

Service of Daily Prayer

Second Sunday in Advent

Athens Lutheran Church, Athens, TN

December 6, 2020

As We Gather

What was it that made not only a couple or a few but, as Mark says, “all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem” come out to be baptized by the Baptist and to confess their sins? Well, what is it that made you get up and come to church today? Notice that today not all do come. Though occasionally during wartime or some great catastrophe more tend to come, the catechism explains, “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.” “But,” it continues, “the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel.” Some think believing is impossible for them. But believing is not on you; it is a gift from God, overflowing with forgiveness, life, and salvation. God was with John by the Jordan River. God is here with you by His Word and Sacraments.

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Versicles

In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.
My mouth is filled with Your praise,
and with Your glory all the day.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Reading

Isaiah 40:1–11

¹Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

³A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry!”
And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Behold your God!”

¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

Comfort for God's People

Reading

2 Peter 3:8–14

⁸But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰But the

day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

The Day of the Lord will come.

Reading

Mark 1:1–8

¹The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,

³the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

John the Baptist prepares the way.

Final Reading Response

LSB 238

L In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.

Apostles’ Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Koine Worship Song - Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

Sermon

Rev. Don Coulter

Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

In the morning

Almighty God, merciful Father, who created and completed all things, on this day when the work of our calling begins anew, we implore You to create its beginning, direct its continuance, and bless its end, that our doings may be preserved from sin, our life sanctified, and our work this day be well pleasing to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Benedicamus

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Then go joyfully to your work.

Stewardship Sentence

2 Peter 3:11 – *“Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness ...”* All the things of earth have an expiration date: “Good Until the Last Day.” On that Day, all these things will be dissolved. The things that seem so important now will simply cease to be. Peter issues this to us as a challenge. Since this is so, what kind of life should we be living? What should your priorities be? On things? Or on the things of God?

Lectionary Summary for Next Week - December 13, 2020

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24; John 1:6–8, 19–28

The Coming of the Christ Brings True Rejoicing in His Forgiveness

When he preaches repentance, John the Baptist points us to Christ Jesus. John was sent by God *“as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him”* (**John 1:7**). He baptizes with water in order to *“make straight the way of the Lord,”* who shall redeem His people from their sins (**John 1:23**). That Lord Jesus *“who comes after”* John now stands among us and makes Himself known to us (**John 1:26–27**). He has been anointed by the Holy Spirit *“to bring good news to the poor”* and *“to bind up the brokenhearted”* (**Is. 61:1**). By the washing of the water with His Word and Spirit, He clothes His Church with *“the garments of salvation”* and adorns her with His own righteousness *“as a bride adorns herself with her jewels”* (**Is. 61:10**). Therefore, we *“rejoice always”* in the Lord, *“pray without ceasing”* and *“give thanks in all circumstances”* (**1 Thess. 5:16–18**). For *“the God of peace,”* who has called you by the Gospel, will surely *“sanctify you completely,”* so that *“your whole spirit and soul and body”* will *“be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (**1 Thess. 5:23–24**).

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