

This downloadable resource from Concordia Publishing House includes fully customizable resources for the pastor and musician, designed to lead the Christian congregation through the season of Advent in preparation for the Christmas celebration

Concordia Publishing House also offers coordinated Daily Devotion booklets and standard-size bulletin covers that may be used to enrich the worship of those congregations using this series. More information about coordinated products may be found at [cph.org/advent](http://cph.org/advent).

This preview document contains excerpted portions of the major components for Midweek of Advent 1.

## WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

### Resources for Advent – Christmas Preaching and Worship

#### Sermon series by Ralph Tausz

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### PREACHING AND WORSHIP RESOURCES

#### Midweek of Advent 1

Sermon: “The Child Who Is Zechariah’s Hope”

Children’s Message: “Certain Hope”

Bible Study: Isaiah 40:1–5; Luke 1:5–25

#### Midweek of Advent 2

Sermon: “The Child Who Is a Virgin’s Great Son”

Children’s Message: “Our True Hero”

Bible Study: Judges 13:2–7; Luke 1:26–38

#### Midweek of Advent 3

Sermon: “The Child Who Is John’s Joy”

Children’s Message: “Leaping for Joy”

Bible Study: 2 Samuel 6:12–23; Luke 1:39–45

#### Christmas

Sermon: “The Child Who Is the Lord”

Children’s Message: “What Child Is This?”

Bible Study: Isaiah 9:2–7; Titus 2:11–14; Luke 2:1–14

PREVIEW OF MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1  
CHILDREN'S MESSAGE – CERTAIN HOPE

TEXTS: ISAIAH 40:1–5; LUKE 1:5–25

MESSAGE

What do you hope to have for lunch tomorrow? (*Receive answers.*) What do you hope to do this weekend? (*Receive answers.*) What gifts do you hope to receive at Christmas in a few weeks? (*Receive answers.*) Are you certain that you will receive those Christmas gifts? Are you certain that your weekend plans won't be rained or snowed out? Are you certain that the school cafeteria won't run out of the food you want before you get there? No, we may hope for all of these things, but we can't be certain they will happen.

As Christians, we often speak about the hope that we have. Unlike the hopes we just mentioned, the hope that we have as Christians is completely certain. Whenever God makes a promise, we are completely certain He will do exactly what He says. Our Old Testament Reading tonight has one of those promises: "The glory of the LORD shall be revealed" (Isaiah 40:5). Because God said it, His people could have certain hope that He would do it.

And God did it, just as He said. Tonight, we heard from Luke 1 the beginning of how God remembered His promise and kept it. As a priest named Zechariah was praying in the temple, God told Zechariah, through the angel Gabriel, that Zechariah and Elizabeth were going to have a son named John. Zechariah didn't believe the angel; he thought he and his wife were too old to have a son. He forgot that he could have certain hope in God's promises.

Sometimes we forget too. Sometimes we forget the certain hope we have in God's promises. When we don't pray regularly, when we don't learn God's Word at home, when we can't stop worrying about bad things in our lives, we forget that God's promises give us a certain hope...[Full message available with purchase.]



## PREVIEW OF MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1; SERMON

### *What Child Is This?*

## THE CHILD WHO IS ZECHARIAH'S HOPE

TEXTS: ISAIAH 40:1–5; LUKE 1:5–25

### EXEGETICAL & HOMILETICAL OBSERVATIONS

ISAIAH 40:1–5

**V. 1:** “Comfort, comfort My people, says your God.” Here the prophet reminds Israel they will still be God’s covenant people, even though they will be exiled. God tells His people that, after they experience His judgment in the coming Babylonian captivity, they will have every reason for hope and comfort. The Hebrew word translated “comfort” is not about making a person feel good. It’s not about feelings. It is about making a person strong and confident, giving a person solid footing by pointing him or her to shelter and protection. For instance, picture a person in a blizzard, stranded and unable to reach his destination. But then someone comes and points him to a place where he will be safe until the storm is over. That is an act of bringing comfort in the biblical sense. That is exactly what Zechariah’s son, John the Baptist, will do. He will be born to point people to Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Shelter from the wrath to come on the Last Day. Though I make only passing reference to Isaiah’s language in the accompanying sermon, it is certainly fitting to use Isaiah’s wonderful words as you preach the Gospel to your hearers, since the proclamation of the Gospel is the ultimate word of comfort.

**V. 2:** “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem . . . that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.” Reed Lessing writes in his commentary, “Yahweh speaks! His word is enduring (40:8) and living (Heb 4:12). It is efficacious: it accomplishes what it says (Is 55:10–11). The divine Word will become incarnate in Jesus Christ (Jn 1:1–3, 14), and so the promises of double comfort will be fulfilled” (*Isaiah 40–55*, Concordia Commentary, 131).

**V. 3:** “A voice cries: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD.’” That voice will belong to the son of aged Zechariah. John will preach repentance in the wilderness of Judea and point people to Jesus, the one who is simultaneously the Great High Priest and the sacrificial Lamb of God, born to take away the sin of the world.

LUKE 1:5–25

**V. 5:** “There was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.” Zechariah’s name means “Yahweh remembers.” Both he and his wife were from the priestly line of Aaron. Zechariah and Elizabeth were similar in many ways to the patriarch Abraham and his barren wife, Sarah. But also note Zechariah and Elizabeth’s similarities to the priest Aaron and his wife, who happened to be named Elisheba (see Exodus 6:23). Aaron was known for his good speaking ability. How ironic and

striking that it is a descendant of eloquent Aaron whom God muzzles for a time because of unbelief.

I toyed with the idea of coupling Exodus 4:10–17, rather than Isaiah 40:1–5, with Luke 1:5–25. In Exodus 4:10, Moses objects that he cannot lead Israel out of Egypt because he cannot speak well. In response, the Lord provides Aaron, Moses' older brother, as an eloquent speaker on Moses' behalf. Zechariah was a descendant of Aaron and represents the old priesthood of Aaron. But whereas Aaron was known for his eloquence, Zechariah is known for being silenced by God for a time.

Zechariah will be silenced because of his response to the angel Gabriel. Not long after, a virgin will open her lips in faith and say yes to a similarly astonishing message delivered by the same angel. There is a contrast in the responses to these two announcements in Luke 1.

Zechariah's silence was only temporary. When Zechariah's son was born, circumcised, and named, Zechariah's tongue was loosed, and he agreed with Gabriel's proclamation—his promised son was to be called John. The Holy Spirit opened Zechariah's lips, and he poured forth eloquence, like his ancestor Aaron, in a joyful canticle that has come to be known as the Benedictus (Luke 1:68–79). At the birth of God's Son, Jesus, a multitude of the angels themselves sang good tidings of great joy.

## SERMON

The silencing of Zechariah is quite an extraordinary scene.

Zechariah was a priest who made his living with his voice. His vocation was to bless, to pray, to teach. And yet, there he stood—like a quarterback without an arm—voiceless in the temple, unable even to finish his temple service with the customary blessing. Furthermore, Zechariah was a descendant of the priestly family of Aaron, the brother of Moses. Aaron's part in the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt was to speak eloquently. Yet, Zechariah, a son of Aaron, could not utter even a word.

The even greater irony is that Zechariah's name anticipated the kind of news Zechariah received from the angel that day in the temple. His name means "God remembers." And when Gabriel told Zechariah that his wife, Elizabeth, would have a child, even in her old age, God was remembering His people in the way He had promised. For when the Bible talks about God remembering, it is not simply His rummaging around in His memory bank. When God remembers, He acts. So God remembered His people on the day Gabriel told Zechariah he would have a miraculous son, a son who would forerun the promised Messiah. God's action that day in the temple fulfilled Zechariah's own name in the ultimate way. Yet, the one whose name means "God remembers" did not believe that God was about to act. He forgot. He forgot God's wondrous actions of old. He forgot what God did for Abraham and barren Sarah, Isaac and barren Rebekah, Jacob and barren Rachel. He forgot just how good God is, and he doubted God's word.

Zechariah and Elizabeth are both described as "righteous before God." That's because their hope was in the Lord and in His promise to act and send the Messiah. Zechariah prayed regularly

for this. Yet when the Lord answered his prayer, he doubted the word of the angel and sought a sign. His offense was not in expecting too *much* from the Lord. It was in expecting too *little*.

A story is told of a beggar who approached Alexander the Great for alms. Feeling exceedingly generous, Alexander ordered the beggar to be given the government of five cities. The beggar was taken aback and said, "I didn't ask for *that* much." Alexander said, "You asked like the man you are; I give like the man I am." Our God is generous. He gives us exceedingly great and precious promises. He invites us to ask and has promised to answer. He gives us more than we either desire or deserve. He is exceedingly generous. That's who *He* is. But we, like Zechariah, so easily forget that. We don't expect much from Him. That's who *we* are.

You, like Zechariah, are priests who easily forget. God's indescribable goodness has made you His royal priests through Holy Baptism. God, in mercy, has chosen you as His own possession and set apart your mouth to do priestly work—to pray, to teach, to proclaim His goodness...[Full outline and sermon available with purchase.]



# BIBLE STUDY – THE CHILD WHO IS ZECHARIAH’S HOPE

## INTRODUCTION

*What Child Is This?* The angel who announced this child’s birth on Christmas Eve answered the question this way: “A Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” The hymnwriter answered it this way: “This, this is Christ the king.” They both want to make known the identity of this child.

And so does Luke the evangelist. Luke reveals the child’s identity from the first chapter of his Gospel account. The little human child introduced in Luke 1–2 is also fully God. He took on human flesh so that “nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you.”

We ask many other questions throughout our lives: “How does regard God me?” “Where can I find peace for my troubled conscience?” “Where can I find hope and joy in this life?” The answer is found in the child born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger. That child is the Lord. He is born to be Zechariah’s hope—and ours too. He is born to be the Virgin Mary’s Savior—and ours too. He is born to be John’s joy—and ours too. In Jesus, the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people. Even as we rejoice in His first coming, we long with penitent and hope-filled hearts for His second coming in glory. “Haste, haste to bring Him laud.” “Hail, hail the Word made flesh.” “Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!”

(Note: Student section contains only questions.)

**Q1.** Many congregations adorn their sanctuary with an Advent wreath. There are four candles, one for each Sunday of Advent. Although there are variations, the four themes most often associated with the four Sundays in Advent are hope, peace, joy, and love. For this first week of Advent, let’s consider these questions: How does the world define *hope*? In contrast, what does God’s Word mean by *hope*?

**A1.** People use *hope* with a variety of meanings. Most often it is used to express an uncertain desire or wish: “I hope it doesn’t rain today.” “I hope my team wins the game this week.” “I hope so-and-so is elected to Congress.” “I hope we find a cure for my illness.” The Greek word *elpis* in the New Testament that is translated “hope” does not convey uncertainty. In fact, a translation that would be preferable is “expectation.” By faith, a believer expects that God’s promise will come to pass at any moment. God does not want us to languish with uncertain desires; rather, He wants us to live with faith that all His promises are dependable in Christ so that we have joyful expectation of their fulfillment.

**Q2.** In Isaiah 40:1, God speaks comfort to His people. How are comfort and hope related? How does God’s Law make us realize our need for comfort and hope? What specific comfort does God deliver in Isaiah 40:2 and Luke 1:76–79?

**A2.** The absence of hope either breeds or betrays doubt and despair. God’s Law forbids and condemns sin, which results in discomfort, doubt, and despair for our guilty consciences. But God speaks comfort to us through the Gospel: “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem [the Church] . . . that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins” (Isaiah 40:2). The “double” we have received for our sins is not double punishment, but double forgiveness: the Lord has more forgiveness than we have sins! We know this because Christ came

to win full forgiveness of sins on the cross; even though we are guilty sinners, we are saved and receive eternal life. This is the message John the Baptist proclaimed as his father prophesied: “And you, child, will . . . give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins” (Luke 1:76–77). This amazing comfort gives us a sure and steadfast hope.

**Q3.** The “voice” in Isaiah 40:3–5 refers to John the Baptist, who went before Jesus. The angel Gabriel said John would be “great before the Lord” (Luke 1:15). But in what way was he great? How did his greatness differ from what we consider to be great? See Luke 1:16 and John 3:25–30.

**A3.** Isaiah proclaimed that through John the Baptist, “The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (Isaiah 40:5). Isaiah did not say, “The glory of John shall be revealed . . . for the mouth of a great man has spoken.” No, what made John great was his humble service as an instrument of God’s mercy. Gabriel also said of John, “He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God” (Luke 1:16). The message of repentance and forgiveness of sins that God placed on John’s lips was the means by which God brought many Israelites back to Himself. John’s greatness is the opposite of what we would consider to be great, according to human logic. But John is the model for every pastor and layperson in the Church because John pointed to Jesus as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), and said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

**Q4.** In Luke 1:18–20, how does John’s father, Zechariah, give us an example of wrongly responding to God’s Word?...[Full Bible study available with purchase.]



## MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1

### VESPERS

## THE CHILD WHO IS ZECHARIAH'S HOPE

[Zechariah's name means "God remembers." When God remembers someone, He acts on that person's behalf. But when God acted in the ultimate way, announcing the coming birth of the Messiah—and the coming birth of Zechariah's own child who would be the Messiah's forerunner—Zechariah doubted God's word. God temporarily caused him to be a priest without a voice. Yet, God still remembered His promises and sent His Son, the Christ Child, to be the perfect Priest. He offered Himself up on the cross as the perfect sacrifice, to obtain forgiveness and eternal life for mistrusting priests like Zechariah and you and me. *What Child Is This?* This child is Zechariah's only hope for salvation—and ours too.]

### *Stand*

**L** O Lord, open my lips,  
**C** and my mouth will declare Your praise.

**L** Make haste, O God, to deliver me;  
**C** make haste to help me, O Lord.

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

+ PSALMODY +

PSALM

*Psalm 25:1–7; antiphon Isaiah 40:3 (Tone F or E)*

*[Antiphon sung by congregation, then alternate whole verse by whole verse between pastor and people.  
All sing Gloria Patri.]*

*Antiphon:*

**A voice cries: "In the wilderness  
prepare the way | of the LORD;\*  
make straight in the desert a highway | for our God."**

<sup>1</sup>To You, | O LORD,\*  
I lift | up my soul.

<sup>2</sup>O my God, in You I trust;  
let me not be | put to shame;\*  
let not my enemies exult | over me.

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, none who wait for You  
shall be | put to shame;\*  
they shall be ashamed who are  
wantonly | treacherous.

<sup>4</sup> Make me to know Your ways, | O LORD;\*  
teach me | Your paths.

<sup>5</sup> Lead me in Your truth and teach me,  
for You are the God of my sal- | vation;\*  
for You I wait all the | day long.

<sup>6</sup> Remember Your mercy, O LORD,  
and Your | steadfast love,\*  
for they have been | from of old.

<sup>7</sup> Remember not the sins of my youth  
or my trans- | gressions;\*  
according to Your steadfast love remember me,  
for the sake of Your goodness, | O LORD!

*Sit*

OFFICE HYMN

“What Child Is This” (*LSB* 370)

+ READINGS +

OLD TESTAMENT

*Isaiah 40:1–5*

**L** A reading from Isaiah, the fortieth chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort My people, says your God.  
<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that her warfare is ended,  
that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the LORD’s hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries:  
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.  
<sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

*Romans 5:1–5*

**L** A reading from Romans, the fifth chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup> Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

*Luke 1:5–25*

**L** A reading from Luke, the first chapter.

<sup>5</sup> In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. <sup>7</sup> But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

<sup>8</sup> Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. <sup>11</sup> And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, <sup>17</sup> and he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

<sup>18</sup> And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” <sup>19</sup> And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. <sup>20</sup> And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.” <sup>21</sup> And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. <sup>22</sup> And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. <sup>23</sup> And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

<sup>24</sup> After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, <sup>25</sup> “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORY FOR ADVENT

*LSB*, p. 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 Righteousness.**

**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 Righteousness.**

**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 Righteousness.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

+ CANTICLE +

[Full customizable traditional service available with purchase]

◆◆◆◆

## MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1

# THE CHILD WHO IS ZECHARIAH'S HOPE

## AS WE GATHER

When Israel was going into exile in Babylon, the Lord promised comfort, both in a return a few decades later and also in a Messiah to pay for their sins. Centuries later, most people had forgotten the promise, but the priest Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, were among those trusting in God. Yet when the angel brought Zechariah news of his son, who would be John the Baptist, preparing the way of the Lord, it was too good to be believed. It is our problem also as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah. God overwhelms us with His love, remembering the promises we sometimes forget and forgiving us purely by grace. The Child, the Son of Mary, is the fulfiller of all God's promises. He is Zechariah's hope and ours.

HYMN

“What Child Is This” (LSB 370:1)

*Choir or cantor:*

What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?

*Congregation:*

**This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!**

## INVOCATION AND OPENING SENTENCES

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

**C** Amen.

**P** Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love,

**C** for they have been from of old.

**P** Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

**C** according to Your steadfast love remember me,  
for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD! *Psalm 25:6-7*

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**P** “Comfort, comfort my people,” the Lord told Isaiah to speak to His people. Let us confess our sins to God, confident that we shall hear His forgiving word of comfort for the sake of Christ, whose birth we are preparing to celebrate.

*Silence for reflection on the Word of God and our sinful condition.*

**P** Gracious heavenly Father,

**C** we confess that too often in our thinking we have relegated Your promises to eternity. In our speaking, we have neglected to speak about the news of Your grace and mercy to the people around us. In our acting, we have considered our efforts as meriting Your attention. Though declared righteous by Your grace with ancient Zechariah, we also share his doubts about Your readiness to bless us in our current circumstances. Forgive us and strengthen our faith in Him for whom Zechariah's son would prepare the way, Jesus, the Word made flesh, the babe, the Son of Mary.

**P** The priest Zechariah was sentenced to silence because of his doubt, but the baby whose way his son, John, would prepare is both our great High Priest and also the Sacrifice for all our sins. Be still and hear His word of comfort and peace that I, His servant, proclaim to you: In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

HYMN

“What Child Is This” (*LSB* 370:2)

*Choir or cantor:*

Why lies He in such mean estate  
Where ox and ass are feeding?

*Congregation:*

**Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The babe, the son of Mary!**

PSALM

*Psalms* 105:1–8

**P** Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name;  
make known His deeds among the peoples!

**L** Sing to Him, sing praises to Him;  
tell of all His wondrous works!

**P** Glory in His holy name;  
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

**L** Seek the LORD and His strength;  
seek His presence continually!

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

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

**C** **He is the LORD our God;  
His judgments are in all the earth.  
He remembers His covenant forever,**

**the word that He commanded, for a thousand generations.**

FIRST READING

*Isaiah 40:1–5*

(God promises that after Israel’s exile in Babylon, a voice will speak comfort and prepare the way of the Lord.)

- L** The First Reading is from the fortieth chapter of Isaiah.
- L** Comfort, comfort My people, says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her  
that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.  
A voice cries:
- P** “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
- C** **And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”**
- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

*Hebrews 10:5–18*

(Jesus is both the High Priest and the single sacrifice for our sins.)

- L** The Second Reading is from the tenth chapter of Hebrews.
- L** When Christ came into the world, He said,
- P** “Sacrifices and offerings You have not desired,  
but a body have You prepared for Me;  
in burnt offerings and sin offerings  
You have taken no pleasure.  
Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God,  
as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book.’”
- L** When He said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then He added, “Behold, I have come to do Your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until His enemies should be made a footstool for His feet. For by a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

**P** “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put My laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,”

**L** then He adds,

**P** “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

**C** **Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.**

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

[insert LSB symbol]

HYMN

“Comfort, Comfort Ye My People” (*LSB* 347)

*[OR]*

“When All the World Was Cursed” (*LSB* 346)

[Full customizable creative service available with purchase.]