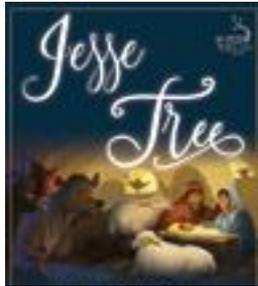


MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1

“JESUS, THE SEED OF JESSE’S TREE”

DECEMBER 2, 2020



AS WE GATHER

“Very good.” These are the words used in Genesis 1 to describe what God sees as He looks over everything that He has just made. All of creation, including humanity, is perfect and just as God intended it to be. Yet, that perfection does not last long. With Adam and Eve’s disobedience of God’s command to not eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, sin enters the world. What was once “very good” is now fallen, imperfect, and not-so-good. Yet, already in Genesis 3:15, the Lord promises One who will save. Eve’s offspring, Jesus, will bring redemption by another tree—the tree of the cross. Through His birth, life, death, resurrection, and return, all creation will be restored and will again be “very good”!

+ PREPARATION +

HYMN "Once He Came in Blessing"

(LSB 333)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt-EF4Y2n8I>



1 Once He came in bless - ing, All our sins re -
2 Now He gent - ly leads us; With Him - self He
3 Soon will come that hour When with might - y
4 Come, then, O Lord Je - sus, From our sins re -



dress - ing; Came in like - ness low - ly,
feeds us Pre - cious food from heav - en,
pow - er Christ will come in splen - dor
lease us. Keep our hearts be - liev - ing,



Son of God most ho - ly; Bore the cross to
Pledge of peace here giv - en, Man - na that will
And will judg - ment ren - der, With the faith - ful
That we, grace re - ceiv - ing, Ev - er may con -



save us; Hope and free - dom gave us.
nour - ish Souls that they may flour - ish.
shar - ing Joy be - yond com - par - ing.
fess You Till in heav'n we bless You.

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INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Isaiah 11:1; Genesis 3:15; Romans 5:19*

P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
C **and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.**

P I will put enmity between you and the woman,
C **and between your offspring and her offspring;**

P He shall bruise your head,
C **and you shall bruise His heel.**

P For as by the one man's disobedience
C **the many were made sinners,**

P so by the one man's obedience
C **the many will be made righteous.**

SERVICE OF LIGHT

P The Spirit and the Church cry out:
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P All those who await His appearance pray:
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P The whole creation pleads:
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Awaiting the shoot from the stump of Jesse, we implore:
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who had mercy on Adam and Eve after they disobeyed
Your loving command in the Garden of Eden, promising a
second greater Adam who is the light of the world.
Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ; may His
Word be a lamp to our feet and light to our path; for You
are merciful, and You love Your whole creation and we,
Your creatures, glorify You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

+ **WORD** +

PSALM

LSB, p. 245

C **Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

! O Lord, I call to You; come to me quickly;
hear my voice when I cry to You.

C **Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

@ Set a watch before my mouth, O Lord, and guard the door
of my lips.

! Let not my heart incline to any evil thing;
let me not be occupied in wickedness with evildoers.

@ But my eyes are turned to You, O God; in You I take
refuge.
Strip me not of my life.

C **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.**

**Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

FIRST READING

P A reading from Romans, the fifth chapter.

¹² Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— ¹³ for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

P A reading from Genesis, the first and third chapters.

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said,

C **“I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”**

P He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”
The man said,

C **“The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.”**

P Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said,

C **“The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”**

P The LORD God said to the serpent,
“Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P 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.**

MAGNIFICAT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP6Svy18x9s>

(The First Christmas Carol sung was The Song of Mary, or the Magnificat. This passage from the Gospel of Luke has been sung at Evening Prayers in the western church since sixth century AD. Many tune settings have been composed for these words throughout the centuries. The tune we will be using is a recent addition to the hymnody of the church composed by the contemporary Lutheran musician, Marty Haugen.)

Cantor:

An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth
to a woman whose name was Mary.

The angel said to her, "Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is
with you.

You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus,
the Chosen One of God Most High."

And Mary said, "I am the servant of my God, I live to do your
will."

The Magnificat

1. My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit
rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here, and blessed
me all my life through.
Great and mighty are you, O Holy One, strong is your
kindness evermore.
How you favor the weak and lowly one, humbling the proud
of heart.
2. You have cast the mighty down from their thrones, and up
lifted the humble of heart,
You have filled the hungry with wondrous things, and left the
wealthy no part.
Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One, strong is your
justice strong your love,
As you promised to Sarah and Abraham, kindness
forevermore.

3. My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here, and blessed me all my life through.
Great and mighty are you, O Holy One, strong is your kindness evermore.
How you favor the weak and lowly one, humbling the proud of heart.

THE LITANY

- P In peace let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For all public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For . . . [additional bids for prayer may be inserted here] . . . let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:

C **Alleluia.**

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Silence for individual prayer may follow.

P Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord:

C **To You, O Lord.**

P O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

SERMON “Jesus, the Seed of Jesse’s Tree”

Genesis 3:8-15

There is one story that the Bible tells: it is the history of our salvation. But to understand the end, one must go back. Way back. To when it all began.

The story of salvation does not begin with the incarnation—though everything in time before leads to the incarnation and everything afterward flows from that central point in history. We see that story in the Jesse Tree—a story that is Jesus’ story and is our story as well. Look around you and you might see a growing tree—an oak, a pine, a maple. Yet the mightiest tree in nature began as a small seed, so small that the world takes no notice.

And so our story begins. Back to the beginning. Back to the tree on the Jesse Tree. Way back when the story of our salvation began.

I. The beauty of the Creator’s work

A. All He made was called “good.”

We all have heard the story of creation. With the words “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1), the panorama of the history of the universe begins. We also know that the crown of creation came on the sixth day when “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27). Creation, including the human race, was not by accident or chance but by the intentional act of the eternal God. And again and again, God saw what He had made, and again and again, He called it “good.”

B. All lived in harmony with the Creator.

And good it was! For the man and the woman, God planted a garden we know as Eden. There, our first parents lived a life of harmony and peace with nature, with each other, and with the One who had created them. Sin and its ugly consequences were unknown in this world. So many have dreamed of living again in an earthly Eden, a utopia of humanity’s own making. But only God can create that which is truly good and a true Eden.

II. The ugliness of humanity’s sin

A. Eden was to become a memory of the past.

How beautiful was that paradise known as Eden! Yet it was not to last. You and I can see its loss just by looking around us or by

looking into a mirror. We see brokenness and sin. We see hate and war. We see despair and hopelessness. In other words, our eyes bear witness to what happened in the Garden of Eden. You know the story. The serpent tempted the woman. Her husband stood by and watched and then with her ate of the fruit of the one tree that was forbidden to them. Yet their initial sin was not in the physical eating but rather in their hearts choosing to listen to the serpent and rejecting the Creator's loving law. A seed of doubt caused an act that would close the gates of Eden to all humanity.

B. The love of the Creator could not change.

So what does the Creator do to those who sinned against Him? Reject them? Leave them without hope and redemption? Such is not the nature of the triune God. He is love itself, and that love reached out to Adam, to Eve, and to all their descendants. So great is His love that He could not destroy His creation or leave it to itself. In love, He created the man and the woman, and in love, He would provide a way of redemption that He had known from eternity. It was a price only He could pay, a price paid by, as the old King James Version so beautifully translates it, a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8 KJV).

III. The promise of a new creation

A. A Seed is promised.

Sin brings death. And yet, from death springs life. Though Adam and Eve and all the subsequent generations have borne the curse our sin has earned, our loving Creator has not deserted us. On the contrary, He has not only embraced us but joined Himself to us. Here is the first promise of salvation, and it is given immediately after that first sin and the darkness that it brought. The Lord God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15). The word for "offspring" is the word for "seed." And here, the love of God shines through the darkness. There would be one seed that would defeat the serpent. And yet that seed would not be the seed of the man and the woman, as every other subsequent human birth would be. No, this Seed is the Seed of the woman—a miraculous and divine conception.

B. A new tree will grow.

The tree of Jesse begins with a seed—a seed present but dormant in Eve. In love, God remembered His promise through every generation of fallen humanity. Through those generations, that Seed that was promised as Eden closed would remain present though hidden to human eyes. In the fullness of time, in the womb of a daughter of Eve, the Virgin Mary, that promised Seed would spring forth and grow. This was the Seed of the woman promised at the fall. From her womb would come forth the Creator Himself joined to His creation in the God-Man, Jesus Christ. Here is the Redeemer.

All that was lost in Adam is restored in the Seed of the woman. Here is the Christ, the Messiah. Here is the Lamb of God, the one and perfect sacrifice whose blood reverses the curse of the fall and brings grace and forgiveness to the whole human race. This is Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man. This is the new Adam, who bears the sin of the old Adam and every human being and carries it all to a cross. From the tree of Eden would come death to all humanity, but from the tree of Calvary would come life to all humanity. This is the Christ of Easter by whose resurrection all the universe is forever changed. This is the Lamb into whom you and I were baptized to share in His death and resurrection. This is the Lamb whose body and blood have sustained us all at altars great and small. This is Jesus, the Seed of Jesse's tree, and through Him, the Eden that was lost is restored for eternity.

OFFERING TO THE LORD'S WORK **IS GATHERED**

PRAYER

- P Lord God, You have called Your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go but only that Your hand is leading us and Your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C **Amen.**

BLESSING

P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
C **and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.**

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the T Son, and
the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

C **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven” (LSB 877)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_Qt9W1wZKY



1 God, who made the earth and heav - en, Dark - ness and light:
2 And when morn a - gain shall call us To run life's way,
3 Guard us wak - ing, guard us sleep - ing, And when we die,
4 Ho - ly Fa - ther, throned in heav - en, All - ho - ly Son,



You the day for work have giv - en, For rest the night. May Your
May we still, what - e'er be - fall us, Your will o - bey. From the
May we in Your might - y keep - ing All peace - ful lie. When the
Ho - ly Spir - it, free - ly giv - en, Blest Three in One: Grant us



an - gel guards de - fend us, Slum - ber sweet Your mer - cy send us,
pow'r of e - vil hide us, In the nar - row path - way guide us,
last dread call shall wake us, Then, O Lord, do not for - sake us,
grace, we now im - plore You, Till we lay our crowns be - fore You



Ho - ly dreams and hopes at - tend us All through the night.
Nev - er be Your smile de - nied us All through the day.
But to reign in glo - ry take us With You on high.
And in wor - thier strains a - dore You While a - ges run.

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