

SERVICE INFORMATION
Minnesota Valley Church
December 1, 2024
First Sunday in Advent

PRELUDE: Ruth Antal (Osthus-Reynolds Singers)

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 25

PASTOR: Show me your ways, O LORD,

ALL: Teach me your paths;

PASTOR: Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,

ALL: And my hope is in you all day long.

PASTOR: Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love,

ALL: For they are from of old.

PASTOR: Remember not the sins of my youth

ALL: And my rebellious ways;

PASTOR: According to your love remember me,

ALL: For you are good, O LORD.

HYMN #5 “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

CONFESSION OF SIN: *Holy and righteous God, merciful Father, we confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. We have not loved you above all things, nor our neighbor as ourselves, and are worthy, therefore, to be cast away from Your presence if You should judge us according to our sins. But You have promised, O heavenly Father, to receive with tender mercy all repentant sinners who turn to You and with a living faith seek refuge in Your Fatherly compassion and in the merits of the Savior, Jesus Christ. Our transgressions You will not regard, nor count them against us. Relying upon Your promise, we confidently pray that You would be merciful and gracious to*

us and forgive us all our sins, to the praise and glory of Your Holy Name. Amen

PRAYER

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE/ADVENT CANDLE

READER: Becky Kruse

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: *Jeremiah 33:14-18 "The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. 15 "In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.' 17 For this is what the LORD says: 'David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, 18 nor will the priests, who are Levites, ever fail to have a man to stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices.'"*

EPISTLE LESSON: *1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? 10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. 11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. 12 May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. 13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.*

READER: Here ends the reading of God’s Word.

CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!

CONFESSION OF FAITH: *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, 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 is seated on the right hand of the Father, And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall 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 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

GLORIA PATRI: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER

TWO PRAISE SONGS: Picked by Ruth

**SERMON TITLE: “THE COMING KING”
December 1, 2024; Pastor Tom Olson;**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

SERIES: Our Advent sermon series this year is from the gospel of Luke: The Coming King, The Righteous King, The Prophesied King and The Incarnate King. Today we look at THE COMING KING from Luke 21:25-33. For 2,000 years we have been confessing “He shall come to judge the living and the dead.” It will happen someday sooner or later. Let’s look at what Jesus said about THE COMING KING. First of all...

I. THE KING’S CREATION ANNOUNCES HIS COMING

Luke 21:25-31 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. 26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. 27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." 29 He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. 30 When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. 31 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

WORD: The primary way God speaks to us is through the Bible. It is the infallible Word of God. It guides our life, it saves our soul, the words jump off the page as we seek God there.

CREATION: God also speaks to us through His CREATION. Creation speaks to every person on earth.

Romans 1:19-20 “...what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-his eternal power and divine nature-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

MAGI: The magi found the announcement of the birth of the King of the Jews in the stars. When I get out in the country, the sky filled with stars speaks with power to me too. Not evil astrology...I am talking about the reverent observation of the nighttime skies in order to perceive the messages that God programmed into them since creation.

VOICES: The roaring of the sea, the earthquakes, the volcanos, the droughts when it doesn't rain, the floods and even the perfect and beautiful weather also speak to us. The animals speak, the mountains speak, the clouds speak, the plants speak. One of my favorite Bible verses is the basis of why I believe our pets will be in heaven.

Roman 8:19-21 *“THE CREATION WAITS IN EAGER EXPECTATION for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.”*

MESSAGE: Every plant and animal, the land and sea, the whole solar system are eagerly waiting for THE RETURN OF THE KING. They reminding us that He is coming back to judge us all!

Luke 21:26 *Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.*

HEADLINES: People who are UNSAVED read the news headlines about wars, earthquakes, deadly asteroids and are filled with TERROR. We, who are SAVED, read about those same things and we are ENCOURAGED! These are signs that the RETURN OF THE KING is getting closer. When signs appear in nature, I have a man who sends me a note on email. He is excited that Jesus may be coming back soon!

AGE: I am at the age where I am bombarded with advertisements about Medicare, social security and retirement. I have to face up to the issue, but something inside of me says, “You may not have to worry about that, Jesus is coming back soon. Keep your hand to the plow and listen for the TRUMPET OF GOD. Your redemption is drawing near.”

THE KING'S CREATION ANNOUNCES HIS COMING!
Secondly...

II. THE KING'S WORD TRANSCENDS HIS COMING

Luke 21:32-33 *"I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*

INERRANT: God's Word does not disappear. Every ancient prophecy about the first coming of Christ came to pass perfectly. I have read that there are about 300 such prophecies. They were given by many prophets over hundreds, even thousands, of years. It is beyond possibility, but they came to pass.

ETERNAL: That same Word of God will come to pass concerning His second coming as well. And the Word of God will also be the basis of God's judgement of our lives. Jesus said in verse 33 that HIS WORDS will never pass away. Heaven will be a place where the Ten Commandments are loved and obeyed.

MISSING: There will be no people in heaven who love to lie, cheat, steal or kill. All such people reject the Word of God. There will only be the blood-bought children of God who love righteousness. I long to live in a righteous place.

ALL: The Word of God will judge all of us. We must repent of sins every day and believe in the Savior in sincere faith to be forgiven and headed for heaven. Those who reject the Word of God will not go to heaven. They would not be happy there.

PREPARE: Advent is a season to prepare for the true meaning of Christmas. It is a time to not only clean house but also to ask God to clean up our hearts, our minds, our attitudes, our speech and our motives.

START: The best place to grow spiritually is with the Bible, the eternal Word of God. It TRANSCENDS THE COMING OF THE KING.

III. THE KING'S PEOPLE ARE PREPARED FOR HIS COMING

Luke 21:34-36 "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. 35 For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

CHILDHOOD: Do you remember as a child how you knew when dad was coming home from work and that affected your behavior? I do. It might be as simple as playing basketball in the driveway and getting out of the way so he could drive in the garage. Or it might be that you were jumping off of the garage roof on to a trampoline and didn't want to get caught.

CAUGHT: If you got caught, you would still be his child, you may get disciplined, but most of all, you had to live with the knowledge that he was disappointed with you and could not trust you as much.

MOTIVATION: One of the motivating questions in my life is this: "Would I want to be doing this when Jesus comes back?"

WARNINGS: Notice in verses 34-36 the kind of things that Jesus warns us to be careful about in light of that fact that He could return at any moment.

1. THE WEIGHT OF DISSIPATION-dissipation means decadence, squandering, frittering away...money, use of time, resources, sexuality...I think most people here today

are quite morally upright but many of us have a problem about spreading ourselves too thin and not focusing on the important things of life. I have had to cut some things I like out of my life in order to keep enough time for what is important. A person can even be at church too much and neglect your family and your personal relationship with the Lord. There is balance in all things. Good things like sports or hobbies or career can take too much time as well. BALANCE is the key.

2. THE WEIGHT OF DRUNKENNESS-In our day and age we would have to include all modern addictions in this. It could include sugar, it could include social media, it could include prescription pain killers, it could include television, it could include video games, it could include reading, it could include people pleasing for attention. Drunkenness goes beyond dissipation; it means literally being under the control of that force to the point that you cannot carry out your responsibilities.
3. THE WEIGHT OF THE ANXIETIES OF LIFE-Remember that these words were spoken 2,000 years ago. The anxieties of life are in every generation. At that time "daily bread" meant getting enough food to make it another day. You could not store up food very long without modern methods of preservation. Every day you needed to find enough food to live. That could make you anxious. Many people are anxious about their money, or politics, or the weather, or the future, or the lives of their children...the list goes on and on. For some people the anxiety is so strong that they literally can't go out of the house and enjoy the sunshine and fresh air. To control anxiety, we need to be careful what we take into our mind and what we think about. We need to learn how to live in the renewed mind of Christ.

PRIORITY: Jesus tells us here to be more concerned about being ready for His return than to be prepared for the issues of life right

now. He wants us to “BE ABLE TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN.”

TRACT: One of the most influential factors in my salvation experience was a gospel tract at the eye doctor’s office called “THIS WAS YOUR LIFE.” It was about a man who died and faced the judgement seat of Christ and was not prepared. It was also about another man who died with faith in the Lord and was ushered into heaven. At that point in my life, I was only a teenager but I was dissipated in my heart with “the cares of life.” I didn’t know Jesus personally in my heart. I was not ready to STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN. Reading that tract at the eye doctor in downtown La Crosse, Wisconsin was a time of awakening for me. I remember it like it was yesterday. I went home and could not sleep. I knew in my heart that I needed to get ready for the COMING OF THE KING.

THE KING’S PEOPLE ARE PREPARED FOR HIS COMING.

Dear friends, are you prepared? Or are you weight down?

Jesus puts it this way in *John 8:34-37 ... "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. 35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

CALL: Today is the day to get prepared. REPENT-which means turn around and start going the right direction and BELIEVE-trust in Jesus as your Savior.

Romans 10:8-13 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-the same Lord is Lord of all

and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

READY: Jesus could come back at any time and it is so important to be ready. The forgiveness of all your sins was purchased with Christ “holy and precious blood and His innocent sufferings and death.” He wants you to be God’s child. He wants to bless you in heaven forever. The altar is open for salvation. The altar is open for Holy Communion to strengthen your assurance of forgiveness. The altar is open for those who would like to let go of dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life. Jesus invites you to COME HOME to God. Amen

May the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen

HYMN #2 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

HOLY COMMUNION (Dave Fischer prep and help)

DOXOLOGY: (To the tune of Edelweiss) *May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever-- Grant you peace, Perfect peace, Strength in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and see His face, Feel His grace forever. May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever.*

POSTLUDE: Ruth Antal