



12/4 MIDWEEK ADVENT-1 WORSHIP 4:30pm. INVOCATION (Please rise.)

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son ✕, and of the Holy Spirit. C: Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS *P: Dearly beloved! We have come together in the presence of God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at His hand, to set forth His most worthy praise, to hear His holy Word, and to ask for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and salvation. O come, let us worship Him! Let us kneel and bow down before Him. Let us confess our sins with penitent hearts, and obtain forgiveness by His infinite grace and mercy.*

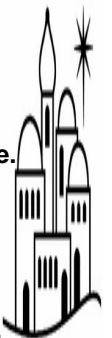
C: Almighty and most merciful Father, we have strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the devices and desires of our hearts. We have offended against Your holy Law. We have done those things which we should not have done, and we have not done those things which we should have done. Have mercy on us, O Lord! Spare us and restore us, according to the promises You have declared to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. For His sake grant that we may live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of Your holy Name.

THE ABSOLUTION

P: The almighty and merciful Lord has granted us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins, grace for true repentance and amendment of life, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

OPENING HYMN: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" ELH #137 (4v) ST. LOUIS

1. O little town of Bethlehem, How still we- see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent- stars go by;
Yet in thy darkness shineth The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, And gather-ed all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of- wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God, the King, And peace to men on earth.
3. How silently, how silently, The wondrous- Gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings- of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to- us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in- us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell:
Oh, come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!



O little town of Bethlehem

The VERSICLES

ELH, p.120

P: ♪ O Lord, open my lips. C: ♪ And my mouth will show forth Your praise.

P: ♪ Make haste, O God, to deliver me. C: ♪ Make haste to help me, O Lord.

those who fear him in ev'ry generation.

He has shown the strength of His Arm; He has scattered the

proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty

from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich

he has sent away empty. He has come to the

help of His servant Israel, for He has remembered His

promise of mercy, the promise made to our fathers,

to Abraham, and to His children forever. Amen

The GLORIA PATRI C: ♪ 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, for-ever-more. - A-men.

LECTION: SCRIPTURE LESSONS for ADVENT-1 "*JESUS OF BETHLEHEM*"

OLD TESTAMENT Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you...

GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-6 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea...

RESPONSORY P: ♪ O Lord, have mercy upon us. C: ♪ Thanks be to You, O Lord!

HYMN: "*O How Shall I Receive Thee*" ELH #94 Sing verses 1,2&10

1. O how shall I receive Thee, - How welcome Thee aright?
All nations long to greet Thee, - My Hope, my heart's Delight!
O Jesus, Jesus, set Thee, - Thy lamp within my breast
And by its guidance let me - Know what doth please Thee best.
2. Thy Zion strews before Thee - Green boughs and fairest palms,
And I, too, will adore Thee - With sweetest songs and psalms.
My heart shall bloom forever - For Thee with praises new
And from Thy name shall never - Withhold the honor due. ...
10. He comes to judge the nations, - A terror to His foes,
A Light of consolations - And blessed Hope to those
Who love the Lord's appearing. - O glorious Sun, now come,
Send forth Thy beams so cheering, - An guide us safely home.

THIRD HYMN "*What Child Is This?*" ELH #145 (3 verses) GREENSLEEVES

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest, - On Mary's lap lay sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, - Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him love, - The Babe, the son of Mary.
2. Why lies he in such mean estate - Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here - The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, - The Cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made Flesh, - The Babe, the son of Mary.
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings, - Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, - The Virgin sings her lullaby:
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, - The Babe, the son of Mary.

The VERSICLE P: ♪ Let my prayers rise before you as incense:

C: ♪ And the lifting up of my hands - As the ev'ning sacrifice.

The MAGNIFICAT (Song of Mary) words and music at end of bulletin →

KYRIE ELEISON (Lord Have Mercy) C: ♪ Lord, have mercy upon us. -
Christ, have mercy upon us. - Lord, have mercy upon us.

The LORD'S PRAYER All pray together (music on p.125)

C: ♪ 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. A- -men.

The (Evening) COLLECT (Pastor prays, Congregation Amen) C: ♪ A- -men.

The BENEDICAMUS P: ♪ Let us bless the Lord. C: ♪ Thanks be to God.

The BENEDICTION P: ♪ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the love of God,
And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: ♪ A- -men.

CLOSING HYMN Now the Light Has Gone Away ELH #570 MÜDE BIN ICH

1. Now the light has gone away; - Father, listen while I pray,
Asking Thee to watch and keep - And to send me quiet sleep.
2. Jesus, Savior, wash away - All that has been wrong today;
Help me every day to be - Good and gentle, more like Thee.
3. Let my near and dear ones be - Always near and dear to Thee.
Oh, bring me and all I love - To Thy happy home above.
4. Now my evening praise I give; - Thou didst die that I might live.
All my blessings come from Thee; - Oh, how good Thou art to me!
5. Thou, my best and kindest Friend, - Thou wilt love me to the end.
Let me love Thee more and more, - Always better than before.

Silent Prayer (Candles out.) You may be seated.

FELLOWSHIP

♪ "Magnificat" (Song of Mary) ♪ Please sing along! ♪

C: ♪ My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; My spirit re-

joices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor

on his lowly servant. From this day all generations

will call me blessed. The Almighty has done great

things for me, and holy is His Name. He has mercy on

ADVENT-1 MIDWEEK "O HOW SHALL I RECEIVE THEE" 12.04.13 OS

Grace to you and Peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus.

***O how shall I receive Thee, - How welcome thee aright?
All nations long to greet Thee, - My hope, my heart's delight!
O Jesus, Jesus, set Thee - Thy lamp within my breast,
And by its guidance let me - Know what doth please Thee best.***

PRAYER Everlasting God, who, by the mouths of Your prophets and saints of old, proclaimed the advent of Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Desire of all nations, the Hope of Israel, the Redeemer of the world: Lead us to repent of all our sins, and so to humble ourselves that we may be prepared to receive Him with gladness and to join in singing: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! Amen.

Fellow redeemed: We grow busy these days, preparing for the celebration of Him who once came into this fallen world to lift and set us free from the accusation of sin and the crushing weight of eternal death. We are busy preparing for Christmas, to remember Jesus' birth.

Yet that is not all, for we are called to prepare too, for the coming of God's only-begotten Son when He returns to us in Glory. And this is the primary focus of Advent. We remember what God has done, but make no mistake about it, ours is not to be a gushy, sentimental focus. No, we are called to lift up our heads and with great hope and joy look to the wondrous things which are yet to be. That is what this hymn "O How Shall I Receive Thee" is all about, and that's what we are going to be talking about this Advent. How shall you meet Jesus, what preparations are fit for you to make? Here we are, not on the Lord's Day, but in the workaday Wednesday world, to consider what sort of things to do that we might have a glad meeting at Christ's returning, for soon, and have no doubt, you *will* see Jesus with your own eyes. Will you be ready, and rightly prepared?

As you look forward to seeing Jesus, you are to take a serious inventory of how it is with you. Aside from mere religious sentimentality, are you in fact finding that you are judging your own worth before God based on what you do? How's that working for you? In the cold light of day do you think that your good behavior and fine thoughts will stand a chance against the sin which always tears at you, infecting those thoughts, and corrupting the intentions and purity of your works? Put in business terms, do you suppose that you could stand an audit of all your thoughts, words, and deeds? Such a

prospect, that at the Last Day you are judged as by an accountant who opens the ledger of your whole life that all might see and inspect it and so come to a judgment about you surely is beyond frightening. Oh, the pietist or legalist may say 'Yes, but Jesus has been my co-pilot, He has lent what I have lacked and made up any difference in my life's balance sheet.' This is blasphemy, to suggest that the person and work of God, who lived in perfect obedience to the Law, and suffered death in your place should somehow be reduced to the position of your second, your copilot, your spiritual handyman. And I dread to think what shall befall the man who would stand before the Judgment Seat of Almighty God and speak such drivel.

No, this is not for you. Your kind thoughts and words, and your good works too, have not merited you a thing toward your eternal salvation and you know it. Rather, these godly behaviors have been the result, and not the cause nor contributions toward your standing in the eyes of the Almighty. You have been made mindful to be good, and have desired to do good as the result of your justification before God, for it is God Himself, the Holy Spirit, working through His Word and the Means of Grace to inspire you and sustain your intentions and works which are pleasing to Him, and you do not for an instant count any of that as your own in any case. For Christ Jesus, God in flesh, has given all that is demanded for your justification, and you stand before God now and on the Last Day too, in His Grace, and not your own work.

So to answer the question posed by the first stanza "O how shall I receive Thee, How welcome thee aright?" In every way, shape, manner and form, not only with high theological delight, but in the down to business manner of the everyday you recognize and delight in the fact that you shall receive and welcome Jesus in His returning aright already in Jesus, that is, in His Grace, in His mercy, in His everlasting righteousness for you. You stand before Jesus and welcome His returning in Jesus, and your life is from Him and to Him and ever and always in Him, His Holiness is your own, and all your good works are a response and joy which results from this everyday divine reality.

How then shall you receive Jesus? As the one for whom He gave His life. How shall you then welcome Jesus aright? As the very one whom He has forgiven, restored, and in whom He delights. You are in Christ Jesus. Your sin is no more. You stand in His sight in His Grace, and claim no other. ***IJ'N, Amen.***

SDG