

Introduction

P Welcome to our Advent worship series, *Prepare Ye*. Each week in this series we will contemplate the many ways we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ Child on Christmas. In our worship for today we will consider ways in which we can ponder the meaning of the birth of our Savior through the reading of Scripture and through reflection. Mary serves as a model for us in this pondering in the Annunciation.

Theme Verse

P Our theme verse for today is, “We ponder your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple” (Psalm 48:9).

Invocation and Call to Worship

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

C **Be strong and courageous, be careful to live according to everything Moses commanded.**

P Do not let God’s Word depart from your mouth.

C **But meditate on it day and night.**

P Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

C **Singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts because nothing is impossible with our God!**

331 The Advent of Our King

LSB 331

- 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.
- 3 O Zion’s daughter, rise To meet your lowly King,
Nor let your faithless heart despise The peace He comes to bring.
- 4 As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come again
And His true members all unite With Him in heav’n to reign.

5 Before the dawning day Let sin's dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on.

Δ6 All glory to the Son, Who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever one Through all eternity.

Confession and Absolution

P Almighty God, because nothing is impossible with You, we come into Your presence confessing our sin, confident of Your mercy and forgiveness. For lack of reverence; for calculating minds; for going along with the majority—

C **O Christ, forgive us.**

P For selfishness that dares not face truth; laziness content with half-truth; for artificial life and worship—

C **O Christ, forgive us.**

P For self-indulgence; for being pompous and puffed up with self-importance—

C **O Christ, forgive us.**

P For cynicism about our fellow Christians; for cruel indifference; for being satisfied with things as they are and failing to trust that with You nothing is impossible—

C **O Christ, forgive us.**

P For token concern for the poor, the lonely, and the loveless people; for confusing faith with good feelings—

C **O Christ, forgive us.**

P For everything in us that hides Your divine power—

C **Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!**

P Hear the good news! Because of His death and resurrection, Jesus is our Savior. The Lord God has given to Him the throne of His father David. Jesus reigns over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end. Therefore, you are fully and forever forgiven in Jesus' name.

C **Nothing is impossible with our God!**

332 Savior of the Nations, Come

LSB 332 vs. 1 & 8

1 Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.

Δ8 Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be Now and through eternity.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Pour Your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of Your Son Jesus Christ, announced by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, may by His cross and resurrection be convinced anew that absolutely nothing is impossible with You; for You live and reign with the Father and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Joshua 1:7–9

⁷Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. ⁸This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

Colossians 3:15–17

¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

Luke 1:26–38

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named

Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He 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 father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Mini Message

933 My Soul Rejoices

LSB 933

- 1 My soul rejoices, My spirit voices—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
For God my Savior Has shown me favor—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
With praise and blessing, Join in confessing God, who is solely
Mighty and holy—O sing the greatness of God the Lord!
His mercy surely Shall rest securely On all who fear Him,
Love and revere Him—O sing the greatness of God the Lord!
- 2 His arm now baring, His strength declaring—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
The proud He scatters, Their rule He shatters—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
Oppression halted; The meek exalted. Full are the hungry;
Empty, the wealthy—O sing the greatness of God the Lord!
Here is the token All that was spoken To Abr'ham's offspring
God is fulfilling—O sing the greatness of God the Lord!

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Sermon

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P Heavenly Father, we have a lot in common with Mary. When we consider the enormity of the promises You have made accompanying the birth of Jesus, we also ask, “How will this be?” To which You answer back in Your Word,

C **Nothing is impossible with our God.**

P Father, every promise You have made about Jesus and our redemption purchased through His shed blood and empty tomb will happen. Indeed, Your great and glorious promises are always “Yes and Amen.” And so we confess,

C **Nothing is impossible with our God.**

P Jesus, on Your Second Advent, You will finish making all things new—changing this sinful and dying world into the New Jerusalem. This promise is so overwhelming that You remind us,

C **Nothing is impossible with our God.**

P Father, heal the pain in our families. Restore unity. Release compassion and kindness. And let the love of Jesus pervade and permeate our homes. We believe that,

C **Nothing is impossible with our God.**

P Father, through Your Holy Spirit, empower us to think of others more often than ourselves; not to keep a record of wrongs; and no longer rehearse the ways others have hurt us, and the ways we’ve hurt them. Remind us again that,

C **Nothing is impossible with our God.**

P And so we say with Mary, we are Your servants, Lord. Let it be to us according to Your Word.

C We pray in Jesus' glorious and grace-filled name. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

LSB 161

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 162

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.

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 162

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

P In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pax Domini

LSB 163

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

☩ Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

342 What Hope! An Eden Prophesied

LSB 342

- 1 What hope! An Eden prophesied Where tame live with the wild;
The lamb and lion side by side, Led by a little child!
- 2 A shoot will sprout from Jesse's stem, A branch from David's line,
A Prince of Peace in Bethlehem: The fruit of God's design.
- 3 As banner of God's love unfurled, Christ came to suffer loss,
That by His death a dying world Would rally to the cross.
- 4 Come, Jesus, come, Messiah Lord, Lost Paradise restore;
Lead past the angel's flaming sword— Come, open heaven's door.

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350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come

LSB 350

- 1 Come, Thou precious Ransom, come, Only hope for sinful mortals!
Come, O Savior of the world! Open are to Thee all portals.
Come, Thy beauty let us see; Anxiously we wait for Thee.
- 2 Enter now my waiting heart, Glorious King and Lord most holy.
Dwell in me and ne'er depart, Though I am but poor and lowly.
Ah, what riches will be mine When Thou art my guest divine!
- 3 My hosannas and my palms Graciously receive, I pray Thee;
Evermore, as best I can, Savior, I will homage pay Thee,
And in faith I will embrace, Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.
- 4 Hail! Hosanna, David's Son! Jesus, hear our supplication!
Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown, Bring us blessing and salvation,
That forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.

Dismissal

☩ Now may this true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in one true faith unto life everlasting. Go in peace and joy. Amen.

Post-Communion Collect

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

C Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

P So that whatever we do, in word or deed.

C We do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

P Giving thanks to God the Father through Him because

C Nothing is impossible with our God!

358 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358 vs. 1-4, 14

- 1 “From heav’n above to earth I come To bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, Whereof I now will say and sing:
- 2 “To you this night is born a child Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.
- 3 “This is the Christ, our God Most High, Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be From all your sins to set you free.
- 4 “He will on you the gifts bestow Prepared by God for all below,
That in His kingdom, bright and fair, You may with us His glory share.
- 14 My heart for very joy must leap; My lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue That sweetest ancient cradlesong:

Acknowledgments

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