
FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 3, 2017

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

THEME

We all need God's wisdom in our families, so we begin this new church year with a series called "Family Life." There is much to learn today from Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John.

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

P: Let us worship God as children—

C: With wonder and awe.

P: Let us worship God as youth—

C: With questions and eager hearts.

P: Let us worship God as adults—

C: With gratitude and praise.

P: Let us worship God as elders—

C: With wisdom and hope.

P: Let the body of Christ sing praises to God—

C: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P: From whom all blessings flow!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: Beloved in the Lord, as we begin this season of Advent, let this wreath and the candles progressively lit each week remind us that Jesus came to conquer the darkness of sin and lead us into the light of His glorious kingdom.

P: Let us pray. Lord Jesus, Savior and King, the true light who comes into this world, bless us as we light this candle in the beginning of our preparation for Your coming. Enter our hearts and minds with the light of Your love that we may welcome and receive You with joy as our true and eternal King; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

+The first candle is lit during the Advent Song+

ADVENT SONG

"Light One Candle"

1. Light one candle for hope,
One bright candle for hope,
He brings hope to ev'ry heart,
He comes! He comes!

2. Light one candle for peace,
One bright candle for peace,
He brings peace to ev'ry heart,
He comes! He comes!

3. Light one candle for joy,
One bright candle for joy,
Ev'ry nation will find salvation
In Bethl'em's baby boy

4. Light one candle for love,
One bright candle for love,
He brings love to ev'ry heart,
He comes! He comes!
He brings love to ev'ry heart,
He comes! He comes!

ADVENT THEME

P: Today, we light the candle of Hope. Just as the world waited for its Messiah many years ago, we also place our hope in this same Deliverer. Great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in Him." The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. *Lamentations 3:23b-25*

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. *Romans 15:13*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

WE CONFESS OUR SIN...

P: In today's Gospel reading, Luke presents two families—one led by Herod, the other led by Zechariah. Come, then, let us confess to our heavenly Father that our family is frequently far too much like Herod's.

C: We, like Herod, would rather rule than serve.

P: Wield power than submit in humility.

C: And get ahead at the expense of our own family members.

P: We've sliced and diced spouses with our words.

C: Made selfish decisions that have hurt our children.

P: And ignored clear warnings from your word.

All: Jesus, Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Silence for a time of personal reflection

...HEARING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

P: Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! And he has had mercy on us. His blood was shed for all your sins and family failures. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I 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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as your family, we gather to receive anew the gifts of your wisdom and guidance. May they turn our homes into places of healing and abundance so that Christ's love establishes us in mercy and grace; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Today's scripture lessons are about God's faithfulness to families.

The First Lesson:

Malachi 4:4-6

"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

"See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction."

The Second Lesson:

Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

CHOIR ANTHEM: "Christmas Is Coming" by Joel Raney

In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time." Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

When his time of service was completed, he returned home. After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. "The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON SONG: "Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel"

LBW 34

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 you, O Israel.

Oh, come oh come, great Lord of might,
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times once gave the law
In cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel

Oh, come, strong Branch of Jesse, free
Your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel

Oh, come, blest Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by your advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel

Oh, come, O 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 you, O Israel

SERMON "Two Families"

Sermon Notes

"Two Families"

Luke 1:5-25

*"In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah"
(Luke 1:5).*

_____ Family

_____ Family

*"They had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both
well along in years" (Luke 1:7).*

1. God's _____ never _____.

*Sarah (Genesis 11:30), Rebekah (Genesis 25:31) were at one time all barren.
And so was Hannah, the mother of Samuel (I Samuel 2:5).*

2. God's _____ never _____.

*"He (Zechariah) was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the
priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense" (Luke 1:9).*

"The curtain of the temple was torn in two" (Luke 23:45).

3. God's _____ never _____.

*"And he (John the Baptist) will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power
of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children" (Luke 1:17).*

For this coming Wednesday night,

December 6

*Read: Luke 1:57-66 and answer this question, "Who are you named after?
What does your name mean?"*

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

C: We believe in God, the Creator of all things, the source of all goodness and love...We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, true God yet true man...He was crucified, died and was buried for our sin that we might be free and know the joy of life...He was raised on the third day and ascended to heaven...and will come again in power and glory to judge both the living and the dead...We believe in the Holy Spirit, the power of God at work inside of us...We believe in the church of God, the people of faith throughout the world...We believe that our sin is forgiven and that we will live together with God for now and throughout eternity. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

P: As we pray for our families, let us open our hearts to God's love and compassion. For fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, we pray for wisdom and courage. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Heavenly Father, when times get tough, assure us that your promises never end, your presence never disappoints and your plan never, ever fails. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Heavenly Father, turn our hearts towards home. Heal fractured relationships, bind up broken homes and restore our marriages. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: For all children and young people, we pray that they grow in wisdom and in stature, in favor with You and with people. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: For all those who are sick or alone, especially we name before You _____; we pray for our church family to love them and reach out to them. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Compassionate God, hear our prayers and the silent prayers in our hearts. This we ask in the name of Jesus your Son.

C: Amen.

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"I've Got Peace"

TOSB 108

1. I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.

2. I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.
3. I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.

"How Great Thou Art"

TOSB 78

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze;
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin;
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim "My God how great thou art!"
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

"Rock of Ages"

TOSB 181

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me
Hide myself in Thee; Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed, be of
Sin the double cure, save me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labor of my hands, can fulfill
Thy law's demands; could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow, all for
Sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hands I bring, simply
To Thy cross I cling; naked, come to Thee for dress,
Helpless look to Thee for grace; foul, I
To the fountain fly, wash me. Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath, when my
Eyes shall close in death, which I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne, Rock of
Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.

CLOSING BLESSING

CLOSING SONG: "Let All Things Now Living"

LBW 557

1. Let all things now living A song of thanksgiving
To God the creator triumphantly raise,
Who fashioned and made us, Protected and stayed us,
Who still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, His light goes before us,
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
Till shadows have vanished And darkness is banished,
As forward we travel from light into light.

2. His law he enforces, The stars in their courses
And sun in its orbit obediently shine;
The hills and the mountains, The rivers and fountains,
The deeps of the ocean proclaim him divine.
We too should be voicing Our love and rejoicing;
With glad adoration a song lets us raise
Till all things now living Unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, Hosanna and praise!"

SILENT PRAYER

Loving Savior, forgive my Herod-like heart and enable me, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, to trust in your promises, your presence, and your plan.....all for my family. Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

POST-SERVICE MUSIC