

HYMN Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (LSB 338)

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.
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver; Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Text: Public domain

INVOCATION

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

P: Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

C You have been our good and faithful Master.

P: You have poured out blessings upon us.

C You have given us all we need to support this body and life.

P: We meditate on all that You have done.

C We ponder the work of Your hands.

P: On account of Your name, O Lord, preserve our lives.

C In Your righteousness, bring us out of trouble.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: Indeed, our heavenly Father has done wonderful things for us. He has given us more than we could ever ask for or imagine. Yet, there have been times when we have been ungrateful for God's gifts, times when we have been lazy and selfish with what He has given us, times when we have been unfaithful servants. Yet, our heavenly Father invites us to return to Him and ask for His forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

P: Heavenly Father,

C we confess that we have not been faithful with all of the good gifts You have given us. We have sinned in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have failed by our inactivity. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, O Lord, that we might be restored as Your servants.

P: God hears your confession and has promised to be with you always. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son, Jesus Christ, to die and rise for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen. We are forgiven. We are restored in Jesus.

HYMN OF PRAISE I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light (LSB 411)

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain: In Him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path, And show me the way to the Father. *Refrain*

I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race, We shall know the joy of Jesus. *Refrain*

Text: © 1970, 1975 Celebration. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005957

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Zephaniah 1:7–16

“Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. And on the day of the LORD’s sacrifice— “I will punish the officials and the king’s sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master’s house with violence and fraud. “On that day,” declares the LORD, “a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills. Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, ‘The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill.’ Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.” The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.”

EPISTLE: 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

“Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in

darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14–30

““For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past (LSB 733)*

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home:

Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream Dies at the op'ning day.

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last And our eternal home!

Text: Public domain

SERMON

NICENE CREED

C: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth And of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures And ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: Dear heavenly Father, You have placed us in various vocations for the sake of Your C. Strengthen us when we face challenges and trials that would tempt us to abandon Your Church. Forgive us when we go astray. Bring back all those who have wandered from the faith. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our pleas for mercy.

P: Lord, raise up good and faithful servants in Your Church, that we work together for the common good and spread the good news of Your kingdom to all nations. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our pleas for mercy.

P: Lord, raise up good and faithful servants in the governments of the world, that citizens of all nations might be treated with fairness and justice. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our pleas for mercy.

P: Lord, the day of Jesus' return is drawing near. Give us patience and faith as we await His return.

Embolden us to serve our neighbors and never grow weary of doing good. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our pleas for mercy.

P: Lord, disease and devastation have infected so much of Your creation, but we know Your healing is always close at hand. Be with all those who suffer now through abuse, illness, and injustice, [especially . . .] Heal them according to Your will, and send justice for the oppressed. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our pleas for mercy.

P: Lord, by the resurrection of Your Son, death has been destroyed. Yet each human being still faces earthly death. We bring before You all those who are mourning the death of loved ones, [especially . . .]. Comfort them with the hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our pleas for mercy.

P: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

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.

DISMISSAL

P: The Almighty and Merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.

C: Amen.

HYMN: Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word (LSB 655)

Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For You are Lord of lords alone;
Defend Your holy Church that we May sing Your praise eternally.

O Comforter of priceless worth, Send peace and unity on earth;
Support us in our final strife And lead us out of death to life.

Text: Public domain