

Advent



HOLY TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
2021

Introduction



Advent is a time of anticipation. Expectancy. Eagerness. But it's about more than being excited to open Christmas gifts. It's recognizing the suffering around us, and admitting this world is not yet fully as God would want it to be.

We see struggle around us: weariness, exhaustion, compassion fatigue, mental health concerns, families and friends torn apart, the threat of illness hovering, corruption, greed, apathy.

Advent invites us to pray for Christ to come again. We wait in anticipation that this time, this year, the significance of the Christmas miracle will sink in once again. That God doesn't leave this broken world forsaken, but enters into it, in order to bring peace. Hope. Even joy.

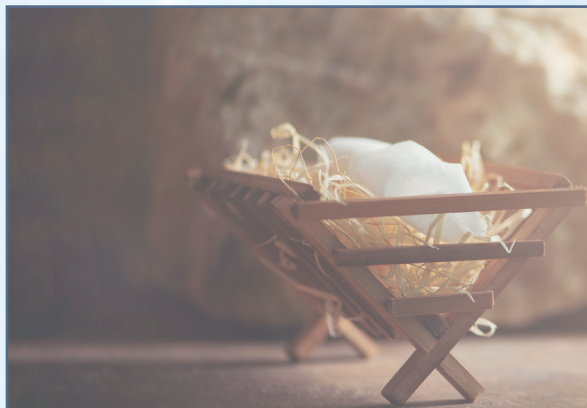
Rev. Terry Morehouse (father of HTLC member Kristina Madigan), writes in his book, *Fellow Travelers: Reflections on the Church Year* (Kirk House Publishers, Minneapolis. 2001),

"The Scriptures remind us that we are accountable. We have been given this precious gift called time, and our time will not last forever. The promise that He will come again reminds us that each day is a gift: Christ waits to touch the world once more with his love. He does this through those that he has called to be his own, those that he has gathered together in his church. That Christ will come again is a message of hope, and a reason for dreaming of a better world, a new world that is waiting to be born." (p.11)

This year, throughout this season of advent, we invite you to practice daily devotions at home. To find consolation and restoration in the Christ who comes to us in the Holy Scriptures. As we focus on Him, may we too, look forward with anticipation for a better world, waiting to be born.

-Pastor Ben Hilding

Services



Early Family Christmas

Wednesday, December 15

Dinner at 5 pm

Worship at 6 pm

Cookies and Cider to follow



Blue Christmas

Wednesday, December 22

Dinner at 5 pm

Worship at 6 pm



Christmas Eve Services

2 pm, 4 pm & 10 pm

In-Person Worship

6 pm Online Worship

Week 1: The Gift of Hope

In the first week of Advent, hear the words from the prophet Jeremiah calling forth "A righteous branch to spring up for David." With anticipation, we wait with hope for the coming days: that the advent of God's future births justice and righteousness. Because of His birth, we can look forward to the future with hope.

Light 1 Candle

Read

Sunday, November 28: Jeremiah 33:14-16
Monday, November 29: Psalm 90
Tuesday, November 30: 2 Samuel 7:18-29
Wednesday, December 1: Isaiah 1:24-31
Thursday, December 2: Philippians 1:12-26
Friday, December 3: Luke 1:68-79
Saturday, December 4: Luke 9:1-6

Reflect

Spend time reflecting on the Scripture passage.

Pray

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Comfort, Comfort Now My People (ELW #256)

"Comfort, Comfort now my people" is a hymn where the text comes straight from the Bible: Isaiah 40:1-5. At this time (sixth century B.C.E.), God's people had been in exile, taken into captivity in Babylon. This passage, spoken by the prophet Isaiah, marks the moment when God was coming to release them. In the presence of fear and suffering, God comes to give them comfort, security, and hope for restoration.

This hymn first appeared in Germany as "Tröstet, tröstet meine Lieben" in Geistliche Singe-Kunst (Leipzig, 1671) which Johann Olearius (September 17, 1611-April 24, 1684) compiled. Olearius contributed three hundred hymns to this twelve hundred hymn book, including this one. Olearius came from a family of Lutheran pastors and teachers, and graduated from University of Wittenberg (MA, 1632; DD, 1643). He was a prolific preacher, hymn writer, and wrote a commentary on the whole Bible. Catherine Winkworth translated this hymn into English in her Chorale Book for England (1863). Educated initially by her mother, Winkworth was a pioneer in promoting women's rights and advocating for women's education. Besides translating German hymns into English, she also translated biographies of German Christians who focused on ministries to the poor and sick.

References

Paul Westermeyer, Hymnal Companion to Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2010).

www.hymnary.org

www.enterthebible.org

Week 2: The Gift of Peace

In the second week of Advent, hear the words from the prophet Malachi (his name means "My messenger") announcing a messenger coming to prepare the way. This messenger comes both as a refiner and a purifier. As we are welcomed into a covenant with the Lord of hosts, we can look forward to the future with peace.

Light 2 Candles

Read

Sunday, December 5: Malachi 3:1-4
Monday, December 6: Psalm 126
Tuesday, December 7: 2 Peter 1:2-15
Wednesday, December 8: Isaiah 35:3-7
Thursday, December 9: Isaiah 12:2-6
Friday, December 10: 2 Corinthians 9:1-15
Saturday, December 11: Luke 1:57-66

Reflect

Spend time reflecting on the Scripture passage.

Pray

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Savior of the Nations, Come (ELW #263)

This is one of the oldest hymns we currently sing. It dates back to Ambrose of Milan (340-397), who wrote it in Latin as “Veni, Redemptor gentium.” Ambrose is called the “father of church song”, “not because he was the first to write hymns but because his hymns were the first ones the church found worth keeping” (Paul Westermeyer, *Hymnal Companion to Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2010), 34). Ambrose was governor of Liguria and Aemilia, and was elected bishop of Milan even though he wasn’t even baptized at the time. So, in December of 374 he was baptized, ordained and made bishop. Ambrose defended the church against the Arian heresy, which asserted that Jesus was not equal to God the Father. In addition to writing hymns, Ambrose also spent considerable time devoted to study, writing, educating clergy (such as Augustine), as well as living a simple life.

This hymn was translated by Martin Luther into German, likely for the season of Advent in 1523. Besides translating the Bible into German and engaging in reforming activities, Luther was also a prolific hymn writer. William Reynolds (1812-1876), a Lutheran Pastor who became an Episcopal minister, translated this hymn into English in the 1850 edition of *Hymns Selected and Original*.



Week 3: The Gift of Love

In the third week of Advent, hear the words from the prophet Isaiah, “surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid.” The Lord comes near to the hurting and brokenhearted to bring comfort and strength. In response, how can we not give thanks? We make known his deeds to the nations, because we can look forward to the future with love.

Light 3 Candles

Read

Sunday, December 12: Isaiah 12:2-6
Monday, December 13: Hebrews 13:7-17
Tuesday, December 14: Acts 28:23-31
Wednesday, December 15: Isaiah 11:1-9
Thursday, December 16: Jeremiah 31:31-34
Friday, December 17: Isaiah 42:10-18
Saturday, December 18: Psalm 80

Reflect

Spend time reflecting on the Scripture passage.

Pray

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (ELW 254)

This hymn is one of the thousands of hymns written by Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Wesley also wrote favorites such as "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing," and "Jesus Christ is Risen Today." Perhaps the great hymn writer of all time, Charles and his brother, John, were itinerant preachers and leaders of the Methodist church (although Charles was ordained Anglican and buried in an Anglican churchyard). Rather than referring to one particular passage, this hymn references many different Scripture passages:

"For to us a child is born" Isaiah 9:6

"He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives" Luke 4:18

"Desire of every nation" Haggai 2:7

This hymn confesses a double nature of Advent, where we remember Christ's birth even while praying for His return. Even though we know that Christ goes with us and before us every day, we long for the day when we are with him completely. This hymn embodies the Advent lament regarding the brokenness of this world, but it directs our prayers to the coming Messiah. Advent speaks of this longing, as we wait with anticipation not only for Christmas, but for the day when we are with Him in a New Heaven and a New Earth.



Week 4: The Gift of Joy

In the fourth week of Advent, hear the words from the prophet Micah, who after speaking judgment speaks of a shepherd-king who will restore Israel and bring peace. The hope of the earth is born in a little town of Bethlehem (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem). With Christmas confessing God's presence with us, we can look forward to the future with joy.

Light 4 Candles

Read

Sunday, December 19: Micah 5:2-5a
Monday, December 20: Colossians 1:15-20
Tuesday, December 21: Psalm 113
Wednesday, December 22: Luke 1:5-25
Thursday, December 23: Luke 1:46-55
Friday, December 24: Luke 2:1-20
Saturday, December 25: John 1:1-14

Reflect

Spend time reflecting on the Scripture passage.

Pray

Stir up Your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness (ELW #251)

In the Gospel of Luke, Mary goes to the hill country to visit her relative Elizabeth. Upon arrival, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In response, Mary shares a song of praise (which we refer to as the Magnificat). "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Mary sings this prophetic hymn, which proclaims that God has "brought the powerful down from their thrones and lifted up the lowly, he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty" (Lk 1:52-53). At Holy Trinity, we sing this text also during Lent, through Marty Haugen's Holden Evening Prayer service.

In the ELW, this particular text was crafted by Martin Seltz (b. December 3, 1951) and Frank W. Stoldt (b. November 18, 1958) for the With One Voice hymnal supplement (1995). Seltz is currently cantor at Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis, and Stoldt has been a pastor or musician in New York, Chicago, Detroit and Minneapolis. Stoldt and Seltz were co-editors of With One Voice. You may well recognize the Kingsfold tune, which Ralph Vaughan Williams (1871-1958) brought into use for The English Hymnal in 1906. This tune is also used for "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" ELW 611, "Come, Join the Dance of Trinity" ELW 412, "How Small Our Span of Life" ELW 636, and "Canticle of the Turning" ELW 723.





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Friday 8am – 12pm

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