

Something Better
3rd Sunday of Advent
12-14-25

Theme - “A Better Absolution”

*It's time to get off the **guilt** trip and get on the **grace** trip. This happens when we claim the truth in Hebrews 1:3, “After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”*

† GOD CALLS †

CALL TO WORSHIP:

from Hebrews 10:19-23

Pastor: In the Name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Pastor: Since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus—

ALL: By a new and living way opened up for us.

Pastor: Let us draw near to God with sincere hearts and in full assurance of faith—

ALL: Having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience.

Pastor: Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess—

ALL: He who promised is faithful and he will do it!

OPENING SONG

“O Come O Come Emmanuel” (LSB 357 v. 1, 2, 4, 5)

Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O Come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things, mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vic-t'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

5

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you all!
ALL: And also with you!

† GOD SPEAKS †

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Lord God, heavenly Father, you have provided a magnificent solution to all of our guilt through Christ's shed his blood on the cross, once and for all, for us; we believe it, receive it and celebrate it; in Jesus' name.
ALL: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT Jeremiah 31:31-34

"The days are coming," declares the Lord,
"when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.
³² It will not be like the covenant
I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand
to lead them out of Egypt,
because they broke my covenant,

though I was a husband to^[a] them,^[b]”
declares the Lord.

³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’

because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,”

declares the Lord.

“For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.”

EPISTLE Hebrews 1:1-4 ESV

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

HOLY GOSPEL Luke 1:67-79

His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

⁶⁸ “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn^[a] of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David

⁷⁰ (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

⁷¹ salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—

⁷² to show mercy to our ancestors

and to remember his holy covenant,
73 the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
74 to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
76 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
77 to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
78 because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
79 to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ!

THE AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH - The Apostles' Creed

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

BRINGING OUR BLESSINGS *with Thanksgiving in our Offering*

PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

SONG OF THE DAY
“This is Jesus” (new song)

Night of wonder
Still and silent
Heavn’s brilliance from above
Light of glory
Pierced the darkness
Mercy pierced my heart with love

This is Jeus
King of glory
Here to rescue from the fall
Son of God who
Comes to save us
Prince of peace and Lord of all

O the mystery
Who could fathom
God would leave His Holy throne
For a manger
For a sinner
For us all to be His own

This is Jesus
King of glory
Here to rescue from the fall
Son of God who
Comes to save us
Prince of peace and Lord of all

For the hearts so
Prone to wander
For these feet so quick to flee
God is here and
Love is reaching
For the lost and least of these

This is Jesus
King of glory
Here to rescue from the fall
Son of God who
Comes to save us
Prince of peace and Lord of all

THE MESSAGE

† GOD GIVES †

TIME OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: In our first lesson, through Jeremiah, God says, “I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” - Jeremiah 31:34 Forgive us, Father, for we are prone to bury our guilt in our hearts.

ALL: But then it comes back to hurt us and haunt us.

Pastor: Forgive us, Father, for we are prone to blame our guilt on someone else.

ALL: But this burdens other people and often destroys relationships.

Pastor: Forgive us, Father, for we are prone to beat ourselves up with guilt.

ALL: But this leaves us down, depressed and despondent.

Pastor: And stuck in a pit of despair.

ALL: Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

Pastor: Hear the best news you will ever hear! Christ Jesus provided purification for all your sin. In his name, you are forgiven. You are absolved. And you are free!

ALL: He who promised is faithful and he will do it!

SONG OF PRAISE “A Christmas Alleluia”

Alleluia, alleluia
Christ, the Savior of the world
He has come!
Alleluia, alleluia
To the highest name of all:
Alleluia

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION
“Hark The Glad Sound” (LSB 349)

**Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev’ry heart prepare a throne
And ev’ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris’ners to release,
In Satan’s bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.**

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim,
And heav’n’s eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.**

“Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)”

**What hope we hold this starlit night
A King is born in Bethlehem
Our journey long, we seek the light
That leads to the hallowed manger ground**

**What fear we felt in the silent age
Four-hundred years can He be found
But broken by a baby's cry
Rejoice in the hallowed manger ground**

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel
God incarnate, here to dwell
Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Praise His name Emmanuel**

**The son of God, here born to bleed
A crown of thorns would pierce His brow**

And we beheld this offering
Exalted now the King of kings
Praise God for the hallowed manger ground

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
God incarnate, here to dwell
Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Praise His name Emmanuel
Oh, praise His name Emmanuel

DISMISSAL

CLOSING SONG

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

Joyful, joyful we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee,
Praising Thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
Drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean depth of happy rest!
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Fountainhead of love divine:
Joyful, we Thy heav'n inherit!
Joyful, we by grace are Thine!

† GOD BLESSES & SENDS †

Benediction

From Hebrews 13:20-21

Pastor: May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

ALL: He who promised is faithful and he will do it!

Pastor Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

ALL Thanks be to God!