

Midweek Advent Service
December 16, 2020



Jesus, the Life of Jesse's Tree

As We Gather

“This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). What a beautiful proclamation from the Father! Jesus is more than meets the eye—more than a mere man. He is the Son of God. Yet, His identity will be challenged. Immediately following His Baptism, Jesus is tempted by Satan in the wilderness. He tempts, “If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread” (Luke 4:3). But Jesus remains faithful and does not sin. Then, at the cross, we hear a similar temptation from those gathered, “If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross” (Matthew 27:40). But again, Jesus remains faithful, doing the will of His Father. Rejoice that for Jesus’ sake, God looks at you as His baptized child and says, “This is My beloved son, my beloved daughter, with whom I am well pleased.” What a beautiful proclamation from our heavenly Father!

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Isaiah 11:1; Romans 6:4; Matthew 3:17

- P** There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
C and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
P We were buried therefore with Him
C by baptism into death, in order that,
P just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father,
C we too might walk in newness of life.
P Behold, a voice from heaven said,
C “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

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.

As the hymn is sung, the candles of the Advent wreath and/or on the altar are lighted.

891 O Light Whose Splendor

- 1 O Light whose splendor thrills and gladdens
With radiance brighter than the sun,
Pure gleam of God’s unending glory,
O Jesus, blest Anointed One;

- 2 As twilight hovers near at sunset,
And lamps are lit, and children nod,
In evening hymns we lift our voices
To Father, Spirit, Son: one God.
- 3 In all life's brilliant timeless moments,
Let faithful voices sing Your praise,
O Son of God, our Life-bestower,
Whose glory lightens endless days.

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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 revealed who Jesus truly is, bringing to light His identity as You proclaimed, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." 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.**

First Reading

Romans 6:1–11

P A reading from Romans, the sixth chapter.

¹What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Matthew 3:13–17

P A reading from Matthew, the third chapter.

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. ¹⁶And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

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.**

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 [names of synodical and district presidents], 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 [name of president or monarch], 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.**

The prayers then continue:

- 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

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.

331 The Advent of Our King

sts. 1-2, 6

- 1 The advent of our King
Our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing
In strains of holy joy.
 - 2 The everlasting Son
Incarnate deigns to be,
Himself a servant's form puts on
To set His servants free.
- △ 6 All glory to the Son,
Who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever one
Through all eternity.

Sermon "Jesus, the Life of Jesse's Tree" Matthew 3:13-17

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 ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.
C Amen.

878 Abide with Me

sts. 1, 3, 6

- 1 Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.
- 3 Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev'ry plea.
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.
- 6 Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

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