

Prepare the Way

“Watch”

December 3, 2023

As We Gather

Advent is a time of watching and waiting. As we celebrate Christ’s first coming, we anticipate His return in glory. In our Gospel today, Jesus calls His disciples to “watch” for His return. What does it mean to live lives of hopeful watching?

Welcome

+ Gathering +

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

1 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.

3 Come to earth to taste our sadness,
He whose glories knew no end;
By His life He brings us gladness,
Our redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number,
Born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder,
Christ was born the Lord of all!

2 Joy to those who long to see Thee,
Dayspring from on high, appear;
Come, Thou promised Rod of Jesse,
Of Thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news,
Glad tidings of a birth
“Go to Him, your praises bringing;
Christ the Lord has come to Earth.”

4 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.

Invocation

Lighting of the Advent Wreath – Hope Candle

Leader: Today we light the first candle of the Advent wreath. The first candle is the candle of HOPE.

(The HOPE candle is lit.)

Leader: Romans 15:13 - ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Leader: We pray. Gracious Lord, fill us with hope, the hope that is found only in You, that in every trial, we may have faith to trust that our lives are eternally in Your hands. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

“Yet Not I But Christ In Me”

Verse 1

What gift of grace is Jesus, my Redeemer
There is no more for heaven now to give
He is my joy, my righteousness, and
freedom
My steadfast love,
My deep and boundless peace
To this I hold: my hope is only Jesus
For my life is wholly bound to His
Oh how strange and divine,
I can sing: all is mine!
Yet not I but through Christ in me

Verse 2

The night is dark, but I am not forsaken
For by my side the Saviour, He will stay
I labour on in weakness and rejoicing
For in my need His power is displayed
To this I hold: my Shepherd will defend me
Through the deepest valley He will lead
Oh the night has been won and I shall
overcome!
Yet not I but through Christ in me

Verse 3

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven

The future sure, the price, it has been paid
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon
And He was raised to overthrow the grave
To this I hold: my sin has been defeated
Jesus now and ever is my plea
Oh the chains are released, I can sing: I am
free!
Yet not I but through Christ in me

Verse 4

With every breath I long to follow Jesus
For He has said that He will bring me home
And day by day I know He will renew me
Until I stand with joy before the throne
To this I hold: my hope is only Jesus
All the glory evermore to Him
When the race is complete, still my lips shall
repeat:
Yet not I but through Christ in me

To this I hold: my hope is only Jesus
All the glory evermore to Him
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Prayer

Children Excused to Children's Church

+ Service of the Word +

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! ² 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! ³ For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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? ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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. ⁸ Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹ Do not be angry beyond measure, LORD; do not remember our sins forever. Oh, look on us, we pray, for we are all your people.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. ⁵ For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—
⁶ God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. ⁷ Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸ He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Holy Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

²⁴ "But in those days, following that distress, "'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; ²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' ²⁶ "At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

²⁸ "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³² "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will

come. ³⁴ It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

³⁵ "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You O Christ!

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sermon

"Watch"

Offering

"God is For Us"

We won't fear the battle, we won't fear the night

We will walk the Valley with You by our side

You will go before us, You will lead the way

We have found a refuge, only You can save

Sing with joy now; our God is for us

The Father's love is a strong and mighty fortress

Raise your voice now, no love is greater

Who can stand against us if our God is for us?

Even when I stumble, even when I fall

Even when I turn back, still Your love is sure

You will not abandon, You will not forsake

You will cheer me onward
with never-ending grace

Sing with joy now; our God is for us

The Father's love is a strong and mighty fortress

Raise your voice now, no love is greater

Who can stand against us if our God is for us?

Neither height nor depth can separate us

Hell and death will not defeat us

He who gave His Son to free us

Holds me in His love

Sing with joy now; our God is for us
The Father's love is a strong and mighty
fortress
Raise your voice now, no love is greater
Who can stand against us if our God is for
us?

Sing with joy now; our God is for us
The Father's love is a strong and mighty
fortress
Raise your voice now, no love is greater
Who can stand against us if our God is for
us?

Prayers

Please add your prayer requests to the chat.

Thanksgivings

Pastor: O Lord, we praise You.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Petitions

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer

St. John's People and Families

Chad, Jenn, Liam, Ivy, & Sophie Alexander
Matthew & Kyleigh Greely
Brad, Shannon, Raegan, & Jaxson Lloyd
Linda Melsheimer
Gary & Marlen Virkus
Daniel, Kate, & Jackson Bock
Toassaint, Sheryl, & Mikaella Gaines
Nate, Alexandra, Colette, Claiborne, & Thatcher
Heydorff
Alex, Samantha, & Madelyn Miner
Ezra, Lynn, & Kane Savage

Benediction

"Cornerstone"

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name

When darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In ev'ry high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil **Chorus**

Chorus

Christ alone, Cornerstone
Weak made strong in the Savior's love
Through the storm He is Lord,
Lord of all

When He shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone
Faultless stand before the throne

Offering

<http://stjohnslutheran.net/give/>

You may also mail your offering to St. John's (3521 Linda Vista, Napa, CA 94558)

Memory Verse for This Week

"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

Mark 13:32

Serving in Worship Today

Preacher	Rev. Michael A. Schmid
Lay Reader	Susan Clark
Organist	Erin Blackwood
Sound Technician	Tyler Koen
Streaming Technician	Joshua Wright
Projector Tech	Brian Schoenfeld
Worship Preparation Team	Betsy Gewirz, Bob & Doris Klein
Children's Church Leaders	Sarah Santora, Joy Dahl
Usher	Penni Cremen
Worship Band	Pastor Mike & Teresa Schmid, Chris & Heidi Newman, Jacob Bartelt, Scott Ondek

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