad.  
The desert will rejoice and blossom like a rose.  
<sup>2</sup>It will blossom abundantly,  
and there will be great joy and singing.  
Lebanon's glory will be given to it,  
it will be excellent like Carmel and Sharon.  
They will see the glory of the LORD,  
the majesty of our God.  
<sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make feeble knees firm.  
<sup>4</sup>Tell those who have a fearful heart,  
    "Be strong.  
    Do not be afraid.  
    Look! Your God will come with vengeance,  
    with God's own retribution  
    he will come and save you."  
<sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf will be cleared.  
<sup>6</sup>The lame will leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy.  
Waters will flow in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert.  
<sup>7</sup>The burning sand will become a pool,  
and in the thirsty ground there will be springs of water.  
Grass, reeds, and rushes will be in the haunts where the jackals once lay.  
<sup>8</sup>A highway will be there, a road,  
and it will be called The Holy Way.  
The unclean will not walk there.  
It will be for those who walk in that Way.  
Wicked fools will not wander onto it.  
<sup>9</sup>No lion will be there,  
nor will any ravenous animal go up on it.  
They will not be found there,  
but the redeemed will walk there.  
<sup>10</sup>Then those ransomed by the LORD will return,

they will come singing to Zion,  
and everlasting joy will be on their heads.  
They will obtain happiness and joy,  
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”

## Epistle / Second Reading

### James 5:7-11

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, brothers, be patient until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the valuable harvest from the ground, patiently waiting for it, until it receives the early and late rain.

<sup>8</sup>You be patient too. Strengthen your hearts because the coming of the Lord is near.

<sup>9</sup>Do not complain about one another, brothers, so that you will not be judged. Look! The Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup>Brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of suffering with patient endurance. <sup>11</sup>See, we consider those who endured to be blessed. You have heard of the patient endurance of Job and have seen what the Lord did in the end, because the Lord is especially compassionate and merciful.

## Holy Gospel

### Matthew 11:2-15

<sup>2</sup>While John was in prison, he heard about the things Christ was doing. He sent two of his disciples <sup>3</sup>to ask him, “Are you the Coming One or should we wait for someone else?”

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, “Go, report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor. <sup>6</sup>Blessed is the one who does not take offense at me.”

<sup>7</sup>As these two were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the crowds about John. “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>What did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? No, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. <sup>9</sup>So what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you! And he is much more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ <sup>11</sup>Amen<sup>a</sup> I tell you: Among those born of women there has not appeared anyone greater than John the Baptist. Yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup>From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been advancing forcefully and forceful people are seizing it. <sup>13</sup>In fact, all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. <sup>14</sup>If you are willing to receive it, he is the Elijah who was to come. <sup>15</sup>Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.”

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<sup>a</sup> Usually, people say Amen at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is I solemnly tell you the truth. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at [wartburgproject.org/faqs](http://wartburgproject.org/faqs)

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# The Fourth Sunday in Advent

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 3-Year Lectionary, Year A  
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## Old Testament / First Reading

**Isaiah 7:10-17**

<sup>10</sup>The LORD spoke to Ahaz again. He said, <sup>11</sup>“Ask for a sign from the LORD your God. Ask for it either in the depths below or in the heights above.”

<sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, neither will I test the LORD.”

<sup>13</sup>So Isaiah said: “Listen now, you house of David. Is it not enough for you to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you all a sign. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and call his name Immanuel. <sup>15</sup>He will eat cheese curds and honey when he knows how to refuse evil and choose good. <sup>16</sup>Before the child even knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken.

<sup>17</sup>“The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father’s house, days worse than any since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah. The LORD will bring the king of Assyria.”

## Epistle / Second Reading

**Romans 1:1-7**

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup>which he promised in advance through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. <sup>3</sup>This gospel is about his Son—who in the flesh was born a descendant of David, <sup>4</sup>who in the spirit of holiness was declared to be God’s powerful Son by his resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ, our Lord. <sup>5</sup>Through him we received grace and the call to be an apostle on behalf of his name, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, <sup>6</sup>including you, who were called by Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>To all those loved by God who are in Rome, called to be saints:

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

## Holy Gospel

**Matthew 1:18-25**

<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother, Mary, was pledged in marriage to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. <sup>20</sup>But as he was considering these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

<sup>22</sup>All this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>“Look, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son. And they will name him Immanuel,” which means, “God with us.”

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. He took Mary home as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but he was not intimate with her until she gave birth to her firstborn son. And he named him Jesus.

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