



SECOND MID-WEEK

OF

Advent

MANY LIGHTS ARE BRIGHTER—TOGETHER!

AS WE GATHER

As Christmas approaches, you may feel like you are doing everything alone, that the stress and struggle of the season will overwhelm your flickering, fading energy and endurance. Or you may be dreading the potential conflict that will come when you gather with family and friends for Christmas celebrations in only a few short days. The apostle Paul writes that our God is the God of endurance and encouragement. You may be tired. You may be discouraged. But Christ has visited His people, and He gathers us all so that we may shine more brightly together in this world of darkness and discouragement. As you continue to prepare for Christmas, may you be encouraged by your brothers and sisters in Christ who shine alongside you.

+ PREPARATION +

644 THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION



1 The Church's one foun - da - tion Is Je - sus Christ, her Lord;
2 E - lect from ev - 'ry na - tion, Yet one o'er all the earth;
3 Though with a scorn - ful won - der The world sees her op - pressed,
4 Through toil and trib - u - la - tion And tu - mult of her war



She is His new cre - a - tion By wa - ter and the Word.
Her char - ter of sal - va - tion: One Lord, one faith, one birth.
By schisms rent a - sun - der, By her - e - sies dis - tressed,
She waits the con - sum - ma - tion Of peace for - ev - er - more



From heav'n He came and sought her To be His ho - ly bride;
One ho - ly name she bless - es, Par - takes one ho - ly food,
Yet saints their watch are keep - ing; Their cry goes up, "How long?"
Till with the vi - sion glo - rious Her long - ing eyes are blest,



With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.
And to one hope she press - es With ev - 'ry grace en - dued.
And soon the night of weep - ing Shall be the morn of song.
And the great Church vic - to - rious Shall be the Church at rest.

5 Yet she on earth has union
With God, the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won.
O blessed heav'nly chorus!
Lord, save us by Your grace
That we, like saints before us,
May see You face to face.

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(Please rise as you are able)

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,
C the light no darkness can overcome.

P Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,
C and the day is almost over.

P Let Your light scatter the darkness
C and illumine Your Church.

HYMN OF LIGHT

Phos Hilaron



L Joy - ous light of glo - ry:

C of the im-mor-tal Fa-ther; heav-en-ly, ho-ly,
 bless-ed Je-sus Christ. We have come to the
 set-ting of the sun, and we look to the eve-ning light.
 We sing to God, the Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Spir-it:
 You are wor-thy of be-ing praised with pure voic-es for-
 ev-er. O Son of God, O Giv-er of life:
 the u-ni-verse pro-claims Your glo-ry.

THANKSGIVING FOR LIGHT

P Blessed 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.

PSALM

Psalm 72:1–7

P Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son!

C **May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice!**

P Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness!

C **May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!**

P May they fear you while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!

C **May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth!**

P In his days may the righteous flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

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.**

May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Lord God, Creator of the universe, You have given us the Holy Scriptures for our encouragement. Unite and reconcile Your people together, that bound together, we may reflect the light of Christ into the darkness of this world, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

C **Amen.**

Please be seated

398 HAIL TO THE LORD'S ANOINTED



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, Great Da - vid's great - er Son!
2 He comes with res - cue speed - y To those who suf - fer wrong,
3 He shall come down like show - ers Up - on the fruit - ful earth;



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, His reign on earth be - gun!
To help the poor and need - y And bid the weak be strong;
Love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, Spring in His path to birth.



He comes to break op - pres - sion, To set the cap - tive free,
To give them songs for sigh - ing, Their dark - ness turn to light,
Be - fore Him on the moun - tains Shall peace, the her - ald, go;



To take a - way trans - gres - sion And rule in eq - ui - ty.
Whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, Were pre - cious in His sight.
And righ - teous - ness in foun - tains From hill to val - ley flow.

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OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 1:1–11

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken: "Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me.

The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand."

Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly!

They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.

Why will you still be struck down?

Why will you continue to rebel?

The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness

in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil.

Your country lies desolate; your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence foreigners devour your land; it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners.

And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.

If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah.

Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom!

Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

“What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

Romans 15:4–13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.”

And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”

And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.” May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

(Please rise as you are able)

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1–12

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

- P** 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.

Please be seated

SERMON: Are We prepared for the light to come at Christmas?

933 MY SOUL REJOICES



1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the
 2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the



great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me
 great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He



fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and
 shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion



bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and
 halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the



ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy
 wealth - y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the



sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,
 to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring



Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!
 God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

OFFERING

(Please rise as you are able)

LITANY

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 For our LCMS President and our Florida Georgia district President and for all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the President of this great nation and for all public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:

C **Alleluia.**

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. Rejoicing in the fellowship of the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord:

C **To You, O Lord.**

COLLECT FOR PEACE

P O God, true peace can be found only in You. Though we have often walked in the darkness, You have sought us with the light of Christ. Cease all our sad divisions and bring peace to Your Church; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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.**

BENEDICAMUS

P Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C Amen.

332 SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
God was there up - on His throne.
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

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