

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.

## BEHOLD THE CHILD

### Resources for Advent-Christmas Preaching and Worship

by Kevin S. Golden

#### PREACHING AND TEACHING RESOURCES

##### **Midweek of Advent 1**

Sermon: “For You and All the World—Luke 2:8–20”

Children’s Message: “Loud and Clear . . . For You and All the World”

Bible Study: “For You and All the World—Luke 2:8–20”

##### **Midweek of Advent 2**

Sermon: “To Set You Free from All Your Sorrow—Matthew 2:1–12”

Children’s Message: “Set Free from the Chains That Bind Us”

Bible Study: “To Set You Free from All Your Sorrow—Matthew 2:1–12”

##### **Midweek of Advent 3**

Sermon: “For You, to Bear Your Flesh in Weakness—Luke 1:46–55”

Children’s Message: “Descended into Flesh . . . For You”

Bible Study: “For You, to Bear Your Flesh in Weakness—Luke 1:46–55”

##### **Christmas**

Sermon: “All the World with His Free Grace Supplying—John 1:1–14”

Children’s Message: “Free Grace Bought at a Price”

Bible Study: “All the World with His Free Grace Supplying—John 1:1–14”

## PREVIEW OF MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

## LOUD AND CLEAR . . . FOR YOU AND ALL THE WORLD

TEXT: LUKE 2:8–20

### MESSAGE

Every time you come to church, you find me wearing this microphone. Do you know why I wear it? (*Allow answers.*) I wear it so that everyone can hear me. The microphone picks up my voice and allows it to go over the speakers more loudly than if I were speaking with only the power of my voice. It even allows my voice to go out over the phone and on the internet so that people at home can listen to the service. We want everyone to hear what is happening here at church.

Why is that? Why not whisper? If I whisper, you are close enough to hear me. But if I whisper, will Mom and Dad hear me? No. And I want everyone to hear because I have good news. What kind of good news do I have for you? That there is ice cream after the service? That would be good news, but I have even better news than that. Jesus comes to save you. That is why we will be celebrating His birth later this month.

The night Jesus was born, God wanted the good news of His birth to be heard. Instead of a microphone, He used an angel of the Lord to make it loud and clear to the shepherds: “Unto you is born this day . . . a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11).

That is good news. No wonder God wanted the angel to make it loud and clear. But that is not the only message we want to hear at times. . . . [Full children's message available with purchase.]

## PREVIEW OF MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1; SERMON

### *Behold the Child*

## FOR YOU AND ALL THE WORLD

TEXTS: GENESIS 12:1–3; PSALM 24; 1 JOHN 4:9–14; LUKE 2:8–20

### EXEGETICAL AND HOMILETICAL OBSERVATIONS

The sermon focuses upon the message of the angel of the Lord (Luke 2:10) and that of the heavenly host (Luke 2:14). We give attention to those two messages in turn.

LUKE 2:10

μη φοβεῖσθε. The angel of the Lord first tells the shepherds, “Stop being afraid.” The verb is present, imperative, middle (deponent). The force of the negative present imperative is to stop doing something that is in the process of being done (rather than to not start doing something). In other words, the shepherds are afraid and they are to stop being afraid. Such fear is a common response to the presence of angels within Scripture and especially within Luke’s account of the Gospel (e.g., the response of Zechariah and Mary in Luke 1:13, 30, respectively). The message of the angel continues with the words ἰδοὺ γάρ. “Behold” calls the shepherds and the reader to attention. “For” tells the shepherds and the reader that the reason to stop being afraid will now be given.

The reason to stop being afraid is this: εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην ἣτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ. “I evangelize to you a great joy that is for all the people.” Two Lukan emphases within this message help shape this sermon. First, the main verb of the sentence is the present, indicative, middle of εὐαγγελίζω. This verb is used more by Luke than by any other New Testament writer. It occurs only once in Matthew’s account of the Gospel (Matthew 11:5), but is absent from Mark’s and John’s accounts. Paul uses the verb a total of twenty-one times throughout his letters (it is found in six of his thirteen letters). It is used twice in the Letter to the Hebrews, three times in Peter’s first epistle, and twice in the Revelation to St. John. Luke uses the verb ten times in his account of the Gospel and another fifteen times in Acts.

English fails to capture the beauty of εὐαγγελίζω. The verb means more than “announce,” which does not capture the prefix εὐ of the verb. . . .

### SERMON

The son has wandered far from home. He has lived as if his father were dead, collecting his inheritance prematurely. He has squandered it all and has sunk to the depths—feeding pigs and even longing to eat their food. The son returns home ready to be less than a son, ready to be a

servant. But the father will have nothing of it. He runs to his son, embraces him, and orders the best robe, a ring, and shoes be put on him. It is time to feast upon the fattened calf, for his son was dead and now is alive. That is peace!

It is no wonder that these words from Christ as so well-loved. The reunion of father and son without anger, without retribution, without scolding—that is beautiful. This is just the sort of thing that Luke loves. Throughout his account of the Gospel, Luke delights to recount how Christ embraces the outcast so that those who had been alienated are now brought near. This is just the sort of account that you need, because you know what it is to be an outcast, alienated from others. Don't get hung up on such an account only because it resonates with you. Hang on to it because this is the kind of God you have.

CHRIST COMES TO BRING PEACE BETWEEN YOU AND THE FATHER.

So we hear in Luke 2. The angel of the Lord sounds forth with a clarion voice: “Behold, I bring to you good news of a great joy. For unto you is born this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” This good news of joy is quite personal. The angel speaks first to a select group of shepherds and says that Christ is born “for you.” That message is echoed by the heavenly host, who praise God, saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among mankind with whom He is pleased.”

Peace. It seems so foreign. These days of preparation hardly seem peaceful. There are presents to buy, pageants to attend, halls to be decked with boughs of holly, and here you are with another Advent service to attend. But it is not an overstretched schedule that robs you of peace. You are robbed of peace by the absence of certain people. There are family members with whom you once spent these days, but they have long since been alienated. They said things that should not have been said. And so have you. Time does not heal all wounds. The more time that passes, the more entrenched you become. While others gather with loved ones, the cold shoulder and silence from parent, child, sibling, friend makes the absence of peace all the clearer.

Yet the Lord is true to His word. Jesus comes with peace for this season and all seasons. . . .  
[Full sermon available with purchase.]

## PREVIEW OF BIBLE STUDY FOR MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1: LEADER

### FOR YOU AND ALL THE WORLD LUKE 2:8–20

#### INTRODUCTION

What confidence is ours in the doctrine of unlimited atonement. Christ's atoning sacrifice is not limited to a few. His death is sufficient for the whole world. So we are certain that His saving work is sufficient for each of us. This universal grace of God found in Christ alone is taught persistently throughout the whole of Scripture. Luke takes a special interest in this doctrine both in his account of the Gospel and in the Book of Acts, where he records the Gospel spreading throughout the world. In preparation for Christ's birth as Savior of the world, marvel anew at God's love for all.

(Note: Student section contains only questions.)

**Q1.** How is Luke's concern for Christ being the Savior of the whole world evident in his account of the genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:23–38? (Note especially v. 38 in comparison to Matthew 1:1.)

**A1.** Luke takes Jesus' genealogy all the way back to Adam, from whom the whole human race descends. Matthew only takes Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham. Since Matthew wrote for a Jewish audience, emphasizing that Jesus was the son of Abraham and David would resonate with his readers. Luke, on the other hand, wrote for a Gentile audience and emphasizes for them that Jesus is for all humans.

**Q2.** Since Luke is interested in Jesus' concern for the whole world, how would each of the following passages (each unique to Luke) underscore that concern—Luke 10:25–37; 17:11–19; 19:1–10?

**A2.** Jesus' teaching regarding the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) reveals that Jesus does not regard prejudices based on ethnic divisions. Samaritans were marginalized by Jesus' peers. He does not share that outlook due to His coming to save the world. Jesus' healing of the lepers (Luke 17:11–19) includes Jesus approaching and caring for a group that would be marginalized due to their health condition. When Jesus not only speaks to Zacchaeus but says He will be dining at his house (Luke 19:1–10), He rejects the cultural standards that marginalized people of certain occupations as being greater sinners and thus beyond the scope of mercy. Jesus oversteps societal views of people based on ethnicity, health, or occupation to embrace them as those whom He came to save.

**Q3.** The central text of this study—Luke 2:8–20—also includes an example of a marginalized group of that time: namely, shepherds. Genesis 46:34 reveals a common view of shepherds in the ancient world. What is that view? How does this make it even more significant that the message of the Savior's birth is first announced to shepherds?

**A3.** The Egyptians looked upon shepherds as an abomination. This outlook was common in the ancient world. That the message of Christ's birth is first announced to shepherds shows that God is not concerned with such societal outlooks. He embraces shepherds and others rejected by

their peers, announcing to them the Gospel. It also speaks to the significance of God identifying Himself as our shepherd (Psalm 23; John 10). The Lord refuses to let culture set the rules.

**Q4.** Not only is it telling that Christ's birth is announced to shepherds, consider also what is announced to them. Luke 2:14 is best translated . . . [Full Bible study available with purchase.

## PREVIEW OF MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1

### EVENING PRAYER VESPERS

#### FOR YOU AND ALL THE WORLD

The good news of Christ's birth is both universal and personal. The angel proclaims that Christ's birth is "good news of great joy . . . for all the people" (Luke 2:10). The heavenly host builds upon that by declaring that Christ's advent brings "peace among men" to make it known that Christ comes to save all.

Even as the news is universally good for all people, it is also news delivered personally to the shepherds—"for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). What is for all people is most certainly "for you" because you are part of all people.

What do you find in Christ? Peace! He brings peace between you and the Father. You who are alienated from the Father by sin are now brought near to the Father in His Son. You have peace with Him. And so you sing with the heavenly host:

Joy, great joy and tidings glad we bring from heav'n resounding,  
For you, for you and all the world abounding.

#### THE QUEMPAS CAROL

##### *Quem pastores*

He whom shepherds once came praising,  
Awed by heav'nly light ablazing,  
Cheered by angel news amazing:  
"King of glory, Christ is born!"

##### *Nunc angelorum*

The glorious angels came today,  
Aglow with light into the night of darkness deep,  
To shepherds who by moon's bright ray  
Did in the field o'er sheep their silent vigil keep.  
"Joy, great joy and tidings glad we bring from heav'n resounding,  
For you, for you and all the world abounding."

##### *Resonet in laudibus*

God's own Son is born a child, is born a child;  
God the Father is reconciled, is reconciled!

#### *Stand*

- L The Spirit and the Church cry out:
- C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

L All those who await His appearance pray:  
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

L The whole creation pleads:  
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

PHOS HILARON

*LSB*, p. 244

L Joyous light of glory:  
C **of the immortal Father;  
heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ.  
We have come to the setting of the sun,  
and we look to the evening light.  
We sing to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:  
You are worthy of being praised  
with pure voices forever.  
O Son of God, O Giver of life:  
the universe proclaims Your glory.**

THANKSGIVING FOR LIGHT

*LSB*, p. 245

L Blessèd are You, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led Your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ; may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a 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.**

*Sit*

+ PSALMODY +

PSALM 141

*LSB*, p. 245

C **Let my prayer rise before You as incense,  
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**  
L O Lord, I call to You; come to me quickly;  
hear my voice when I cry to You.  
C **Let my prayer rise before You as incense,  
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**  
A Set a watch before my mouth, O Lord,  
and guard the door of my lips.  
L Let not my heart incline to any evil thing;  
let me not be occupied in wickedness with evildoers.  
A But my eyes are turned to You, O God;  
in You I take refuge.  
Strip me not of my life.

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

**L** Let us pray.

Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before You, O Lord, and let Your loving-kindness descend on us that, with purified minds, we may sing Your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host and may glorify You forever.

**C** **Amen.**

PSALM

*Psalm 24; antiphon: v. 7 (Tone F or E)*

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

*Antiphon:*

**Lift up your heads, O gates! And be  
lifted up, O | ancient doors,\*  
that the King of glory | may come in.**

**L** The earth is the LORD's and the  
full- | ness thereof,\*

the world and those who | dwell therein,

**C** **for He has founded it up- | on the seas\*  
and established it upon the | rivers.**

**L** Who shall ascend the hill | of the LORD?\*

And who shall stand in His | holy place?

**C** **He who has clean hands and a | pure heart,\*  
who does not lift up his soul to  
what is false and does not swear de- | ceitfully.**

**L** He will receive blessing | from the LORD\*

and righteousness from the God of his sal- | vation.

**C** **Such is the generation of those  
who | seek Him,\*  
who seek the face of the God of | Jacob.**

**L** Lift up your heads, O gates! And be  
lifted up , O | ancient doors,\*  
that the King of glory | may come in.

**C** **Who is this King of | glory?\***  
**The LORD, strong and mighty,  
the LORD, mighty in | battle!**

**L** Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift  
them up , O | ancient doors,\*  
that the King of glory | may come in.

- C **Who is this King of | glory?\***  
**The LORD of hosts, He is the King of | glory!**
- 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.**

OFFICE HYMN

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” (*LSB* 341)

+ READINGS +

FIRST READING

*Genesis 12:1–3*

- L A reading from Genesis, the twelfth chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

- L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

*1 John 4:9–14*

- L A reading from First John, the fourth chapter.

<sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.

- L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THIRD READING

*Luke 2:8–20*

- L A reading from Luke, the second chapter.

<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them,

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

<sup>15</sup> When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup> And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

L 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.**

#### CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

#### SERMON

For You and All the World

+ CANTICLE +

[Full customizable traditional service available with purchase.]

## PREVIEW OF MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1: CREATIVE WORSHIP SERVICE

### FOR YOU AND ALL THE WORLD

#### AS WE GATHER

The good news of Christ's birth is both universal and personal. The angel proclaims that Christ's birth is "good news of great joy . . . for all the people" (Luke 2:10). The heavenly host builds upon that by declaring that Christ's advent brings "peace among men" to make it known that Christ comes to save all.

Even as the news is universally good for all people, it is also news delivered personally to the shepherds—"for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). What is for all people is most certainly "for you" because you are part of all people.

What do you find in Christ? Peace! He brings peace between you and the Father. You who are alienated from the Father by sin are now brought near to the Father in His Son. You have peace with Him. And so you sing with the heavenly host:

Joy, great joy and tidings glad we bring from heav'n resounding,  
For you, for you and all the world abounding.

#### + PREPARATION +

#### PSALM

*Psalm 24*

P The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein,  
for He has founded it upon the seas  
and established it upon the rivers.

C **Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?  
And who shall stand in His holy place?  
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
who does not lift up his soul to what is false  
and does not swear deceitfully.**

P He will receive blessing from the LORD  
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.  
Such is the generation of those who seek Him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

C **Lift up your heads, O gates!  
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.**

P Who is this King of glory?

The LORD, strong and mighty,  
the LORD, mighty in battle!

**C Lift up your heads, O gates!  
And lift them up, O ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.**

**P Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD of hosts,  
He is the King of glory!**

#### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**P** God's Son is born a child so that He reconciles us to the Father. Confident in the reconciliation that Christ has won for us, let us confess our sins to God and receive His forgiveness.

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

**P** Gracious heavenly Father,

**C we have alienated ourselves from You and from one another. In our sin, we have neglected You and our neighbor. By the merit of Your Son, draw near to us and forgive us. Through Him, reconcile us to Yourself and to one another.**

**P** The angels came to announce great joy and glad tidings to the shepherds. Their message is for the whole world and for you. God's own Son is born a child; God the Father is reconciled. Therefore, 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 T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

#### THE QUEMPAS CAROL

*Quem pastores*

He whom shepherds once came praising,  
Awed by heav'nly light ablazing,  
Cheered by angel news amazing:  
"King of glory, Christ is born!"

*Nunc angelorum*

The glorious angels came today,  
Aglow with light into the night of darkness deep,  
To shepherds who by moon's bright ray  
Did in the field o'er sheep their silent vigil keep.  
"Joy, great joy and tidings glad we bring from heav'n resounding,  
For you, for you and all the world abounding."

*Resonet in laudibus*

God's own Son is born a child, is born a child;  
God the Father is reconciled, is reconciled!

+ WORD +

FIRST READING

*Genesis 12:1–3*

- L A reading from the twelfth chapter of Genesis.
- L Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.
- C **And I will make of you a great nation,**
- L and I will bless you
- C **and make your name great,**
- L so that you will be a blessing.
- C **I will bless those who bless you,**
- L and him who dishonors you I will curse,
- C **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”**
- L This is the Word of the Lord.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

*1 John 4:9–14*

- L A reading from the fourth chapter of First John.
- L In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.
- C **In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**
- L Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.
- C **By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.**

L And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### THIRD READING

*Luke 2:8–20*

P A reading from the second chapter of Luke.

P And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them,

C **“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”**

P And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

C **“Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”**

P When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

C **“Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”**

P And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### RESPONSORY

L In this is love, that God loved us.

C **God’s own Son is born a child; God the Father is reconciled.**

L Beloved, let us love one another.

C **God’s own Son is born a child; God the Father is reconciled.**

- L God sent His Son as the propitiation for our sins.  
C **God's own Son is born a child; God the Father is reconciled.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” (*LSB* 341)

*[OR]*

“Lift Up Your Heads, You Everlasting Doors” (*LSB* 339)

[Full customizable creative service available with purchase.]