**The Season of Advent**

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

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**The First Sunday in Advent**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Isaiah 2:1-5**

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

2This will take place in the latter days:

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 stream to it like a river.

3Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,

to the house of the God of Jacob.

Then he will instruct us about his ways,

and we will walk in his paths.”

For from Zion the law will go out,

and the Lord’s word will go out from Jerusalem.

4He 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 will not lift up sword against nation,

nor will they learn war anymore.

5O house of Jacob, come,

and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

**Epistle / Second Reading**

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

8Do not owe anyone anything except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9For 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.” 10Love does no harm to a neighbor, so love is the fulfillment of the law.

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.

**Holy Gospel**

**Matthew 21:1-11**

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2telling 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. 3If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.”

4This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

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

6The disciples went and did just as Jesus commanded them. 7They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their outer clothing on them, and he sat on it. 8A very large crowd spread their outer clothing on the road. Others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them out on the road. 9The 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!

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

*or*

**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**

*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.

2The 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 the fear of the Lord.

3He will be delighted with the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,

nor will he render decisions based on what he hears with his ears,

4but with righteousness he will judge the poor,

and he will render fair decisions in favor of the oppressed on the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

and with the breath from his lips he will put the wicked to death.

5Righteousness will be the belt around his waist,

and faithfulness the belt around his hips.

6The 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.

7The cow and the bear will graze together,

and their young ones will lie down together.

The lion will eat straw like the cattle.

8The nursing child will play near a cobra’s hole,

and the weaned child will put his hand into a viper’s den.

9They will not hurt or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain,

for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord,

as the waters cover the sea.

10This is what will take place on that day. 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**

4Indeed, 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. 5And may God, the source of patient endurance and encouragement, grant that you agree with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6so that with one mind, in one voice, you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7For this reason, accept one another as Christ also accepted you to the glory of God. 8For 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. 9He 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.

10And again it says:

Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.

11And again:

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,

and let all the peoples give him praise.

12And 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.

13Now 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, 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 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**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Isaiah 35:1-10**

The wilderness and the desert will be glad.

The wasteland of the Arabah will rejoice and blossom like a crocus.

2It will bloom lavishly,

and there will be great joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon 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.

3Strengthen the weak hands,

and make the shaky knees steady.

4Tell 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.

5Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,

and the ears of the deaf will be unplugged.

6The crippled 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 wasteland.

7The burning sand will become a pool,

and in the thirsty ground there will be springs of water.

There will be grass, reeds, and rushes where the haunts of jackals once lay.

8A highway will be there,

a road that will be called the holy way.

The impure will not walk there.

It will be reserved for those who walk in that holy way.

Wicked fools will not wander onto it.

9No lion will be there,

nor will any ferocious animal go up on it.

They will not be found there,

but only the redeemed will walk there.

10Then those ransomed by the Lord will return.

They will enter Zion with a joyful shout,

and everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Happiness and joy will overtake them,

and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**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.

**Holy Gospel**

**Matthew 11:2-15**

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[[1]](#footnote-1) 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. 12From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been advancing forcefully and forceful people are seizing it. 13In fact, all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14If you are willing to receive it, he is the Elijah who was to come. 15Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.”

**The Fourth Sunday in Advent**

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Isaiah 7:10-17**

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.

**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, 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.

**Holy 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.

1. 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 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)