

Augsburg Evangelical Lutheran Church
December 20, 2020 - Advent 4

Welcome: *We would like to thank Andrea Nesbitt and Michaela Rawlingson for reading the lessons today.*

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. *C: And also with you.*

Call to Worship for Advent ~ written by Fr. Henri J. M. Nouwen. Posted on **Patheos**.

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/yimcatholic/2012/12/an-advent-prayer.html>

Lord Jesus,
Master of both the light and the darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much
seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things
look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy
seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.
To you we say,
"Come Lord Jesus!"

Advent Candle Lighting and Prayer (Written by Rev. Karen Ware Jackson)

Light one candle for love.
Because the world is broken and the wait is long, but love never ends.
Love faithfully goes about the work of casting out fear, speaking truth,
healing the deepest wounds, crossing the divide from this world to the next
and back again. "Here I am," she whispers, "the servant of the Lord."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
Christ with us.
(Light the fourth candle on the advent wreath)

Song – O Come, O Come Emmanuel ¹

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain*

O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law in cloud and majesty and awe. *Refrain*

O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain*

The Readings

Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
'The Lord has done great things for them.'
The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-21

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, for ever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.
I declare that your steadfast love is established for ever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

You said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:
"I will establish your descendants for ever,
and build your throne for all generations." '

Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:
'I have set the crown on one who is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
I have found my servant David;
with my holy oil I have anointed him;
my hand shall always remain with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

The Word of the Lord

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her. The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

Song: The Angel Gabriel²

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, with wings as drifted snow, with eyes as flame:
"All hail, to thee O lowly maiden Mary, most highly favoured lady." Gloria!

"For, know a blessed mother thou shall be, all generations laud and honour thee;
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold, "Most highly favoured lady." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head; "To me be as it pleas-eth God," she said.
"My soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name." Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
"Most highly favoured lady." Gloria!

Prayers of the People

We pray: *Lord, in your mercy...* and respond: *Hear our prayer.*

Holy Communion (Zoom Only)

The Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us;

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

Christmas Is Coming

Song – Joy to the World³

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns; let all their songs employ,

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. *C: Thanks be to God*

¹ ELW hymn #257 (verses 1-4). Text: *Psalterium Contionum Catholicarum*, Koln, 1710; tr. composite. text st. 2 ©1997 Augsburg Fortress. Music: French Processional, 15th cent. Reprinted with permission under OneLicense #A736240. All rights reserved.

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³ ELW hymn #267. Text: Isaac Watts Music: English melody; arr. Lowell Mason. In the public domain.