

Today's Theme for Worship: When the Lord Comes Near, He Humbles Himself.

When Jesus Christ came into our world, he hid his glory and power. He humbled himself so that sinners would be drawn to him rather than driven away in fear.

Opening Hymn 47 Behold, a Branch Is Growing

1 Behold, a Branch is growing Of loveliest form and grace,
As prophets sang, foreknowing; It springs from Jesse's race
And bears one little flow'r In midst of coldest winter,
At deepest midnight hour.

2 Isaiah had foretold it In words of promise sure,
And Mary's arms enfold it, A virgin meek and pure.
Through God's eternal will This child to her is given
At midnight calm and still.

3 The shepherds heard the story Proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of glory, Was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped And in the manger found him,
As angel heralds said.

4 This flow'r, so small and tender, With fragrance fills the air;
His brightness ends the darkness That kept the earth in fear.
True God and yet true man, He came to save his people
From earth's dark night of sin.

5 O Savior, Child of Mary, Who felt our human woes,
O Savior, King of glory, Who conquered all our foes,
Bring us at last, we pray, To the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.

Text: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, Köln, 1599, abr.; tr. composite.

P: The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

Confession of Sins

P: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

P: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

♪ Oh Taste And See

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Bless-ed are they who take re-fuge in him.

Your Word, O Lord, is e-ter-nal;
it stands firm in the heav-ens.
Your faith-ful-ness con-tin-ues for-ev-er.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Bless-ed are they who take re-fuge in him.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us Pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Protect us by your strength, and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♪ Amen

First Lesson: Jeremiah 33:14-16

¹⁴Listen, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the good promises that I have spoken to the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah.

¹⁵In those days and at that time,

I will cause a righteous Branch to grow up from David's line.

He will establish justice and righteousness on earth.

¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved,
and Jerusalem will dwell securely.

This is what she will be called:

The LORD Our Righteousness.

Psalm of the Day Psalm 24

Refrain

Let the Lord enter; he is the King of glory.

The earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it,*
the world, and all who live in it;

for he founded it upon the seas*
and established it upon the waters.

Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?*
Who may stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart,*
he will receive blessing from God his Savior.

Refrain

Let the Lord enter; he is the King of glory.

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

Who is this King of glory?*
The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.

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

Who is he, this King of glory?*
The LORD Almighty-he is the King of glory.

**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.**

Refrain

Let the Lord enter; he is the King of glory.

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Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

⁹Indeed, how can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have before God on account of you? ¹⁰Night and day we are praying earnestly to see you in person and to supply what is lacking in your faith.

¹¹May God our Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord increase your love and make it overflow for each other and for all people, just as ours does for you, ¹³so that he may establish your hearts as blameless in holiness before our God and Father, when our Lord Jesus comes with all his saints.

Verse:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 19:28-40

²⁸After Jesus had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹As he came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ahead, ³⁰saying, “Go to the village ahead of you. When you enter it, you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you will say this: ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”

³²Those who were sent ahead went and found things just as he had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

³⁴They said, “The Lord needs it.”

³⁵Then they brought the colt to Jesus. They threw their robes on the colt and set Jesus on it. ³⁶As he went along, people spread their robes on the road. ³⁷As he was approaching the slope of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began to praise God joyfully, with a loud voice, for all the miracles they had seen, ³⁸saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

³⁹Some of the Pharisees from the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

⁴⁰He replied, “I tell you, if these people would be silent, the stones would cry out.”

P: This the gospel of our Lord.

C: ♪ Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day: 2 Savior of the Nations, Come

1 Savior of the nations, come; Virgin’s Son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav’n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.

2 Not by human flesh and blood, By the Spirit of our God
Was the Word of God made flesh, Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

3 Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child Of the virgin undefiled,
Though by all the world disowned, Yet to be in heav'n enthroned!

4 From the Father's throne he came And ascended to the same,
Captive leading death and hell-High the song of triumph swell!

5 Praise to God the Father sing, Praise to God the Son, our King,
Praise to God the Spirit be Ever and eternally.

Text: Ambrose, 340-97, abr.; German version, Martin Luther, 1483-1546, abr.;
tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812-76, alt.

Sermon

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

Offering

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Prayer of the Church

Hymn: CW21 – 322 Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus

1. Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us
let us find our rest in thee.

2. Israel's Strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart.

3. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thou gracious kingdom bring.

4. By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Tune: *Southern Harmony*, New Haven, 1835, ed. William Walker;

Setting: Hal. H. Hopson, b 1933

Prayer and Blessing

P: Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  **A-men.**

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

C:  **A-men, A-men, A-men**

Closing Hymn: 25 The King Shall Come

1 The King shall come when morning dawns
And light triumphant breaks,
When beauty gilds the eastern hills
And life to joy awakes-

2 Not as of old a little child
To bear and fight and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun
That lights the morning sky.

3 Oh, brighter than the rising morn
When Christ, victorious, rose
And left the lonesome place of death
Despite the rage of foes.

4 Oh, brighter than that glorious morn
Shall dawn upon our race
The day when Christ in splendor comes
And we shall see his face.

5 The King shall come when morning dawns
And light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
Come quickly, King of kings!

Text: John Brownlie, 1857-1925, abr., alt.