

Midweek Worship 1

ADVENT

December 2, 2020



*Surrounded by saints before us,
we persevere to make heaven
bigger tomorrow
by sharing Jesus on earth today.*

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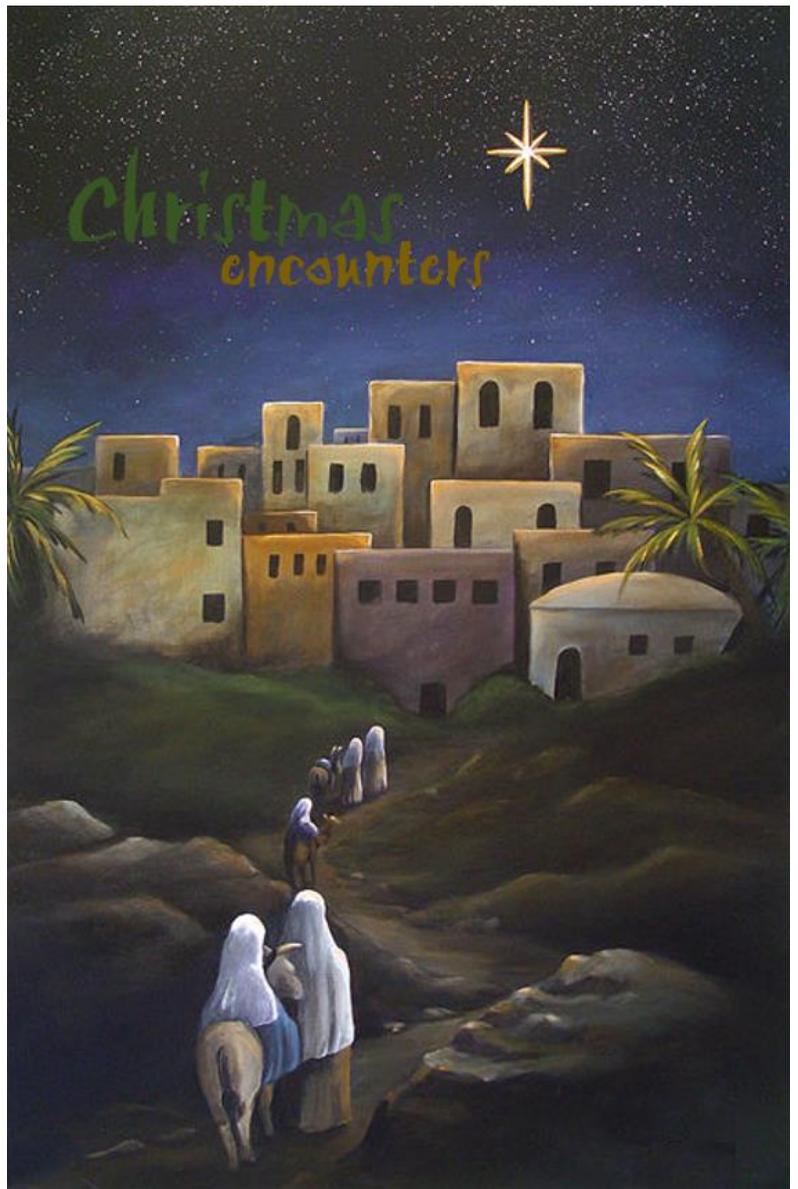
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Christmas Encounters

Week One: Contrasting Kings

Caesar Augustus, King Herod, and King Jesus

December 2, 2020

PRELUDE

“Noel Vosgien”

Jean Bouvard

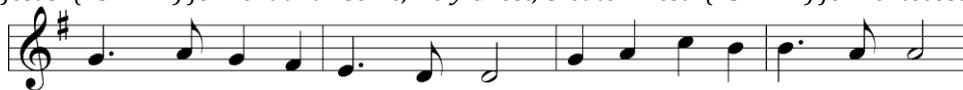
AS WE GATHER: Great leaders are hard to come by. The temptation for the leader is always to put his wants and desires before the needs of the people. Caesar Augustus and Herod the Great both succumbed to that temptation. It is interesting that both of these kings are best known for their association with an infant king, a king who came to this earth precisely because he put the needs of his people before his own. On earth he never lived in a palace, but because of what he did for mankind, he will never be forgotten. Is he ruling in your heart?

OPENING HYMN

“See amid the Winter’s Snow”

LSB 373 v. 1-2

This is an English Christmas Carol first published in 1858 by Rev. Edward Caswall. He also wrote “Glory Be to Jesus” (LSB 433) for Lent and “Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest” (LSB 498) for Pentecost.



1 See a - mid the win - ter's snow, Born for us on earth be - low,
2 Lo, with - in a sta - ble lies He who built the star - ry skies,



See, the gen - tle Lamb ap - pears, Prom - ised from e - ter - nal years.
He who, throned in height sub - lime, Sits a - mid the cher - u - bim.



Refrain
Hail, O ev - er - bless - ed morn! Hail, re - demp - tion's hap - py dawn!



Sing through all Je - ru - sa - lem: “Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!”

INVOCATION Mt 28:19

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

People: Amen.

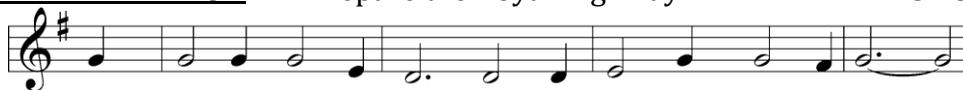
OPENING VERSES

Ps. 105:4-8, Is. 40:3b

Pastor: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;
People: make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Pastor: Seek the Lord and his strength;
People: seek his presence continually!
Pastor: Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
People: his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,
Pastor: O offspring of Abraham, his servant,
People: children of Jacob, his chosen ones!
Pastor: He is the Lord our God;
People: his judgments are in all the earth.
Pastor: He remembers his covenant forever,
People: the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.
Pastor: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
People: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
Pastor: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;
People: make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

HYMN OF PREPARATION "Prepare the Royal Highway"

LSB 343 v. 1, 4



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!
His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
So let your praise be sound - ing For kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Refrain
Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Having heard the hopeful message of Christ's coming in the hymn, may we approach the Father, asking for His forgiveness that our hearts might be prepared.

People: For Jesus said, "Come to Me all you who are weary and weighed down, and I will give you rest."

Pastor: O merciful God,

People: our celebration of holidays and festivals often reflects our sinful nature. We think about the wrong things, and sin against You by what we say and do, and by what we fail to do. Forgive us our sins, for Jesus' sake, and enable us by the Holy Spirit to sin no more.

Pastor: God hears your confession and knows your struggle. That is why He sent His only begotten Son into the world to bring forgiveness. This is the true Christmas gift that God shares with us, and we must share with one another. God, in Christ Jesus grants us His joy and peace. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of the Word I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: ♪ Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lord Jesus, although you are the king of the universe, you chose to be born in a humble stable.

People: Help us, Lord, to keep you on the throne of our hearts.

Pastor: Too often we get caught up in the worries of the world. Too often we look only to earthly kings, like Augustus and Herod, for help.

People: Help us, Lord, to keep you on the throne of our hearts.

Pastor: Lord Jesus, thank you for becoming one of us so that you could take care of our greatest need: the need for forgiveness of sins.

People: Help us, Lord, to keep you on the throne of our hearts.

Pastor: Enable us to prepare for Your coming with joyous anticipation. Send us now Your Holy Spirit that we may always say, "You are my King and my Savior." We pray in Your holy name.

People: ♪ Amen.

THE FIRST READING

Luke 2:1-7

(Caesar's Decree Brings the Holy Family Home)

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

♪ **Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

THE SECOND READING

Matthew 2:1-23

(King Herod encounters the News of a Savior)

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

♪ **O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and

frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

**♪ O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, Who ord'rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show, And teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

¹³Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

**♪ O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the Law In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

**♪ O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree, Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save, And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

♪ **O come, Thou Key of David, come, And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

HOMILY

*Rev. Peter Nickel, Cathedral Pastor
Historic Trinity Lutheran Church*

GATHERING OF OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Hannah's Song: 1 Samuel 2

(Hannah mingled tears with her prayers; she considered the mercy of our God, who knows the troubled soul. God gives us leave, in prayer, not only to ask good things in general, but to mention that special good thing we most need and desire. She spoke softly, none could hear her. Prayer is the heart's ease to a gracious soul.)

Pastor: My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the LORD my horn is lifted high.

People: **There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.**

Pastor: The bows of the warriors are broken, but those who stumbled are armed with strength.

People: **The Lord brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up.**

Pastor: The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts.

People: **He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor.**

Pastor: For the foundations of the earth are the LORD's; upon them he has set the world.

People: **He will guard the feet of his saints, but the wicked will be silenced in darkness.**

Pastor: It is not by strength that one prevails;

People: **those who oppose the Lord will be shattered.**

Pastor: He will thunder against them from heaven; the Lord will judge the ends of the earth.

People: **He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.**

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.**

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Be patient, then, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.

People: **You, too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.** *James 5:7-8*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: **Amen. Blessed are those who wait for Him! Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

LSB 357 v. 6-7

**♪ O come, Thou Dayspring from on high, And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**