

The Season of Advent

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*

Revised October 9, 2021

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The First Sunday in Advent

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Reading

Isaiah 64:1–9

Oh, that you would rip open the heavens and come down.
Mountains then would quake because of your presence.
²As fire ignites stubble and as fire makes water boil,
make your name known to your adversaries.
Then nations would quake in your presence.
³You did amazing things that we did not expect.
You came down. Mountains quaked because of your presence.
⁴From ancient times no one has heard.
No ear has understood.
No eye has seen any god except you,
who goes into action for the one who waits for him.
⁵You meet anyone who joyfully practices righteousness,
who remembers you by walking in your ways!
But you were angry because we sinned.
We have remained in our sins for a long time.
Can we still be saved?
⁶All of us have become like something unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like a filthy cloth.
All of us have withered like a leaf,
and our guilt carries us away like the wind.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you.
So you hid your face from us.
You made us melt by the power of our guilt.
⁸But now, LORD, you are our father.
We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.
⁹Do not be angry, LORD, without limit.
Do not remember our guilt forever.
Please look closely.
All of us are your people.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

⁴I always thank my God for you because of the grace of God given to you in Christ Jesus. ⁵You were enriched in him in every way, in all your speaking and all your knowledge, ⁶because the testimony about Christ was established in you. ⁷As a result you do not lack any gift as you eagerly wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also keep you strong until the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful, who called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Gospel

Mark 11:1–10

As they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and told them, “Go into the village ahead of you. As soon as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it, and he will send it back here without delay.’ ”

⁴They left and found a colt on the street, tied at a door; and they untied it. ⁵Some who were standing there asked them, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶The disciples answered them just as Jesus had instructed them, and the men let them go.

⁷They brought the colt to Jesus, threw their garments on it, and Jesus sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their garments on the road. Others spread branches that they had cut from the fields. ⁹Those who went in front and those who followed were crying out,

Hosanna!

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

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!

Hosanna in the highest!

Or

Mark 13:26–37

Then you will see the Son of Man coming on clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷At that time he will send out his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of the sky.

²⁸“Learn from this illustration of the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also when you see these things happening, you will know that he is near—at the doors! ³⁰Amen I tell you: This generation will certainly not pass away until all these things happen. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³²“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Watch! Be alert and pray, because you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going away on a journey. When he left his home, he put his servants in charge and assigned what each one was to do. He also commanded the doorkeeper to keep watch. ³⁵Therefore keep watch,

because you do not know when the owner of the house is coming: whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or early in the morning. ³⁶If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷What I say to you, I say to everyone: Keep watch!"

The Second Sunday in Advent

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First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call out to her.

Her warfare really is over.

Her guilt is fully paid for.

Yes, she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice is calling out:

In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD.

In the wasteland make a level highway for our God.

⁴Every valley will be raised up,
and every mountain and hill will be made low.

The rugged ground will become level,
and the rough places will become a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all flesh together will see it.

Yes, the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

⁶A voice was saying, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry out?"

All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like a wildflower in the countryside.

⁷Grass withers, flowers fade,
when the breath of the LORD blows on them.

Yes, the people are grass.

⁸Grass withers, flowers fade,
but the Word of our God endures forever.

⁹Get up on a high mountain,

O Zion, you herald of good news.

Lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, you herald of good news.

Lift it up! Do not be afraid!

Say to the cities of Judah,

"Here is your God!"

¹⁰Look, God the LORD will come with strength,
and his arm is ruling for him.

Look, his reward is with him.

The result of his work is in front of him.

¹¹Like a shepherd he will care for his flock.

With his arm he will gather the lambs.

He will lift them up on his lap.

He will gently lead the nursing mothers.

Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-14

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: For the Lord, one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to do what he promised, as some consider slowness. Instead, he is patient for your sakes, not wanting anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will pass away with a roar, the elements will be dissolved as they burn with great heat, and the earth and what was done on it will be burned up. ¹¹Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed, what kind of people ought you to be, living in holiness and godliness, ¹²as you look forward to and hasten the coming of the day of God? That day will cause the heavens to be set on fire and destroyed, and the elements to melt as they burn with great heat. ¹³But according to his promise we look forward to new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴Therefore, dear friends, as you look forward to these things, make every effort to be found in peace, spotless and blameless in his sight.

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²This is how it is written in the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare the way for you.

³A voice of one calling out in the wilderness,

“Prepare the way of the Lord.

Make his paths straight.”

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. ⁶John was clothed in camel’s hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He preached, “One more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals! ⁸I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Third Sunday in Advent

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First Reading

Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11

The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the afflicted.
He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release for those who are bound,
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance for our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion,
to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,
the oil of joy instead of mourning,
a cloak of praise instead of a faint spirit,
so that they will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD to display his beauty.

¹⁰I will rejoice greatly in the LORD.

My soul will celebrate because of my God,
for he has clothed me in garments of salvation.
With a robe of righteousness he covered me,
like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress like a priest,
and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.

¹¹For as the earth produces its growth,
and as a garden causes what has been sown to sprout up,
so God the LORD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up
in the presence of all the nations.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always. ¹⁷Pray without ceasing. ¹⁸In everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹Do not extinguish the Spirit. ²⁰Do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹But test everything. Hold on to the good. ²²Keep away from every kind of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Gospel

John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?”

²⁰He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, “I am not the Christ.”

²¹And they asked him, “Who are you then? Are you Elijah?”

He said, “I am not.”

“Are you the Prophet?”

“No,” he answered.

²²Then they asked him, “Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ just as Isaiah the prophet said.”

²⁴They had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵So they asked John, “Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?”

²⁶“I baptize with water,” John answered. “Among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.”

²⁸These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

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First Reading

2 Samuel 7:8-16

You are also to say the following to my servant David.

This is what the LORD of Armies says. I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your reputation great, like that of the great ones on the earth. ¹⁰I will set up a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them there. They will dwell there, and they will not be disturbed again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning ¹¹and ever since the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

The LORD also declares to you that the LORD himself will make a house for you. ¹²When your days are complete and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your seed, who will come from your own body. I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will discipline him with a rod used by men and with blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵My faithful mercy will not depart from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed to make room for you. ¹⁶Your house will stand firm, and your kingdom will endure forever before you. Your throne will be established forever.

Second Reading

Romans 16:25-27

Now to him who is able to strengthen you—

according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ,

according to the revelation of the mystery that was veiled in silence for long ages past, ²⁶but now has been revealed through the prophetic Scriptures and made known to all the Gentiles, in keeping with the command of the eternal God, resulting in the obedience of faith—

²⁷to God, who alone is wise, be glory forever through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

²⁹But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God.

³¹Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end.”

³⁴Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

³⁵The angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Listen, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age even though she was called barren, and this is her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible for God.”

³⁸Then Mary said, “See, I am the Lord’s servant. May it happen to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.