



I. The Service of Vespers ELH p.120



12/17 MIDWEEK ADVENT-3 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: "Behold, A Branch Is Growing" ELH #121 5 verses

1. Behold a Branch is growing - Of loveliest form and grace,
As prophets sung, fore-knowing; - It springs from Jesse's race
And bears one little Flow'r
In midst of coldest winter, - At deepest midnight hour.

2. Isaiah hath foretold It - In words of promise sure,
And Mary's arms enfold It, - A Virgin meek and pure.
Through God's eternal will
This Child to her is given - At midnight calm and still.

3. The shepherds heard the story, - Proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of Glory, - Was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped
And in the manger found Him, - As angel heralds said.

4. This Flow'r, whose fragrance tender - With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor - The darkness everywhere.
True Man, yet very God;
From sin and death He saves us - And lightens every load.

5. O Savior, Child of Mary, - Who felt our human woe;
Savior, King of Glory. - Who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray.
To the bright courts of heaven - And to the endless day.

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 VERSICLES

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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.

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-ev-er-more. - A-men. Al-le-lu—ia!

LECTION: SCRIPTURE LESSONS for ADVENT-1W *“JESUS IS OUR ELISHA.”*

OLD TESTAMENT 2 Kings 13.20-21 Elisha's (dead) body is touched.

NEW TESTAMENT Mark 6:9-11 Jesus is touched.

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

HYMN: *“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”* ELH 123, vv.1-5 M. Luther

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| 1) "From Heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to every home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing: | 2) "To you this night is born a Child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child, of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all the earth. |
| 3) Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee. | 4) Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto us His Son hath given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth. |

- 5) "These are the tokens ye shall mark:
The swaddling-clothes and manger dark;
There ye shall find the Infant laid
By Whom the heavens and earth were made."

For all God's sons securing - Their heritage in heaven.

THIRD HYMN *“Ah, dearest Jesus holy Child”* ELH 123, vv.13-15. Luther

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| 13) Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee. | 14) My heart for very joy doth leap,
My lips no more can silence keep;
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradle-song: |
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- 15) Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto us His Son hath given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.



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 (chant)pray together (chant tone 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 *Abide With Me* ELH #561 Sing verses 1, 5, 6 EVENTIDE

1. Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide; The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!
5. Thou on my head in every youth didst smile, And though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee. On to the close, O Lord, abide with me.
6. I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour; What but Thy grace can foil the Tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be? Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!

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-3 MIDWEEK “JESUS IS OUR ELISHA, PART 3” 12.17.14 OS

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 Who comes in the Name of the Lord! Amen.

Text: (Wk1) **2 Kings 5.9-14;** (Wk2) **2 Kings 6.1-7;** (Wk3) **2 Kings 13.20-21**

OVERALL THEME: **JESUS IS OUR ELISHA**

- I. Jesus **Brings Cleansing for All Our Sins** (midWeek 1)
- II. **Jesus Recovers What Was Lost Through Water** (midWeek 2)
- III. **Jesus Revives our Souls When We Touch Him in His Death (TODAY!)**

Fellow redeemed: Long ago, during a time of famine, a certain man came with twenty loaves of barley bread to Elisha the man of God, 2 Kings 4. Elisha looked out at a crowd of 100 people in front of him. He said: “Give it to the people to eat.” The servant asked: “How can I set this before 100 men?” There would never be enough. It will run out, and the people will go hungry.

We’re people living in a land of famine, too... even if we have bread for the body, and food to spare; even if we had money enough to finance the Christmas of our dreams without going into debt. There’s nothing of substance for us to live on from this world. Even if we’re filthy rich and gorgeous, we are still sinful and dying; still worldly, and this world is passing away. There’s poison everywhere, which looks good and sweet, but it does not fill or satisfy. It makes a person sick to death to try and live on it. Nevertheless we’re drawn: to riches, cares, pleasures; if not those things, then pride because we’re above it. You can’t live on that, either. We need food for our hearts, real substance for our souls, like a loaf of barley bread would be for the body.

Elisha took his plain barley loaves and said again: “Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the Lord says: ‘They will eat and have some left over.’” Just as God said in His Word from Elisha’s mouth, there was food to spare. What about us? Who will come and feed us, not only with food for our bellies, but food that fills and refreshes and sustains us for eternal life?

Jesus is our Elisha. Jesus Himself is Bread for our souls, and **He Revives Us When We Touch Him in His Death.** (<-Part 3)

Elisha himself finally grew old, and got sick. Elisha died, and they buried him, 2 Kings 13. Then in the springtime, Moabite raiders poured into the land. During that time, another man died. They were going to bury him, too. But just at that time, they saw a band of these

enemy foreign raiders. When they saw them, they decided quickly to put this dead man into the tomb of Elisha, with Elisha’s bones.

We’re surrounded by enemies, too. Not just those who would take from us our money and possessions, our houses or our properties. We’re surrounded by the devil and his angels; enemies that we can’t see, who want to steal from us our heavenly treasures: to snatch away the word of Jesus our Elisha from us; to lead us away from the Promises attached to our Baptism in Jesus’ name; to snuff out the faith that God grants in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We too would be as good as dead against such a host of raiders.

Quickly as they could, they lowered this dead man down into Elisha’s tomb. When that dead body touched Elisha’s bones, suddenly it came to life. From out of death, the man was alive again. What in the world could that mean? But in his death, God made Elisha’s bones a sermon for us, about what our true Elisha would come and do for us through His atoning, sacrificial death and burial.

Jesus is our Elisha, who died not of any sickness of His own - **Jesus carried our sin and guilt to the Cross.** He put it all to death in Himself. In Him our sins are dead, and in Him there is life for the world. There’s life for us, who gather around Him, our bread from heaven, and touch His life-giving death in our celebration of Holy Communion. Because He brought life out of His death, we find bread here that quickens, that saves, that grants us life not just for here and now, but life that will never run out or fail us.

Even though we die, **we die in the sure hope of the Resurrection to Everlasting Life.** We live even though we die, on the strength of what He gives us at His Table.

In that wonderful meal, Jesus says: *“This is My Body, given for you.” “This cup is the New Testament in My Blood.”* And He gives us to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of all our sins, and we live - delivered from our sins; quickened to new life that’s not of this world; kept safe for heaven against the wiles of the devil and all our enemies bent on our destruction.

What a wonderful gift to celebrate at Christmas! It’s not the cookies and the pastries, it’s not the gifts and the trimmings, it’s not the big meals or Christmas bonuses or vacation time that crown our holiday. On Holy Christmas Day, as God wills, we’ll gather here and celebrate Jesus coming to US, Body and Blood and all, and receive as our gift the Life that’s in Him! God grant it, for Jesus sake! **I’N, Amen.**

SDG