



2020 Advent Devotionals

The Third Week of Advent
December 13 - 19, 2020



Bless Be The King

1 Blest be the King whose coming is in the name of God!
For him let doors be opened, no hearts against him barred!
Not robed in royal splendor, in power and pomp, comes he;
but clad as are the poorest, such his humility!

2 Blest be the King whose coming is in the name of God!
By those who truly listen his voice is truly heard;
pity the proud and haughty, who have not learned to heed
the Christ who is the Promise, who has atonement made.

3 Blest be the King whose coming is in the name of God!
He only to the humble reveals the face of God.
All power is his, all glory! All things are in his hand,
all ages and all peoples, till time itself shall end!

4 Blest be the King whose coming is in the name of God!
He offers to the burdened the rest and grace they need.
Gentle is he and humble! And light his yoke shall be,
for he would have us bear it so he can make us free.

Hymnal 1982 #62

Sunday, December 13, 2020

Hymn #74 is often the Processional Hymn on the third Sunday of Advent, as we await the birth of Jesus, the coming of Christ. The same music is heard again on Palm Sunday but with different words. At that time, we sing Hymn #154 as we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Hearing the same music in both hymns, many emotions and memories come to me. This music helps transport me to the countless times I've been able to gather with you and with others for worship. As we offer praise and glory to God, these hymns become prayers.

And so it is that music offers me a connection. I have become increasingly more aware of connections; I even long for connections. And if I really look, listen, and pay attention, I discover them everywhere. That can be both wondrous and mind-boggling.

I could stop there. But as I pondered over this hymn, my thoughts kept returning to the last phrase of verse 3: "All things are in his hand, all ages and all peoples, till time itself shall end!"

Those words in this Advent hymn proclaim a connection we have, through Christ, to all living things, past, present, and future. And I ponder on, with grateful thanksgiving!

Kerry Hancock



There is a Voice in the Wilderness

1 There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places,
where the Lord our God may go!

2 O Zion, that bringest good tidings,
get thee up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their King.
Like the flowers of the field they perish,
like grass our works decay,
the power and pomp of nations
shall pass like a dream away;

3 but the word of our God endureth,
the arm of the Lord is strong;
he stands in the midst of nations,
and he will right the wrong.
He shall feed His flock like a shepherd,
the lambs he'll gently hold;
to pastures of peace he'll lead them,
and bring them safe to his fold.

Hymnal 1982 #68

Monday, December 14, 2020

Kim called us with disturbing news during our drive home from Maine. “There’s sewage all over the floor of your condo!” As I write these words, a team of cleaners, painters, and floor installers is cleaning up the mess so we can go home again.

James Lewis Milligan re-phrased the words of Isaiah 40:3-11 into our Advent hymn for today. Isaiah declared to Israel that God was going to send a clean-up team so that God could come home again. Each Advent we meet this preparer of the way as John the Baptist. Living in the wilderness, clothed in rough materials, he called the nation to give up her sinful ways and receive baptism.

When you hear the word “repent” do you have positive or negative thoughts? Do you get excited by the invitation to change your habits, values, and goals for your life? I know I don’t! Because we usually resist the idea of repenting, we miss Isaiah’s and the Baptist’s message. The bad news is that we are a mess. But if we will give our consent, God will make His home in our hearts so He can come home again.

Fr. Dave Scheider



Hark The Glad Sound

**1 Hark, the glad sound! the Savior comes,
the Savior promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.**

**2 He comes, the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.**

**3 He comes, the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure;
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.**

**4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
thy welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with thy beloved Name.**

Hymnal 1982 #67

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

“He comes, the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,”

Advent is such a hopeful time. We are longing for change and renewal even as the old year dies. This year there is more than the usual need to hope, There is brokenness and a tremendous need to bind and to heal, to find a cure both actually and metaphorically. We feel stressed and helpless. How can we cure our souls and bind our hearts? We can stop and reflect on this year and its turmoil. There are lessons to be learned from being separated and having to keep our distance. There are little moments to build upon and cherish. Each of us can find a reason for hope as we look toward the birth of the Prince of Peace. Each of us must have faith in ourselves and our communities to heal, to bind all of us together. Most of all, we have to find love in our hearts and minds that will guide us in our actions and thoughts in this season and always.

Georgie McAteer

The King Shall Come when Morning Dawns

1 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks;
when beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.

2 Not, as of old, a little child,
to bear, and fight, and die,
but crowned with glory like the sun
that lights the morning sky.

3 The King shall come when morning dawns
and earth's dark night is past;
O haste the rising of that morn,
the day that e'er shall last;

4 and let the endless bliss begin,
by weary saints foretold,
when right shall triumph over wrong,
and truth shall be extolled.

5 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light and beauty brings:
Hail, Christ the Lord! Thy people pray,
come quickly, King of kings.

Hymnal 1982 #54

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Our Hymn for today begins: “The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks; when beauty guilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes.” In this year of Covid-19 and all it has brought to bear, we long for distractions to take us away from the hardships and sorrows we’ve experienced. Christmas -the celebration of the first Advent of our Lord Jesus- seems a long time coming! But this hymn encourages us to look with equal joy to the Second Coming of our Lord, when he comes “crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morning sky”! These scriptures and this lovely hymn invite us to linger in the Light! Light DWELLS with God - Jesus IS the Light, and in Him there is NO DARKNESS! Let us take heart! Just as a star announced Jesus’ first arrival, the dawn and morning star point us to His Coming again! Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!

Pat Gorman

On Jordan's Bank

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings.

2 Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.

3 For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.

4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

5 All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore.

Hymnal 1982 #56

Thursday, December 17, 2020

“On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry” . . . this hymn was first written as a poem by Charles Coffin in the 1700’s. Beautiful in it’s simplicity yet words poignant in telling about Jesus. The story of the birth of Jesus is one that is filled with marvelous miracles. We sometimes take them for granted, especially as the year and burdens wear us away. Our liturgy reminds us and takes us back to that time to renew our lives. The Lord is nigh! For thou art our Salvation, Lord! The words bid us to prepare a place and take Him in. This Advent prepare and make a place for this mighty guest. Jesus came to set us free that we might be with Him forevermore.

O Come Lord Jesus!

Harriet Brodie

Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending

**1 Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.**

**2 Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.**

**3 Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, with what rapture,
with what rapture,
gaze we on those glorious scars!**

**4 Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.**

Hymnal 1982 #63

Friday, December 18, 2020

Usually when I think of Advent, I think of the preparation for the birth of Jesus. The fulfilment of sending the messiah foretold in Isaiah. Emmanuel!

Hymn number 58. Lo! He comes with clouds descending, While the tune is joyful, the lyrics reiterates Christ's return and sings of the rapture. The Song joyfully reminds us that he will come again. I feel the song is in Advent because it keeps us grounded. Why is Christ coming to the earth in the first place? This baby that we are preparing for is going to suffer for us. Let us have joy that he will come again because he has power over death.

I think my favorite verse is the last one. "Yea, amen! Let all adore thee, high on thine eternal throne, savior, take power and glory; claim the kingdom for thy own. Alleluia! Alleluia! Thou shalt reign, and thou alone". I love to praise God. Praising Jesus is always done with such positive feelings. It brings warmth and energy to my soul. To sing music of praise gives me comfort and peace knowing someone greater is there for me.

What does hymn 58 say to you? What touches you or strengthens your faith? What images come to your mind when you read, hear, or sing this hymn?

G.A. Whitehead



Creator of the Stars of Night

**1. Creator of the stars of the night,
your people's everlasting light.
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,
we pray you hear us when we call.**

**2. In sorrow that the ancient curse
should doom to death a universe,
you came, O Savior, to set free
your own to glorious liberty.**

**3. When this old world drew on toward night,
you came; but not in splendor bright,
not as a monarch, but the child
of Mary, blameless mother mild.**

**4. At your great Name, O Jesus now,
all knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
all things on earth if one accord,
like those in heaven, shall you Lord.**

**5. Come in your holy temple might, we pray,
redeem us for eternal day;
defend us while we dwell below
from all assaults of our dread foe.**

**6. To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
praise, honor, might, and glory be
from age to age eternally.**

Hymnal 1982 #66

Saturday, December 19, 2020

The hymn reminds us that Christ is the redeemer of us all. He came of humble birth not as a monarch. He is God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit, Three in One. When we sing this hymn we sing of praise, honor, might, and glory with bended knee.

This beautiful Advent hymn dates back to as early as the 6th century and was translated from Latin to English by John Mason Neale. Dr. Neale contributed to church music by writing many original hymns, including two volumes of Hymns for Children.

He was a gifted scholar and a master translator who had an “exquisite ear for music” (John Julian, A Dictionary of Hymnology). Dr. Neale translated dozens of medieval songs and introduced them to the English speaking world — “Good Christian Men, Rejoice ” and “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” were both translated by Neale.

After graduating from seminary at Cambridge, Neale went on to serve as a pastor for a short time. In the quiet retreat of East Grinstead, because of his poor health Dr. Neale spent the remainder of his comparatively short life, dividing his time between literary work and starting a sisterhood under the name of St. Margaret’s. He worked for the advancement of that great Church revival of which he was so able and courageous a champion.

Ami Hooper

The Song of Mary
Magnificat Luke 1:46-55

Week 1

Advent candle: Prophecy/Hope

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices 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.

Week 2

Advent candle: Bethlehem/Preparation

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

Week 3

Advent candle: Shepherd/Joy

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.

Week 4

Advent candle: Angel/Love

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.