

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Advent 4 - December 20, 2020

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #23 - "Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel"

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

**Oh, come, O Root of Jesse, free
Your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save,
And bring them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!**

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

**Oh, come, O 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 you, O Israel!**

Confession of Sins:

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!

P: Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

First Lesson: 2 Samuel 7:8-16

You are also to say the following to my servant David. This is what the Lord of Armies says. I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel. I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your reputation great, like that of the great ones on the earth. I will set up a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them there. They will dwell there, and they will not be disturbed again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning and ever since the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord also declares to you that the Lord himself will make a house for you. When your days are complete and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your seed, who will come from your own body. I will establish his kingdom. He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will discipline him with a rod used by men and with blows of the sons of men. My faithful mercy will not depart from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed to make room for you. Your house will stand firm, and your kingdom will endure forever before you. Your throne will be established forever. (EHV)

Psalm 89:

Refrain: At the works of your hands, O Lord, I lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

**I will wing of the LORD's great love for'ever;
I will make your faithfulness known through all gener'ations.**

**I will declare that your love stands firm for'ever,
That you established your faithfulness in heav'en itself.**

**The heavens praise your won'ders, O LORD,
Your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the 'holy ones.**

**Refrain: At the works of your hands, O Lord, I lift up my voice in song; I
sing for joy.**

**O LORD God Almighty, who 'is like you?
You are mighty, O LORD, and your faithfulness sur'rounds you.**

**Blessed are those who have learned to ac'claim you,
Who walk in the light of your pres'ence, O LORD.**

**They rejoice in your name 'all day long;
They exult in your 'righteousness.**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son
And to the Holy 'Spirit,
As it was in the be'ginning,
Is now, and will be forever. 'Amen.**

**Refrain: At the works of your hands, O Lord, I lift up my voice in song; I
sing for joy.**

Second Lesson: Romans 16:25-27

Now to him who is able to strengthen you - according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was veiled in silence for long ages past, but now has been revealed through the prophetic Scriptures and made known to all the Gentiles, in keeping with the command of the eternal God, resulting in the obedience of faith - to God, who alone is wise, be glory forever through Jesus Christ. Amen. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel. Alleluia.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women." But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God. Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end." Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Listen, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age even though she was called barren, and this is her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible for God." Then Mary said, "See, I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. (EHV)

The Apostles' Creed:

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

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

Hymn #24 - *"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"*

**The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he to meek and lowly Mary,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!**

**“I come from heav’n to tell the Lord’s decree:
A blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
“Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!**

**Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
“To me be as it pleases God,” she said.
“My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name.”
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!**

**Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
“Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!**

**The Sermon: 2 Samuel 7:8-16
 “God’s Great Power And Promises”**

Our text today has what we might call a humble **beginning**. In the verses which precede it we read, *“It happened that when the king (David) was living in his palace, and when the Lord had given him rest from his enemies all around, the king said to Nathan the prophet, ‘Look, I live in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God sits under tent curtains.’”* Somehow, after all the things which God had done for David, it just didn’t seem **right** that God should have to live in a **tent**. So, David decided to build a **house** for God - a **temple**. Actually, it seems like a pretty nice gesture on David’s part. The only **problem** was that David hadn’t bothered to ask **God** if He **wanted** him to build a house for the LORD. And as it turns **out**, He **didn’t**. That’s what makes the **beginning** of our text **humble**. However, the **end** of our text offers us quite a **contrast**. There we see **God’s Great Power And Promises**. God **promises** to use His great **power** to build a house - both for **David**, as well as for **all** of Israel - a house which will endure **forever**.

Just like our text, David **himself** had humble **beginnings**. He was the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse. With seven older brothers in the family, you can **imagine** some of the problems he faced. David wasn’t given much **consideration** in the family - after all, he was just the “**baby**” of the family. Why, when Samuel came to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be the next **king**, at first Jesse didn’t even bring David out. But after the LORD had rejected all seven of Jesse’s **other** sons, Samuel asked if he had any **more**. Obviously, Samuel knew that God wouldn’t have **sent** him there on a wild goose chase. Almost as an

afterthought Jesse said, “*There is still the **youngest**, but he is tending the sheep.*” Have you ever found yourself **ignoring** the youngest child in your family? Have you ever heard them being teased or ridiculed because they’re not **big** enough, or **old** enough, or **smart** enough to do the same things as their older brothers and sisters? Well, **watch out!** Just like David, they may be destined for some **great things** in the future. Jesse figured that David wasn’t the **oldest**, he wasn’t the **strongest**, he wasn’t the **tallest**, and he probably wasn’t the **smartest** of his children. So obviously, **he** couldn’t be the one whom God had **chosen**. But how **wrong** Jesse was - and **Samuel** too! If it hadn’t been for the guidance of the LORD, **Samuel** would have chosen any **number** of David’s **brothers** to succeed King Saul. But the LORD told Samuel, “*The **LORD** does not look at things the way **man** does. For **man** looks at the **outward** appearance, but the **LORD** looks at the **heart**.*” So, Samuel anointed **David** - **God’s** choice - to be the next king.

Such were the humble **beginnings** of David. You know, sometimes it’s good to be reminded of **our** humble beginnings too. As **adults**, things haven’t always been as **good** for us as they are right now. Perhaps as a child **you** were the little one in the family. Perhaps **you** were beat up by the neighborhood bully. Perhaps **you** struggled with your studies in school. Perhaps **you** didn’t have any idea about what you wanted to **be** when you grew up. It’s good for us to be **reminded** of our humble beginnings from time to time, in order that we may be more **understanding** of those who are **currently** going through such problems, and so we may always remain properly **humble** and **thankful**.

So in our text, the LORD reminded **David** that He had been with him **throughout** his life. Listen again to the words which Nathan the prophet was to speak to David. “*This is what the Lord of Armies says. **I** took you from the **pasture**, from **following** sheep, to be **ruler** over my people, over Israel. **I** have been with you **wherever** you went. **I** have cut off all your **enemies** from before you. **I** will make your reputation **great**, like that of the **great ones** on the earth.*”

Listening to those words might have **irked** David a bit. After all, wasn’t he a pretty good **king**? Hadn’t he **worked** pretty hard on behalf of God’s people? Didn’t **he** deserve a little **credit**? David had become renowned for his ability to **rule**, for his great **courage**, and for his **military** achievements - not only in **Israel**, but among all the **surrounding** nations as well. Even in his own day, David was spoken of more **often**, and in more **glowing terms**, than any of the other great men of his time. And later in history, people would look back on the rule of King David (and his son, Solomon) as the **Golden Age** of Israel. Yet, the LORD seemed to be **passing by** all of those accomplishments.

However, if David was completely **honest** with himself, it wouldn't take much soul searching to come to the conclusion that the LORD was absolutely **right** in His assessment of the situation. Looking back on his life, David would certainly have seen the many times that his **own** wisdom and his **own** choices had only created **more problems** for him. And that's where David would have been greatly **comforted** by the words of Nathan. After all, even when David had made a total **mess** of his life, it was still the LORD Himself who was obviously in **control** - carefully **guiding**, and sometimes **redirecting** the events of David's rule. As an **individual**, none of David's "accomplishments" would have come about at **all**, if it had not been for the gracious and loving hand of the **LORD**.

In much the same way, the LORD also made some great **promises** regarding the entire **nation** of Israel. He said, "*I will set up a place for my people Israel, and I will **plant** them there. They will **dwell** there, and they will not be **disturbed** again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning and ever since the day I appointed **judges** over my people Israel. I will give you **rest** from all your enemies.*" The things which the LORD had done for **David**, He had done for the sake of **all** Israel. Two things in this promise seem to stand out in bold relief. First of all, God promised that His people would have a place to **dwell** - a **home of their own**. And secondly, He promised that they would no longer be **disturbed** in that home.

What would that **mean** to Israel? Well, speaking to the **first** part, just ask any young married couple, currently **renting** an apartment, what it would mean for **them** to have their own **place** - a **home of their own** - and they will quickly tell you how **important** it is - and how **wonderful** it would be. Many couples, young and old alike, scrimp and save to make that initial down-payment on a house. Then they **continue** to spend a goodly portion of their income each month, in order to **keep** that dream of a **home** for themselves. There's really nothing quite like a home of your **own** - a place where you can kick off your shoes and relax - a place which you can change, or remodel, or update as **you** see fit. Nobody will tell you that you're being too noisy, or that you can't drive a nail into the wall to hang up a picture, or paint, or put up wallpaper, or whatever **else** you might have in mind. It's **your place** - a home of your **own** - to **enjoy** in your own way.

Of course, those of us who **are** homeowners can easily tell everybody **else** that having a place of your **own** isn't all **roses** either. There are the **mortgage payments**, the **property taxes**, the constant **repairs** and **updates**, and even the occasional disputes with your **neighbors**. But, God had taken care of **all** those

things for the Israelites - giving them the assurance of **stability** - guaranteeing that they would no longer be **disturbed**.

The Israelites had never really **had** such a place in the past. From the time of Abram, they had been a **nomadic** people - **wandering** from place to place - **searching** for areas where grazing land was plentiful, and food and water were abundant. God came to Abram and told him to **leave** his father, his relatives, and his false gods, and that He would **show** him such a place - a land flowing with milk and honey. Abram didn't waste any time. He **left**. Abram **wanted** a home of his own.

But at the time of our **text**, the Israelites **had** their home. They **had** their land flowing with milk and honey. They **had** their powerful ruler in King David. They **had** stability, peace, and prosperity. What **more** could they possibly desire? What **more** could God possibly deliver? The answer lies in the final words of our text. *"Your house will stand **firm**, and your kingdom will endure **forever** before you. Your throne will be established **forever**."* The LORD had done great things for David and the Israelites. But while the Golden Age of Israel under David and Solomon would come to an **end**, God's **promises** would **not** come to an end. The kingdom which God would establish **through** David, would be an **everlasting** kingdom. And that promise was **fulfilled**, through **Jesus Christ**, great David's **greater** son.

Dear friends, this week we celebrate the **birth** of that son - **God's Son** - a birth which would qualify as a **humble beginning** by **anyone's** standards. Yet, as we celebrate Jesus' humble **birth**, we must always remember that it is not the **beginning** which really matters - it's the **end**. **God's Great Power And Promises** are ours today. Through **faith** in His Son, God has provided **us** with a **place of our own** - an **eternal** dwelling place with Him in heaven - a place where we will be **undisturbed** by the enemies which currently assail us. May God grant us **all** that blessed end - an end which He has **promised** to all those who believe in **Him**.
Amen.

Prayers:

O Jesus, Word of God made flesh, **through** whom the world was formed, and by whose **Word** all things are upheld, we stand in humble awe and reverence before the great mystery of Your **incarnation**. Our reason cannot **comprehend** how **You**, the Almighty Son of God - our Creator and Preserver - could be **born** on earth, and **live** here as our flesh-and-blood Brother. You are both **God and man**. But what we cannot understand with our **minds**, You have graciously enabled our

hearts to accept by **faith**. We thank and praise You that through the Holy Spirit You have directed our hearts to bow in faith before You. You are indeed our God who was made flesh, our Sin-bearer, our Substitute, our Savior from sin; our Righteousness, Hope, Joy, and Peace.

O Savior of the world, send the Holy Spirit to **keep** us in true repentance, so that we **continue** to confess our sinfulness and unworthiness, and trust the sacrifice **You** made on the cross to **save** us. Create faith in **every** heart through the Gospel, so that **every** sinner may find in You **forgiveness** for his sins, and eternal **rest** and **salvation** for his soul. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, empowering us to testify to others, that they too have been ransomed by Your blood.

With the Spirit directing and controlling our lives, bless our efforts to **overcome** sin and to live **righteously** in this evil world. Where we have **failed** in doing good, where we have **lacked** love for our brother, where we have **disobeyed** God and sinned, assure us of Your **forgiveness** - full and free.

Lord, **increase** our faith so that with Your help we will be able to chase our **worries** away; cast out all our **doubts**, subdue every **sinful desire** in us, and change our gloom and depression into hope and joy. And finally, take us safely to Yourself in heaven, where we will gladly sing our hosannas to You through endless ages. We ask all these things knowing that as our loving Lord and Savior, You **can** and **will** hear and answer us. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (sung to "Away in a Manger")

**Our Father in heaven all praise to Your name!
Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same
By mortals and angels. Come, Lord reign alone;
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In times of temptation, to lead us; be near.
From evil deliver Your children most dear.**

**For Yours is the kingdom, o'er all things You reign.
And Yours is the power; all things You maintain.
To You be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

Hymn #35 - "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

**Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.**

**Oh, that birth forever blessed
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face
Evermore and evermore.**

**This is he whom heav'n-taught singers
Sang of old with one accord;
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word.
Now he shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.**

**Let the heights of heav'n adore him,
Angel hosts his praises sing,
Pow'rs, dominions bow before him
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.**

**Christ, to you, with God the Father,
And the Spirit ceaselessly
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion**

**And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. 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.

The Blessing:

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Hymn #15 - *“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”*

**Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding;
“Christ is near,” we hear it say.
“Cast away the works of darkness;
You are children of the day.”**

**Lo, the Lamb, so long-expected,
Comes with pardon down from heav’n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all, to be forgiv’n,**

**That, when next he comes with glory
And the world is wrapped in fear,
He may shield us with his mercy
And with words of love draw near.**

**Honor, glory, might, dominion
To the Father and the Son
With the everlasting Spirit
While eternal ages run!**