

Advent 4

December 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C)

The promised Messiah came into the world to create a new order; one that put an end to sin and separation from God. He was not what the world expected. The Son of God came as an infant, born of a human mother, wielding no weapons and continually acting in love. Jesus was the fulfillment of Micah’s prophecy of a shepherd ruler from the smallest tribe in Israel and his love was stronger than death.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Lesson: Micah 5:2–5a **He Will Be Their Peace**

From the smallest of the tribes of Israel will come forth a ruler. He will stand like a shepherd among his people and lead them to righteousness and salvation. This was the message of the prophet Micah to a nation that had been battered and bruised by her enemies. One is coming who is filled with the strength of the Lord God of Israel.

Psalm 80:1–7 **Stir Up Your Might and Save Us**

The psalmist once again asked, “How long will you be angry with us, Lord?” He recalled the many tears of the people who were subjected to the hands of their Assyrian enemies. Out of this lament came a cry for restoration and salvation.

Second Lesson: Hebrews 10:5–10 **A Second Order Established**

The sacrifices that were made in the Jewish temple year after year were ineffective against sin. The offering of bulls, goats, and other animals could not take away the sin of the people. Jesus came to establish a new order. He would be the one to fulfill God’s will. The sacrifice of Christ’s body changed everything for humanity.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 1:39–45 (46–46) **Mary’s Visit to Elizabeth**

The young pregnant mother, Mary, went to the hill country to visit her older cousin, Elizabeth who was miraculously pregnant with John the Baptist. As the two women greeted one another, the infant within Elizabeth’s womb leaped for joy. Elizabeth pronounced the younger woman, “Blessed among women,” and in faith named her the “mother of my Lord.” Both women were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Suggestions for the Day:

- Liturgical Color: Blue or Purple
- Use the Kyrie in the Season of Advent.
- Use the Nicene Creed during this time of waiting and watching for the return of Christ.
- Light the fourth candle on the Advent wreath. See the seasonal planning page for optional candle prayers.
- How do we help people see what the Holy Spirit looks like — in themselves and in others? Today we have the story of Mary and Elizabeth (the Visitation). Both women were filled with the Spirit and both exhibited great joy. Pointing this out might help some folks make an important connection.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Mary Was Betrothed	---	---	---	---	---	web
Prepare the Royal Highway	26	---	343	264	102	102
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	456	---	709	502	198	198
O Lord, How Shall I Meet You	23	---	334	241	100	100
Of the Father’s Love Begotten	42	---	384	295	120	120
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	481	---	711	789	205	205
Savior of the Nations, Come	28	---	332	263	97	97
Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel	34	---	357	257	103	103
Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers	25	---	515	244	99	99
Sent Forth by God’s Blessing	221	---	643	547	58	58

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles:
Cornerstone (CCLI#)
My Soul Magnifies the Lord (CCLI# 5601671)
Joy Has Dawned (CCLI# 4408246)
The Lion and the Lamb (CCLI# 7038281)
Breath of Heaven (CCLI# 1128784)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.