

The Season of Advent

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

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The First Sunday in Advent

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Lesson

Genesis 6:9-22, 7:11-23

⁹This is the account about the development of Noah's family.

Noah was a righteous man, a man of integrity in that generation. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹¹In the sight of God the earth was morally corrupt, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²God looked at the earth and saw that it was corrupt, for all flesh was corrupt in all their ways on the earth.

¹³So God said to Noah, "I have decreed the end of all flesh, because the earth is filled with violence because of them. Now I am going to destroy them along with the earth.

¹⁴"Make an ark of gofer wood. Make rooms in the ark. Seal it inside and outside with pitch. ¹⁵This is how you are to make it: The length of the ark is to be 450 feet, its width 75 feet, and its height 45 feet. ¹⁶Make a roof for the ark, and leave an eighteen-inch opening just under the roof. Place a door on the side of the ark. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.

¹⁷"I myself am about to bring a flood of waters on the earth, in order to destroy all flesh under the sky that has the breath of life. Everything that is on the earth will die, ¹⁸but I will establish my covenant with you. You shall come into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹You shall bring a pair (male and female) of every kind of living flesh into the ark with you to keep them alive. ²⁰Include the birds according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, every creeping thing on the ground according to their kinds. Two of every sort shall come to you, so you can keep them alive. ²¹Take with you every type of food that is eaten, and store it for yourself, so it can be used as food for you and for them."

²²So that is what Noah did. He did everything that God commanded him, just as he had been told.

^{7:11}In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that very day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. ¹²The rain came down on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

¹³On that same day Noah, Noah's sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons along with them, entered the ark. ¹⁴They went in with every animal according to its kind, all the livestock according to their kinds, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, and everything that flies according to its kind, flying birds of every sort. ¹⁵Pairs of all the animals that have the breath of life in them went to Noah in the ark. ¹⁶A male and female of each animal that breathes went in, just as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut Noah in.

¹⁷The flood kept coming on the earth for forty days. The waters became deeper and lifted up the ark until it floated high above the earth. ¹⁸The water kept increasing and overwhelmed the earth, and the ark was carried along on the surface of the water. ¹⁹The water overwhelmed the earth. All the high mountains that were under the entire sky were covered. ²⁰The waters rose more than twenty feet above the mountains and covered them. ²¹All living creatures that moved on the earth perished,

including birds, livestock, wild animals, every creeping thing that crawls on the earth, and all mankind. ²²Everything that breathed the breath of life through its nostrils, that is, everything that was on the dry land, died. ²³Every living thing that was on the face of the earth was wiped out, including mankind, livestock, creeping things, and birds of the sky. They all were wiped off the earth. Only Noah was left, as well as those who were with him in the ark.

Second Lesson

Romans 13:11-14

¹¹And 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. ¹²The 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. ¹³Let us walk decently as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual sin and wild living, not in strife and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not give any thought to satisfying the desires of your sinful flesh.

Gospel

Matthew 24:36-44

³⁶“No one knows when that day and hour will be, not the angels of heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be when the Son of Man returns. ³⁸In 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. ³⁹And 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.

⁴⁰“At that time two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²So be alert, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But 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. ⁴⁴You also need to be ready for this reason: The Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect him.”

The Second Sunday in Advent

*Christian Worship: Supplement Lectionary 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Lesson

Daniel 4:19-37

¹⁹Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was horrified for a moment, and his thoughts troubled him. The king said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream and its meaning trouble you.”

Belteshazzar answered, “My Lord, if only the dream were about your enemies and its meaning about your foes!”

²⁰The tree which you saw grew and became strong. Its height reached to heaven, and it was visible to the whole earth.²¹Its leaves were beautiful, and its fruit was abundant. On it there was food for all. The wild animals lived under it, and the birds of the air lived in its branches.

²²You are the tree, Your Majesty. For you have grown, and you have become great. Your greatness has increased and reached to heaven. Your dominion reaches to the ends of the earth.²³And you, Your Majesty, saw a watcher, who was a holy one, coming down from heaven, and he said, “Chop down the tree and destroy it. However, leave the stump with its roots in the ground, with an iron and bronze band around it. Let it be with the grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew from the sky. Its place will be with the wild animals, until seven times pass over it.”

²⁴This is the interpretation, Your Majesty:

It is a decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord, the king. ²⁵You will be driven away from humans, and your dwelling will be with the wild animals. You will have to eat plants as bulls do, and you will be wet with the dew from the sky. Seven times will pass over you until you know that the Most High rules the kingdoms of men, and he gives them to whomever he wishes. ²⁶Because they said to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will remain yours when you acknowledge that Heaven rules.

²⁷Therefore, Your Majesty, let my advice be pleasing to you. Break away from your sins with righteousness and from your guilty deeds by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps your prosperity will be extended.

²⁸All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹At the end of twelve months he was walking on top of the palace of his kingdom in Babylon. ³⁰The king said, “Isn’t this the great Babylon that I built for a royal residence by my mighty power and my majestic glory?”

³¹While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice came down from heaven. It said, “It is announced to you, King Nebuchadnezzar: The kingdom has been taken away from you. ³²You will be driven away from humans, and your dwelling will be with the wild animals. Grass will be fed to you as grass is fed to bulls, and seven times will pass over you until you know that the Most High rules the kingdoms of men, and he gives them to whomever he wishes.”

³³Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar, and he was driven away from humans. So he ate grass as bulls do, and his body was wet with the dew from the sky until his hair grew long like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.

³⁴At the end of the set time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me. So I blessed the Most High, and I praised and glorified the one who lives forever, because his dominion is an eternal dominion, and his kingdom lasts forever and ever. ³⁵All of the inhabitants of the earth are considered to be nothing, and he does as he wishes with the army of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. So there is no one who can hold back the hand of the Most High and say to him, “What have you done?” ³⁶At that time my reason^a returned to me, and my splendor and glory returned to me for the honor of my kingdom. So my advisors and nobles looked for me. I was reinstated over my kingdom, and I became even more majestic than I was before. ³⁷Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and honor the King of Heaven, because all his works are true, and his ways are just. All those who walk in arrogance he is able to humble.

Second Lesson

Acts 3:19-26

¹⁹Therefore repent and return to have your sins wiped out, ²⁰so that refreshing times may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you. ²¹He must receive heaven until the times when everything will be restored, as God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.

²²“Moses said to the fathers:

The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet from your brothers who is like me. Listen to everything he tells you. ²³And this is what will happen: Every person who does not listen to that Prophet will be completely cut off from the people.

²⁴“Also, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have talked about these days. ²⁵You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with our fathers when he said to Abraham:

In your Descendant all the families of the earth will be blessed.

²⁶“God raised up his Servant and sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you away from your wicked ways.”

Gospel

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days, John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, ²“Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is near!” ³Yes, 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.”

⁴John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then Jerusalem, all of Judea, and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him. ⁶They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. ⁷But 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? ⁸Therefore produce fruit in keeping with

^a36 Or *sanity*

repentance! ⁹Do 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. ¹⁰Already 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. ¹¹I 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. ¹²His 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."

The Third Sunday in Advent

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Lesson

Job 1:6-22

⁶There came a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came into their midst. ⁷The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?”

Satan answered the LORD, “From roaming the earth and walking around on it.”

⁸Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a man who is blameless and upright, who fears God and turns away from evil.”

⁹Satan answered the LORD, “Is it without cause that Job fears God? ¹⁰You have put a protective hedge around him and his household and everything that belongs to him, haven’t you? You have blessed the work of his hands. His livestock has spread throughout the land. ¹¹But just stretch out your hand and strike everything that is his, and he will certainly curse you to your face!”

¹²So the LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then. Everything that he has is in your hand. But you may not stretch out your hand against the man himself.” So Satan left the presence of the LORD.

¹³One day when Job’s sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their oldest brother, ¹⁴a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the female donkeys were grazing nearby, ¹⁵when the Sabeans swooped down and took them away. They put the servants to death with the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

¹⁶While he was still speaking, another servant came and said, “The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the flocks and the servants and consumed them, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

¹⁷While he was still speaking, another servant came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and plundered the camels and took them away. They put the servants to death with the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

¹⁸While he was still speaking, another servant came and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and were drinking wine in the house of their oldest brother. ¹⁹Suddenly a powerful wind swept in from the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it collapsed on the young people, and they died, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

²⁰Then Job stood up, tore his robe, and shaved his head. He fell to the ground and worshipped. ²¹Then he said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will return. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. May the name of the LORD be blessed.”

²²In all this, Job did not sin or blame God.

Second Lesson

James 5:7-11

⁷Therefore, 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.

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

⁹Do not complain about one another, brothers, so that you will not be judged. Look! The Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰Brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of suffering with patient endurance. ¹¹See, 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.

Gospel

Matthew 11:2-11

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

⁴Jesus answered them, “Go, report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The 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. ⁶Blessed is the one who does not take offense at me.”

⁷As 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? ⁸What did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? No, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹So what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you! And he is much more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹Amen^a 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.”

^a 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

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Lesson

Isaiah 7:1-14 (15-17)

This took place in the days when Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, was king of Judah. Rezin king of Aram, and Pekah son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, marched up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but they could not capture it.

²The house of David was told, “Aram has allied itself with Ephraim.” The heart of Ahaz trembled, and the heart of his people trembled as the trees of the forest tremble in the wind.

³Then the LORD said to Isaiah:

Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear Jashub. Meet him at the end of the water channel from the upper pool, on the road that goes to the launderers field.

⁴Tell Ahaz, “Get control of yourself, and remain calm. Do not be afraid. Do not lose your courage because of these two stubs of smoldering torches. Do not be afraid because of the fierce anger of Rezin, Aram, and the son of Remaliah, ⁵even though Aram, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you and said, ⁶“Let’s go up against Judah and tear it apart. Let’s divide it among ourselves and set up a king over it, namely, this son of Tabe’el.”

⁷This is what the LORD God says.

Their plan shall not succeed.

It shall not take place.

⁸Yes, the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin, but within sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken into pieces, so that it will no longer be a people.

⁹The head of Ephraim is only Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah’s son.

If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all.

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

¹²But Ahaz responded, “I will not ask. I will not test the LORD.”

¹³So Isaiah said:

Listen now, you house of David. Is it not enough for you to test the patience of men? Will you test the patience of my God as well? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel.

¹⁵He will eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse evil and choose good, ¹⁶because even before the child knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken.

¹⁷The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house, days worse than any since the day that Ephraim broke away from Judah. The LORD will bring the king of Assyria.

Second Lesson

Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised in advance through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. ³This gospel is about his Son—who in the flesh was born a descendant of David, ⁴who in the spirit of holiness was declared to be God's powerful Son by his resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ, our LORD. ⁵Through 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, ⁶including you, who were called by Jesus Christ.

⁷To 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.

Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸This 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. ¹⁹Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. ²⁰But 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. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²²All this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"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."

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