

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

We are bold to ask You, O God, that as Your faithful people in every age have so strongly believed in Your Word, that You would make us over into people who unwaveringly believe in the work of Your Son and that we would be found worthy to obtain Your heavenly promise. As Your people of the Old Covenant looked with longing for the coming of the Messiah, the Deliverer, grant that we may eagerly and joyfully welcome Him, Jesus our Lord, into our hearts by faith, and be delivered by His might from the power of sin, death and the devil.

Bless all who are gathered here in Your house this day and sanctify us by Your Word. To those among us who are afflicted in any way, those who are in sorrow, those who are enduring trials, those who may be in any necessity of body or spirit, grant such strength comfort, and understanding that they, loving You above all else, may know the joy of Your abiding presence.

Keep us watchful for the second coming of our Savior, even while we prepare to celebrate the anniversary of His first Advent. All this we ask in the name of He Who came for our deliverance, Jesus Christ our Lord.

ADVENT ONE

Chant Tone



Introit

Let not my enemies exult over me.

Behold, your King is com | ing to you,*
righteous and having sal — vation.

(Antiphon, Zechariah 9:9b; alternative Psalm 25:1-3)

Collect of the Day

Gradual

We bless you from the house | of the Lord.

(Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26 alternative)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: O Lord, our Father and Redeemer, from everlasting You are God. With joy and thanksgiving we acknowledge that we are indebted to You for our existence. Without You we cannot live, and apart from You life has no meaning. Bend down Your ear and listen as we pray. For permitting us to enter another church year, for finding us and leading us like a shepherd through Your Word, for keeping Your promise and sending us a Savior, we praise Your Holy name. Keep us every watchful for the second Advent. Even as we prepare the festivities for celebrating our Lord's birth, grant us true spiritual insight that we may recognize Him as David's Son and David's Lord. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

ADVENT IS ONE OF THE MOST COMPLICATED CELEBRATIONS OF THE CHURCH YEAR. We are asked to look in two directions at the same time. While we prepare for our celebration of the Christmas Event, (the First Advent of Christ in the flesh,) we are looking forward to the end of the world, (the Second Advent of Christ as Judge and King.) The Sundays of Advent make no pretense of this twice looking. Today, for Advent One, we are only concentrating on the end time, the Second Advent of our King. We leave the schizophrenic looking in two directions at the same time to begin next week. As we rush through Advent on our way to Christmas it is important to stop and ask: "What are some of the ways that we forget the Second Advent?" "What is the point of celebrating the birthday of Christ?" The answer to all of these questions is contained in our faith.

THEME OF THE DAY:

The Advent of our King

NOTE:

In 1968 the Gospel lesson assigned to Advent One was Mark 13:24-27 (with Mark 11:1-10 as the alternative.) Mark 13:24-27 was also assigned to the "Last Sunday in the Church Year." This allowed us to begin the year and end the year with the same lesson (which is an interesting thing to do as Advent is more a connection to the end times than to Christmas.) In 2006 we reversed the order. As Mark 11:1-10 is more aligned with the historic lesson for this day (which is the "Palm Sunday" event read from Matthew 21:1-9) I have chosen to comment on Mark 11 and use the "Advent" theme.

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Zechariah 9:9b alternative;) Psalm 25:1-3
We use the middle of verse 9 from Zechariah. This is the prophecy of Palm Sunday, the triumphant entry. It is a part of Christ's first Advent when He showed Himself to be the Suffering Servant; the Christ. Psalm 25 is a song, about David's devotion and affection toward God.

COLLECT

We ask Jesus to come. We know that the first Advent is over. We ask Him to come into our lives in the spiritual sense, and in His second coming. The result we expect is that we will be saved by Him to life eternal.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Isaiah 64:1-9

We are shown the great love of God. Great kindness and mercy come from God to His people. We praise Him for the many things He has done for our good. God is our redeemer. We rebelled against our Redeemer. The people at the time of Isaiah were crying out for the God Who was their Exodus, without remembering the complaining that went on during that great event. At the end, after describing our total sinfulness, Isaiah reminds us that God is our Father, He will rework us as a potter reworks clay into useful pots, the very existence of our life. God has done many things for us all of them bound up in the wonder of His Son. There are many sides to the first Advent of our King and there are many sides to the wonder of life in God.

GRADUAL—Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26 alternative

We add to our Introit with the beginning of verse 9, to further remind us of the Palm Sunday event. Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, was His Advent done in power, while also the servant riding on a donkey, rather than a war horse. Psalm 118 is a song of praise. We anticipate the coming Savior, Who will be met with excitement and praise.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 Corinthians 1:3-9

The theme of this section of Paul's letter is: "Watchfulness in grace." Paul indicated the timing of Christ's second coming is unknown. In this He was repeating the Words of Jesus. God will sustain His people in grace to that day. There are many sides to grace. Grace still stands even in the face of a trial. grace stands in the midst of conflict, grace stands in the midst of doctrinal differences. The wisdom of the Corinthians (and us) is Jesus. Jesus will keep us blameless to the end of the world.

GOSPEL LESSON—Mark 11:1-10

To show that he was not afraid of his enemies in Jerusalem, Jesus did not sneak into the city. He came in with power and glory. This can encourage