



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

CHURCH AT HOME

Announcements:

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for November 27, 2022, celebrating the First Day of Advent.

Pastor Jack Dressler (519-250-7210) is our interim Pastor. Please contact him for any pastoral needs.

Upcoming Services:

Date	Comment	Pastor / Lay Leader	Reader
December 4		Greg Peifer	Margaret
December 11	Communion	Pastor Jack	Dagmar
December 18		Father Brian	
December 24	Christmas Eve – Communion – 7pm	Pastor Jack	Kathy
December 25	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
January 1, 2023	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
January 8	Communion	Pastor Jack	
January 15		Father Brian	
January 22		TBD	
January 29		Father Brian	

**** REMINDER **** There will be a Financial Update after service
on Sunday December 4

**** Our Christmas Bazaar has been CANCELLED ****

Introduction

The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly

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watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

God of new beginnings,

we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us.

Amen.

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on \pm Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

Amen.

Worship

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation. *Alleluia.*

First Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

³Many 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 forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; 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 any more.

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

Psalm: Psalm 122

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."

¹I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."

²**Now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

³Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity with itself;

⁴**to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, the assembly of Israel, to praise the name of the LORD.**

⁵For there are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

⁶**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you.**

⁷Peace be within your walls and quietness within your towers.

⁸**For the sake of my kindred and companions, I pray for your prosperity.**

⁹Because of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek to do you good."

Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the ar-

mor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Gospel: Matthew 24:36-44

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶“About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon: Watch and be Ready (preached by Father Brian Wearne at Trinity on November 27, 2022)

In the name of the true and living God: † Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

When St. Mathew composed his Gospel, he included 5 great discourses of Jesus, and the passage we heard today is fittingly part of the last of these. Advent, or its more specific Latin term *Adventus* means "coming". Advent is a season when we prepare to celebrate the 1st Coming of Jesus at Christmas, but we also use the season to prepare for the 2nd Coming of Jesus to Reign over the world He has created.

Our observance of Advent serves to remind us that whenever we hear the term "end times" either from the Holy Bible or from others, we should be aware that we are living in the "end times" right now. For the "end times" are the age of the Church — the times between the 1st and 2nd Comings or Advents, of Jesus Christ. In His mercy, God has given us — His Church — these times that we may fulfil His Great Commission to "make disci-

ples of all the nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things He has commanded us" (Matthew 28:19-20). In Holy Week as Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, asking Him questions.

The disciples asked Jesus privately, saying, "tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). We heard part of His answer today. "Of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. Watch, therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect".

Many Christians have unfortunately ignored Christ's clear teachings in the Gospels that only God the Father knows when Christ's 2nd Advent will be, and have succumbed to divisive speculation regarding His Return. This has often caused Christians to part ways as new denominations spring up around interpretations of events which have not yet come to pass!

Throughout history, the Anglican Church has steadfastly insisted on the reality of the 2nd Coming of Christ as a settled belief, while granting freedom on the question of when it will occur. We rise and confess our faith, using the articles of belief we find in the ancient Nicene Creed of the Church, saying we believe that "Jesus Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end" (BAS: 189). Note that the Early Church emphasis here is that Jesus *will* come again, not *when* Jesus will come again. We should not speculate about when Jesus will Return.

Neither should we speculate about when Jesus will not Return. Rather, we should be ever mindful that Jesus may Return at any moment. But if we are taught by Jesus not to speculate on the timing of His 2nd Advent, then what must our response be? Jesus says "watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect".

Watch And Be Ready! The Biblical, spiritual word "watch" or "watchfulness" is the absolute opposite of drunkenness that Jesus warns us against. Hence our spiritual sobriety, alertness, vigilance is called for here. Watchfulness signifies an attitude of attentiveness, whereby you keep watch over your heart and intellect. Watchfulness indicates that whole range of the practice of the virtues, and is clearly linked with purity of heart" (Philokalia Vol. 1:367). We learn from this understanding of the term that when Jesus says "watch", He is telling us to watch for the signs of His Return that He gives us in the Gospels, but also that we are to "watch" over ourselves - our thoughts, feelings and actions - that we are observing the commandments, teachings and example given us by

our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus lifts Noah up to us as an example of one who was watchful in this sense, while those around him were not.

"As in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away". From Genesis we gain a fuller sense of those days. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God said to Noah, "the end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:11-13). To this example, Jesus adds "As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be".

The people of Noah's day drew the wrong conclusions from their ignorance of the time of the flood. They were careless in the things that pertain to God and so they did not watch. As their example relates to us, exact Knowledge of the 2nd Coming could lead otherwise serious believers to moral carelessness, inactive faith and a lack of daily perseverance, which is the opposite of watchfulness. Jesus illustrates His teaching on watchfulness with 3 shocking parables in order to emphasize the suddenness of His Return. Two men are working in a field. One is taken while the other is left behind. Similarly, two women work their hand mill — one normally operated by two women squatting opposite each other with the mill between them, each woman in turn pulling the stone around 180 degrees.

Yet no matter how close their relationship, one is instantly taken while the other is left behind when Jesus Returns. These two vignettes stress the unexpectedness of Christ's 2nd Advent by means of the sudden separation of two people. Likewise in the third parable, Jesus says the master of a house would have "watched" if he knew what hour the thief would come and not have allowed his house to be broken into. Since no one knows at what "watch" of the night a thief might strike, constant vigilance and proper conduct is required. We must be ready at all times, because in this respect - the unexpectedness of His 2nd Advent — Jesus resembles a thief.

Besides the necessity of watchfulness, these 3 parables share something else in common. The men work in a field, the women work at the mill, and the master falls asleep at night, because life seems to be going on pretty much as usual, just as in the days of Noah. And when we recall that night time is Biblically symbolic of spiritual darkness, we see that the master of the house was not spiritually alert and vigilant. He was not watching.

To us, Jesus says "Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect". Jesus could come at any moment. Have you been watching the signs and watching yourself? Are you ready to meet the Lord Jesus Christ? In the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ to St. John, it is written that "the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'"

The Holy Spirit and Christ's Bride - The Church - eagerly await His Return. And the answer Jesus gives there is "Surely I am coming quickly". We who love Jesus may add our voices to St. John the Evangelist as he writes "Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:17,20).

The Season of Advent helps us awaken from our sleep so we may watch and be ready for Christ's 2nd Coming, and lest we forget, we may come together Sunday by Sunday to worship Him and to be reminded by the Creeds that we believe "He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end."

Thus we are enabled to **Watch And Be Ready** for "when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him" (Matthew 25:31).

And now to ☩ God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, be all might, majesty, dominion and honour, this day and forevermore. Amen.

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The Prayers of Intercession

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

God of all, your children everywhere cry out for mercy. Awaken the global church to the urgent needs of our time. Break down barriers of culture and custom and unite people of all faiths in your redemptive and healing work. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of wonder, the earth's beauty and abundance is your gift. Teach us your ways of sharing resources and caring for life. Guard fragile habitats, preserve the wild places, and protect endangered plants and animals. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of peace, you judge the nations. Beat our weapons into tools for serving the neighbor. Strengthen the resolve of all who work for an end to war. We pray for lasting peace in the land of Jesus' birth. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of lovingkindness, you desire fullness of life for everyone. Fill those who hunger. Comfort the grieving and attend to those near death. Bring help and hope to any who are sick or needing your care. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of community, you are present when we gather in your name. Guide congregations in transition or conflict. Give wisdom to congregational councils, call committees, and ministry leaders. Keep us alert to unexpected opportunities for mission. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of presence, bless those of this community who cannot be with us this morning, and those who walk with them, especially:

In Residence: Margaret; Maria; Stan; Katie; Katherine; Cordelle; Dorothy

Needing our prayers: Ed; Pastor Mike & Patti, Donna; Sharon B; Jeffrey; Art; Joan

Friends of our Members Needing our prayers: Audrey; Greg; Paul; Hilda; Mary; Anna

...and all members who may have needs unknown to us

And all those we name in our hearts...

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of promise, your goodness is everlasting. We give thanks for the lives of the faithful who now rest in you. We trust that you will bring us into the company of all the saints with rejoicing. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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

God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**