



# The Gifts of Christmas

Grace Lutheran Church

Yorba Linda, California

November 29, 2020

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent

## The Gifts of Christmas

Gifts! It's that time of the year: when kids can't wait to open them; when we spend way too much time in lines and online and in traffic searching for them; when we don't know which ones to give and they are often ones we don't need.

God however has provided us with the perfect gift, the gift we cannot do without. We'll celebrate that gift of His Son at Christmas. Until then, the Church uses the season of Advent to prepare us to receive that Gift. **Today: Jesus Comes – through the Gift of Baptism.**

Advent (Latin for "He comes") helps us prepare for and anticipate the festival of Christmas much like Lent helps us prepare for Easter. The roots of Advent go back all the way to the 400's in France and Italy. The color of the season is blue for royalty. Our King is coming!



### Today: Jesus Comes – through the Gift of Baptism

December 6: Jesus Comes – through the Gift of Preaching

December 13: Jesus Comes – with Gifts that are Priceless

December 20: Jesus Comes – with Gifts to Receive

Christmas Eve - Jesus – the Greatest Gift



*Gathering around Grace – Growing in Grace – Going with Grace*

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L: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God the Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

*Silence for reflection*

M: Holy and merciful Father,

C: **I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

*John 20:21-23*

M: "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me."

C: **"Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."**

(Revelation 22:12,20)

M: We light one Advent candle, remembering Jesus, who is coming again. He will come to gather his people from everywhere, both the living and the dead.

C: **We light one Advent candle as a sign of our watchfulness and waiting.**

M: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C: **Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.**

*After one advent candle is lit we sing this hymn that has been used at the beginning of Advent since the 300s AD. God's people always pray, "Savior, 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.

*Sometimes referred to as the "Collect," these ancient prayers "collect" the thoughts of the day for the people in the form of a petition. Each of the prayers for Advent asks God to "Stir up... and come."*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: 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.

## GOD'S WORD

*Peter points to the flood as an illustration of how Jesus comes to us in baptism to save us.*

### FIRST READING

**1 Peter 3:18-22**

<sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the spirit. <sup>19</sup> After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—<sup>20</sup> to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, <sup>21</sup> and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

## GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:4-8

*John the  
Baptizer is the key  
figure of Advent for  
he points us to the  
One who would  
come to save.*

<sup>4</sup> And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. <sup>6</sup> John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup> I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

## HYMN OF THE DAY

Children of the Heavenly Father (#449)

- 1 Children of the heav'nly Father Safely in his bosom gather;  
Nestling bird or star in heaven Such a refuge ne'er was given.**
- 2 God his own doth tend and nourish; In his holy courts they flourish.  
From all evil things he spares them; In his mighty arms he bears them.**
- 3 Neither life nor death shall ever From the Lord his children sever;  
Unto them his grace he showeth, And their sorrows all he knoweth.**
- 4 Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne'er forsaketh;  
His the loving purpose solely To preserve them pure and holy.**

## SERMON

based on Isaiah 63:16b- 64:9

You, LORD, are our Father,  
our Redeemer from of old is your name.  
<sup>17</sup> Why, LORD, do you make us wander from your ways  
and harden our hearts so we do not revere you?  
Return for the sake of your servants,  
the tribes that are your inheritance.

**64** Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,  
that the mountains would tremble before you!  
<sup>2</sup> As when fire sets twigs ablaze  
and causes water to boil,  
come down to make your name known to your enemies  
and cause the nations to quake before you!

<sup>3</sup> For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,  
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.

<sup>4</sup> Since ancient times no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

<sup>5</sup> You come to the help of those who gladly do right,  
who remember your ways.  
But when we continued to sin against them,  
you were angry.  
How then can we be saved?

<sup>6</sup> All of us have become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;  
we all shrivel up like a leaf,  
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

<sup>7</sup> No one calls on your name  
or strives to lay hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us  
and have given us over to our sins.

<sup>8</sup> Yet you, LORD, are our Father.  
We are the clay, you are the potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

*Offerings are part of our worship life and our life in the church. During this time of social distancing, your offering may be left at the door or mailed or you may give online at [www.gracelutheran.church](http://www.gracelutheran.church).*

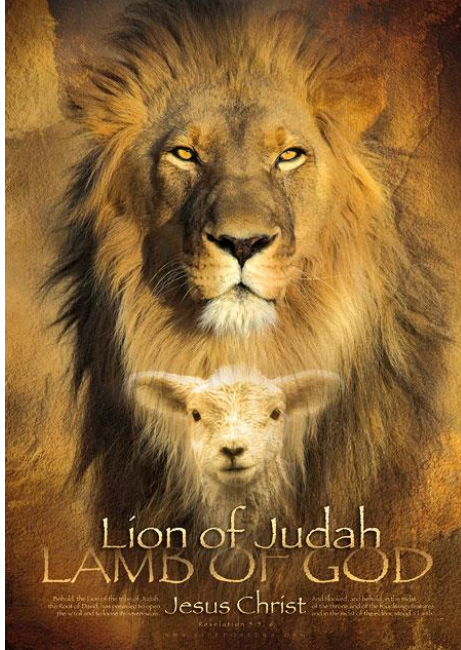


**C: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

**M:**     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:**     **Amen.**



## ADVENT DEVOTIONS

*The message of Christmas and our Savior is a great mystery, for in the manger*

- *we find a child, yet the Son of God;*
- *a servant, yet a King;*
- *a Lion, yet the Lamb;*
- *the Son of David, yet the Ruler whose kingdom never ends.*

*Using accounts from the Old Testament, our focus is on this child who is The Lion of Judah, The Root of David, and The Lamb of God. Look for emails with the link for the devotions each Wednesday or check our web site regularly.*

**“Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed... Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in**

**the center of the throne.” Rev.5:5,6**

## CALENDAR

**Wednesday** – Advent devotion (check your inbox or online)

**Thursday** - Bible Study online – 10 AM or 7 PM

**Sunday**– Worship online (at your convenience) or in the breezeway at 9:30 AM.

Confirmation class

## PRAYERS