

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Most Lutheran congregations include an Advent wreath as part of their preparation for Christmas. This brief rite provides a fitting beginning to this sacred season on the First Sunday in Advent.

P *Beloved in the Lord, as we begin the season of Advent, let this wreath remind us that Jesus Christ came to conquer the darkness of sin and to lead us into the light of His glorious kingdom, as the prophet Isaiah says, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. (Isaiah 9:2)*

P *Our help is in the name of the Lord,*
C *who made heaven and earth.*

P *The Lord be with you.*
C *And also with you.*

P *Let us pray.... O Lord Jesus Christ, the true light who comes into the world to enlighten everyone, bless us as we light the candles of this wreath in preparation for Your coming, and so enkindle our hearts with the fire of Your love that we may receive You with joy and gladness and evermore remain steadfast in the faith, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*
C *Amen.*

P *The Lord almighty, the Father, the ✠ Son and the Holy Spirit, bless this wreath for use in His Church throughout this holy season of Advent.*

C *Amen.*

The service continues with the hymn “Hark the glad sound” # 349

INTROIT

Psalm 118:25-28; Antiphon: Zechariah 9:9b

*Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation*

Save us, we pray, O LORD!

O LORD, we pray, give us success!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!

We bless you from the house of the LORD.

The LORD is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us.

Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;

you are my God; I will extol you.

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.

Behold, your king is coming to you;

righteous and having salvation.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come,
that by Your protection*

*we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins
and saved by Your mighty deliverance;*

*for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

C **Amen**

GRADUAL

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26 alt

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, your king is coming to you;

righteous and having salvation

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!

From the house of the Lord we bless you.

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,*

C **hear our prayer.**

Isaiah 2:1-5 (ESV)

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

² It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills;

and all the nations shall flow to it, ³ and many peoples shall come, and say:

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob,

that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”

For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples;

and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

⁵ O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Romans 13:8-14 (ESV)

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹ Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Matthew 21:1-11 (ESV)

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” ⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

⁵ “Say to the daughter of Zion,

‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!”¹⁰ And when
he entered Jerusalem, the whole city
was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?”
¹¹ And the crowds said, “This is the
prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of
Galilee.”

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Isaiah 2:1–5

Romans 13:8–14

Matthew 21:1–11 *or* Matthew 24:36–44

The Lord Comes in Meekness and Humility to Save Us Now

The Lord Jesus enters Jerusalem “*humble, and mounted on a donkey,*” riding on “*a beast of burden*” (Matt. 21:5), as He Himself bears the sins of the world in His body. Now He comes by the Ministry of the Gospel to save us from sin, death, the devil, and hell. Therefore, we sing, “*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!*” (Matt. 21:9). For we are called “*to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob,*” His holy Church, “*that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths*” (Is. 2:3). By His Word, we “*walk in the light of the Lord*” (Is. 2:5). That is to live in love, which “*does no wrong to a neighbor*” (Rom. 13:10). We “*cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light,*” for “*salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed*” (Rom. 13:11, 12). Hence, the entire Christian life is a time to wake and watch, “*for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming*” (Matt. 24:42).

Next Week’s Readings from God’s Word:

December 4: Second Sunday in Advent (Series A)

Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7 (v.18); Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12