

Old Testament Christmas

This is a time of year when we cherish moments with family and friends by taking photographs. We look back on these images to remember what took place, to fill us with joy when family and friends are absent, and to remind us of their love. Tonight, we begin an Advent series on images through which God addresses His people, calls them to joy in His promises, and reminds us of His unfailing love and presence. These are living pictures of God's gracious acts to redeem His people. Tonight, we look at the burning bush and the Lord's address to Moses. This picture is even more meaningful because it was the pre-incarnate Christ who stood before Moses and spoke through the burning bush, foreshadowing the incarnation itself, which is the focus of Christmas.

Prelude

Welcome

343 Prepare the Royal Highway



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!
2 God's peo-ple, see Him com - ing; Your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom-ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch-es strew be - fore Him! Spread gar-ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom-ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands, bow down be - fore Him! All na - tions, now a - dore Him!
So let your praise be sound - ing For kind-ness so a - bound-ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

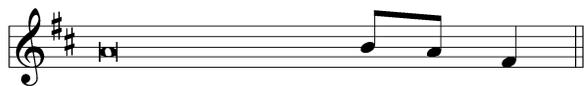
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Stand

L O Lord, open my lips,

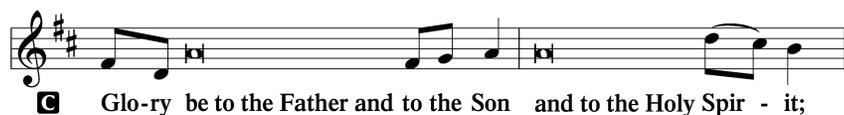


C and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.

L Make haste, O God, to deliver me;



C make haste to help me, O Lord.



C Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.



Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.

Psalmody

PSALM *Psalm 105:1–6, 23–26, 43–45; antiphon: v. 2*

[Congregation sings antiphon, then pastor and congregation alternate. All sing Gloria Patri.]

C Sing to Him, sing prais- | es to Him;*tell of all His | wondrous works!

L Oh give thanks to the Lord; call up- | on His name;*make known
His deeds among the | peoples!

C Sing to Him, sing prais- | es to Him;*tell of all His | wondrous works!

L Glory in His | holy name;*let the hearts of those who seek the | Lord rejoice!

C Seek the Lord | and His strength;*seek His presence con- | tinually!

L Remember the wondrous works that | He has done,*His miracles,
and the judgments He | uttered,

C O offspring of Abraham, His | servant,*children of Jacob, His | chosen ones!

L Then Israel came to | Egypt;*Jacob sojourned in the | land of Ham.

C And the Lord made His people very | fruitful*and made them stronger | than their foes.

L He turned their hearts to hate His | people,*to deal craftily with His | servants.

C He sent Moses, His | servant,*and Aaron, whom He had | chosen.

L So He brought His people | out with joy,*His chosen ones with | singing.

C And He gave them the lands of the | nations,*and they took possession of the fruit of the | peoples' toil,

L that they might keep His | statutes*and observe His laws. | Praise the Lord!
C **Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*and to the Holy | Spirit;as it was in the be- |
ginning,*is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

**Sing to Him, sing prais- | es to Him;*
tell of all His | wondrous works!**

Sit

338 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy peo - ple free;
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - long;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

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Readings

Reading

Exodus 3:1–14

¹Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." ⁴When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." ⁶And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷Then the LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them

up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹²He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

¹³Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Reading

John 15:1-8

¹[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”



357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



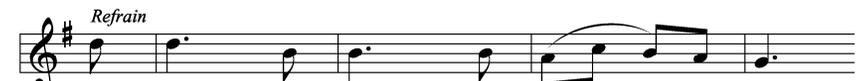
1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
 2 O come, Thou Wis - dom from on high, Who or - d'rest
 3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy
 4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
 all things might - i - ly; To us the path of
 tribes on Si - nai's height In an - cient times didst
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny That trust Thy might - y



ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 knowl - edge show, And teach us in her ways to go.
 give the Law In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el



Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

- 5 O come, Thou Key of David, come,
 And open wide our heav'nly home;
 Make safe the way that leads on high,
 And close the path to misery. Refrain
- 6 O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
 And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 And death's dark shadows put to flight. Refrain
- 7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
 In one the hearts of all mankind;
 Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
 And be Thyself our King of Peace. Refrain

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Acknowledgments

Vespers from Lutheran Service Book

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Collects

L O Lord, hear my prayer.



C And let my cry come to You.

Collect of the Day

P Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

COLLECT

P O Almighty God, You are the great I am who rescued Your people from their slavery in Egypt and redeemed us from our bondage to sin and its death by Your beloved Son. Grant that we may recognize Your presence, rejoice in Your saving gifts, and remember Your mercy in every time of trouble or sorrow; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Collect for Peace

L 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.

Stand

Benedicamus

LSB 234

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

LSB 234

P The grace of our Lord T Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

Responsory (Advent)

LSB 230

L Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.



C This is the name
by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righ-teous-ness.

L In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.



C This is the name
by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righ-teous-ness.

L Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.



C This is the name
by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righ-teous-ness.

Sermon

Catechesis

The First Article

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

L What does this mean?

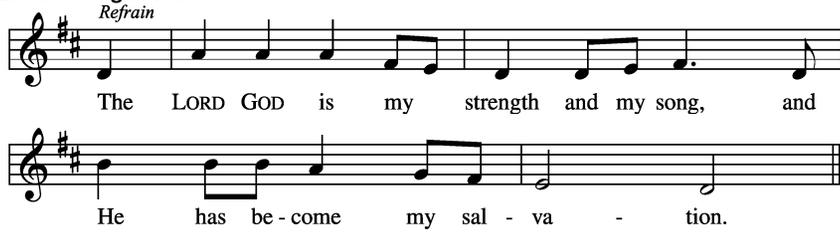
C **I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.**

This is most certainly true.



927 First Song of Isaiah

Refrain



The LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and
He has be-come my sal - va - tion.

- ¹I will give thanks to You, | O LORD,*
for though You were angry | with me,
²Your anger | turned away,*
that You might | comfort me.
³Behold, God is my sal- | vation;*
I will trust, and will not | be afraid;
⁴for the LORD GOD is my strength | and my song,*
and He has become my sal- | vation.

Refrain

- ⁵With joy you will draw | water*
from the wells of sal- | vation.
⁶Give thanks | to the LORD,*
call up- | on His name,
⁷make known His deeds among the | peoples,*
proclaim that His name is ex- | alted.

Refrain

- ⁸Sing praises to the LORD, for He has done | gloriously,*
let this be made known in | all the earth.
⁹Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of | Zion,*
for great in your midst is the Holy One of | Israel.
**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Refrain

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Canticle

Stand

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

Magnificat

LSB 231

- C **My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior;**
L for He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.
C For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed.
L For the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy is His name;
C and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.
L He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the
imagination of their hearts.
C He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the lowly.
L He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away.
C He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy as He spoke to our
fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.
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.**

Sit

Offering

Prayer

Kneel/Stand

Kyrie

LSB 233



C Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy; Lord, have mer-cy.

Lord's Prayer

- 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.**