

Christ the King Sunday
Adaptive Worship Service
November 29, 2020



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Welcome! Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: GraceCLW.com

ADAPTIVE SERVICE OF THE WORD

GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Introduction to the Lesson: *As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.*

Reader: 3 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

4 I always give thanks to my God for you because of the grace he has given you through Christ Jesus. 5 For in union with Christ you have become rich in all things, including all speech and all knowledge. 6 The message about Christ has become so firmly established in you 7 that you have not failed to receive a single blessing, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. 8 He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be faultless on the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is to be trusted, the God who called you to have fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 13:24-37

Introduction to the Gospel: *Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 13th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 24 “In the days after that time of trouble the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, 25 the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven from their courses. 26 Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 He will send the angels out to the four corners of the earth to gather God's chosen people from one end of the world to the other.

28 “Let the fig tree teach you a lesson. When its branches become green and tender and it starts putting out leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the time is near, ready to begin.

[a] 30 Remember that all these things will happen before the people now living have all died. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

32 “No one knows, however, when that day or hour will come—neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; only the Father knows. 33 Be on watch, be alert, for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It will be like a man who goes away from home on a trip and leaves his servants in charge, after giving to each one his own work to do and after telling the doorkeeper to keep watch. 35 Watch, then, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming—it might be in the evening or at midnight or before dawn or at sunrise. 36 If he comes suddenly, he must not find you asleep. 37 What I say to you, then, I say to all: Watch!”

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Learn from the Figs

Fig trees mature slowly. They don't require much maintenance, but they do require plenty of time to grow. Some fig trees take years to start producing fruit. It may be tempting to give up on a fig too soon, but the patient gardener knows to wait and watch for the subtle signs that the fig tree is about to produce.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson,” Jesus says in today’s gospel (Mark 13:28). Just as the gardener watches for indications that a bud is about to unfold, so should believers watch for where God’s presence is emerging in the world.

Jesus’ words in this passage paint a picture of God’s arrival as unsettling and fearsome, with darkening skies and shaking celestial orbs. It is hard to imagine how anyone could miss such an arrival, yet Jesus warns his listeners that those who are not vigilant will be caught unaware. We must watch with care and patience for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man, like the gardener who watches for the ripening fig. If you think such signs can be ignored, you will miss the surprising, gentle cry of the incarnate God come as a tiny, vulnerable baby.

Today, at the beginning of Advent, we enter a season of waiting and watching as we anticipate with hope the coming of Christ’s light into the world. Yet, even as we wait, there are active signs of God’s presence all around us now—in water and word, in bread and wine, in the assembly gathered for worship. These signs remind us of God’s gracious love toward us. At the same time, the lesson of the fig tree reminds us to stay curious and attentive, open to what might surprise us. God is always up to something new.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vs. 1 & 2

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and night: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;

un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain* Re-joice! Re-joice!

Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - rael.

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.
 Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

Prayer Leader: We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: We pray for the people in our families and congregation who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and other invisible illnesses (especially Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia & family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Missy, Penny, & Henry, Lisa & Ty Hauschild, Rob Rodriguez & family, Marcus de Souza Lima, Maria de Nazare & Michele Rios, Ana Agramonte, Bishop Pedro Suarez, Pastor Courtney Erzkus and family, Ralph Burson, Luanne Sekel, Lorraine Chavez, Seve Chacon, Pat Fredell, Skylar Favos, the family and friends of of Ethan Burgess, and all those suffering from natural disasters [including all those impacted by COVID-19, Hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta, and Western wildfires], violence, & terror, and the family & friends of the 240,000+ people in the US & the 1.2 million+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19). Ease their suffering and support them when they struggle. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the “Donate” button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Congregation: Amen.

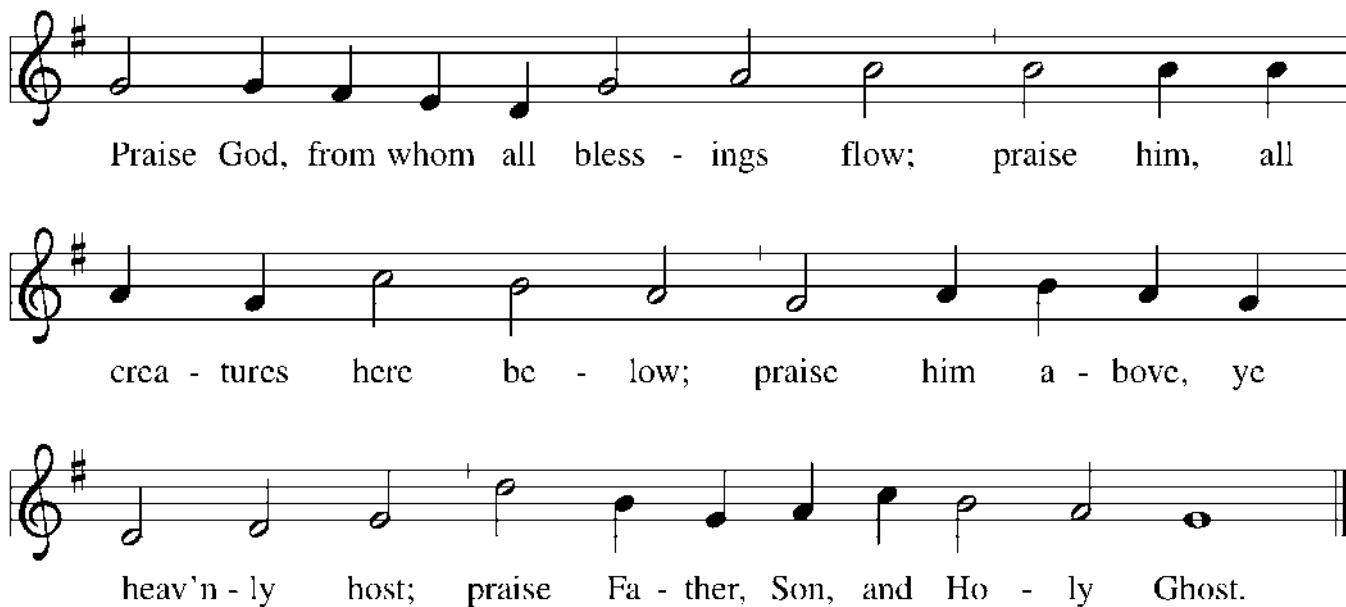
BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace .

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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