

Advent IV Sermon 4 by Bishop Michael Hawkins

By the Right Reverend Michael W. Hawkins

Bishop of Saskatchewan

John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

I have always thought of John the Baptist as a preacher and so considered his words, “Behold the Lamb of God”, as preaching, which they surely are. But he was also and was first, himself a believer, and his exclamation is as much personal confession as public proclamation. This comes out in the way that our gospel is told. John sees Jesus coming to him, and says, “Behold the Lamb of God.”

We consider in this season the Advent of God in Christ, his coming in humility, to save, and his coming again in glory, to judge. He is ever and always present as both Saviour and Judge, the Lord who is at hand and who stands among us, though we

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fail to recognize, welcome and honour him.

We speak of and preach the Advent of God in Christ, and his presence with us always, but this is not some abstraction. John saw Jesus coming to him, and this is what faith knows: Christ coming to us and for us. And this is what is communicated, what we are reminded of, in Holy Communion, that it is all for us and to us. Jesus Christ comes to us and for us. May we know that, especially in his death and in Holy Communion. God comes to us, God comes for us, God is with us in Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, Immanuel.