



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

The First Sunday in Advent, 2020 A.D.

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the Introit and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Athanasian Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

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

Amen.

Introit

From Zechariah 9 and Psalm 25

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

To you, O LORD,

I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.

Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

**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.**

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Athanasian Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson – Mark 11:1-10

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. ³ If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’” ⁴ And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. ⁵ And some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶ And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. ⁷ And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. ⁸ And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. ⁹ And those

who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

Sermon † *How will you welcome Him?* † *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

The Athanasian Creed *(As is tradition at Bethany for the fifth Sunday of the month.)*

Whoever desires to be saved must, above all, hold the catholic (universal) faith. Whoever does not keep it whole and undefiled will without doubt perish eternally.

And the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance.

For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Holy Spirit is another. But the Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit: the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Spirit uncreated; the Father infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet there are not three Eternals, but one Eternal, just as there are not three Uncreated or three Infinities, but one Uncreated and one Infinite. In the same way, the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Spirit almighty; and yet there are not three Almighty's, but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord; and yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord. Just as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge each distinct person as God and Lord, so also are we prohibited by the catholic religion to say that there are three Gods or Lords.

The Father is not made nor created nor begotten by anyone. The Son is neither made nor created, but begotten of the Father alone. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding. Thus, there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another; but the whole three persons are coeternal with each other and coequal, so that in all things, as has been stated above, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity is to be worshiped. Therefore, whoever desires to be saved must think thus about the Trinity.

But it is also necessary for everlasting salvation that one faithfully believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is the right faith that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the same time both God and man. He is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages; and He is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age: perfect God and perfect man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father with respect to His divinity, less than the Father with respect to His humanity.

Although He is God and man, He is not two, but one Christ: one, however, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ, who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose

again the third day from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence He will come to judge the living and the dead. At His coming all people will rise again with their bodies and give an account concerning their own deeds. And those who have done good will enter into eternal life, and those who have done evil into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith; whoever does not believe it faithfully and firmly cannot be saved.

The Lord's Prayer



**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.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Thanksgiving

- The start of the new church year
- Angela Yuza - recovered after illness

Entrusting into God's Care

- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Bernie Rehstrom– hospice care at St. Luke's
- Dee Rose - hospice care at Meth-Wick nursing facility
- Workers in the Church, here at Bethany and throughout the world

Healing

- Gene (husband of Nancy Owens) - recovering after surgery
- Pat Krekeler - recovering after hospitalization
- Wilson (son of Luke Viertel) - health issues
- Donald (brother of Carol Edwards) - recovering after COVID-19
- Steve Hanchera - recovering after COVID-19
- Linda Patten - recovering after hip replacement
- Kent Zenor - recovering after second eye surgery
- Darlene Eckert - recovering after broken leg
- Aaron Moffett - recovering after eye surgery
- Dave Christian - recovering after surgery
- Kris Dunn - health issues

Shut-Ins

- Candi Engel - Garnet Place

Mourning

- Karen Pfeffer - mourning her uncle, Ray's, death on 11/7
- Bernice Stonewall - mourning her brother, Merle's, death on 10/31
- Bonnie Bubke - mourning her son, Scott's, death on 10/27

Serving Our Country

- Tailor & Charlie (grandsons of Kim Neuhaus) – serving in the U.S. Armed Forces

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... 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.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ *How will you welcome Him?* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

This Sunday is the first day in the season of Advent. Advent is an interesting time in the church year, as well as in most people's lives. In the church it comes right after we finish talking about Christ's glorious return, like we did last Sunday, and right before we celebrate Jesus' first coming on Christmas. As we go about the business of the rest of our lives, we might look at Advent as somewhat of a busy season, this year more than ever. We are all too aware that in these next few weeks there are all the usual things we have to do this time of year - projects to complete, gifts to buy, and cards to send out. But this year, in addition to all of that, many of us will have to figure out how to celebrate Christmas in the midst of the pandemic. And so, with Advent wedged between the time the church focuses on Christ's Second Coming and His First, and with so much going on in our lives outside of the church, it can be helpful to look at this Season of Advent as more than just a time of preparation for the big day of Christmas. We can use Advent as sort of a liturgical speed bump. A way to slow us down and focus us on what is important by asking the question, "How shall we welcome Christ into our lives?" Whether we are talking about Christ as the lowly child in the manger, or Christ when He returns in glory, we ask, "How shall we meet Jesus?" As we begin Advent and the new church year, we say goodbye to the Matthew and his gospel and turn to the Gospel according to St. Mark for the next year. And in reading our Gospel lesson this morning from Mark, we see that to welcome Jesus we must first recognize the interruption that He brings into our lives.

In our Gospel lesson this morning, we find the city of Jerusalem in preparation for the great Jewish celebration of the Passover. The Passover celebration was an annual remembrance of God's mighty act of deliverance of His chosen people out of slavery in Egypt. This celebration would have made the streets of Jerusalem absolutely packed. Jerusalem would have been bursting at its seams with people from around the known world as they prepared to slaughter the Passover lambs and celebrate this great occasion with family and friends.

But when the king arrives, when the King of all Creation, Jesus our Lord shows up on the scene, it interrupts the sort of celebration people are expecting. Martin Luther says that Jesus comes as a "beggar king", for He comes into Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey. He came in humility and meekness, even though Jesus rules with all things are under His feet. Of course, if we think about it, as the King of Creation, all of the donkeys in the world belong to Jesus, for He is the Lord. He is not stealing when He commissions His disciples to fetch the colt. He is simply using what is His, so that there can be no objections when the Lord takes it back for His purposes. And in doing so, He shows His purpose of coming to us in this way by fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah: "*Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation.*"

Jesus comes to the city of Jerusalem in this unusual way – comes to the city where the temple is – the place of sacrifice – to suffer and to die as God's ultimate Passover Lamb. His sacrifice now interrupts Passover as usual, LIFE as usual; sin and death as usual for here, coming to the people now, is a king like no other. He does not come with royal splendor or military might, but in the humility of the Servant who embraces the cross for you and in doing so interrupts every aspect of our lives. And now, today, as we welcome Jesus who interrupts our lives, we proclaim Him as the Blessed One who brings us the kingdom of God.

In our Gospel lesson the people lining the streets waved palm branches in their hands and shouted acclamations from their lips. They greeted Him as the Blessed One from God. Just before His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was greeted by blind Bartimaeus as the Son of David. The blind man implores the Lord, whom he could not see, for mercy, and with restored vision he follows Jesus. Now, all the citizens of Jerusalem seemingly behold their Messiah and bless Him as the One even greater than David.

With the words of Psalm 118, the crowds confess Jesus as Lord, even as they cry out for Him with their glad hosannas, imploring Him to “save us now”. Little do they know at this point that the salvation for which they truly yearn comes only from Jesus and the shedding of His blood. For in His death, Jesus brings all of the blessings of God from heaven down to earth. With the child laying in the manger is the forgiveness of our sins and therefore peace with God as well. It is no wonder that during Advent we hear again and again that this Jesus is Immanuel, a name that means “God with us”. For wherever a king goes, His kingdom follows. And wherever God is, His Kingdom follows as well. When God is with us, we know that God’s Kingdom of love and mercy is with us as well.

Jesus’ kingdom is not a dominion that we ourselves attain. It is a pure gift. Just as we have done nothing to have Jesus come to us on the first Christmas, we have done nothing to have His kingdom here with us today. When we pray in the Lord’s prayer “Your Kingdom come...” Martin Luther teaches us that, “The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.” We do not come into the kingdom, it comes to us, like Jesus came to the crowds in Jerusalem when He was riding on that donkey. And as the crowds shouted their praises, we sing our praises to God as well. And where they held palm branches in their hands, we use our hands in service to God and to love our neighbor. For with Christ still coming to us today through His Word and in His Sacraments, we are not left out in the darkness of our sin and death, but we have been brought into the Kingdom of God forever. This is not just a past event, but something that God continues to do each and every day.

So how shall we meet our Lord and welcome Him? We receive Him by faith, trusting His merciful words of promise and peace. See, your King comes to you, no longer riding on a donkey, but in His Word and with His body and blood under bread and wine. He comes to claim you as his very own. He comes to take away your shame and restore to you the joy of salvation. Therefore, let us praise Him and live as people in His Kingdom. Amen.

And now may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds this Advent and forever in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

