
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 23 & 24, 2017

As We Gather

What a letdown when people break their promises! A father tells his ten-year-old son, "I know I promised to be at your soccer game, but something has come up." Maybe we have been a victim of a broken promise like this, or perhaps we've been the one who's broken a promise. In today's Gospel, however, we see a promise kept. The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive and bear a Son. This pledge to Mary is part of the ongoing fulfillment of God's promises. When we see this promise kept in the coming of Jesus, we have the assurance that we can always trust God that He acts according to His Word. Our heavenly Father never breaks His promises!

Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

LSB 357

Stand Confession and Absolution

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

C Amen.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will**

and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name.
Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As an ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Service of the Word

Stand **Introit**

Ps. 19:1, 4c, 5–6; antiphon: Is. 45:8a, b

P Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.

C **The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.**

In them he has set a tent for the sun,

P which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

C **Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.**

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.**

P Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.

Kyrie ♪

LSB 152

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

C *Amen.*

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P *♪ The Lord be with you.*

C *♪ And also with you.*

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord,

C **and come and help us by Your might, that the sins that weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy;**

P for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit Old Testament Reading

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16

¹Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ²the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” ³And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ⁵“Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”” ⁸Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, “Thus says the

LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. . . . ¹⁶And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Zech. 9:9; Ps. 118:26, alt.

P Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.

C Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

P Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

C From the house of the Lord we bless you.

Epistle

Romans 16:25–27

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

C Alleluia.

*Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.*

Holy Gospel

Luke 1:26–38

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

P In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He 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, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel,

C "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

P And 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. And 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. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said,

C "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."

P And the angel departed from her.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Sit Children's Message

Hymn *My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord* *LSB 934*

Sermon *"The Mind of Mary"* *Luke 1:38*

Stand Nicene Creed (Saturday)

☩ 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.

Apostles' Creed (Sunday)

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.

Prayer of the Church

P Let us come before our Lord in prayer, asking Him to hear our
prayer and grant us love.

Lord of love, during this season of Advent, prepare our hearts
that we would be made ready to receive Your Son as He comes in
His incarnation and birth, but also in His body and blood. Make
us ever ready for His final coming on the Last Day. Lord, in Your
mercy,

C hear our prayer and grant us love.

P Lord of love, You have called Your Church to bear witness to
Christ's redeeming work. Grant that we boldly proclaim the
Good News of the One who brings joy to the world through His
life, death, and resurrection, that all who hear it may receive the
gift of salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer and grant us love.

P Lord of love, You have instructed us to pray for workers in your harvest field. Raise up faithful and loving teachers of Your Word so that Christ may be proclaimed near and far. Make us Your instruments to encourage and equip individuals for work in Your Church. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer and grant us love.

P Lord of love, we ask that You stretch forth Your almighty arm to protect the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces of our land. Support them, granting them courage and loyalty. Strengthen them to serve with integrity and honor. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer and grant us love.

P Lord of love, You are the creator and sustainer of all things. According to Your will, grant healing to those who suffer in body and mind. Look with favor upon Your servants, [especially . . .], and if it is Your will, restore them to health, or give them grace to accept tribulation, knowing that Your grace is sufficient for them. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer and grant us love.

P (Saturday) Lord of love, thank You for calling us to be Your people through Holy Baptism. Make us ready to receive Your Supper as we remember the One who is truly present in this Meal as He comes to us in Holy Communion. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer and grant us love.

P Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy and Your promise to hear us for the sake of the One in whose name we come, Your Son, Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Sit Offering

While we worship the Lord with our offerings, please write your names in the fellowship registers, indicating the date and time of the service you are attending. To help us serve you more effectively, please use the blanks provided to indicate a change in mailing address, phone numbers (home, work, cell, fax) or e-mail address(es). Please tear out

the sheets with names on them and let them stick out of the top of the folder so that the ushers can collect them. Thank you!

Stand Offertory

LSB 159

- C** *What shall I render to the Lord
for all His benefits to me?
I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and will call on the name of the Lord.
I will take the cup of salvation
and will call on the name of the Lord.
I will pay my vows to the Lord now
in the presence of all His people,
in the courts of the Lord's house,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.*

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 160

- P** The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
P Lift up your hearts.
C **We lift them to the Lord.**
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**
P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 161

- C** *Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

*Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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

Pax Domini

LSB 163

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

LSB 163

C *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.*

Sit Distribution Hymn

Once He Came in Blessing

LSB 333

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

LSB 341

Stand **Post-Communion Canticle** *Thank the Lord* LSB 164

C *♪ Thank the Lord and sing His praise;
tell ev'ryone what He has done.*

*Let all who seek the Lord rejoice
and proudly bear His name.*

*He recalls His promises and leads
His people forth in joy*

with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 165

C *Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace;
Your word has been fulfilled.*

My own eyes have seen the salvation

which You have prepared in the sight of ev'ry people:

A light to reveal You to the nations

and the glory of Your people Israel.

*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.*

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; 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

LSB 166

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Hymn

The Advent of Our King

LSB 331

Acknowledgments

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