Fourth Sunday in Advent
December 21, 2025

350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come

1 Come, Thou precious Ransom, come,
Only hope for sinful mortals!
Come, O Savior of the world!
Open are to Thee all portals.
Come, Thy beauty let us see;
Anxiously we wait for Thee.

2 Enter now my waiting heart,
Glorious King and Lord most holy.
Dwell in me and ne'er depart,
Though I am but poor and lowly.
Ah, what riches will be mine
When Thou art my guest divine!

3 My hosannas and my palms
Graciously receive, I pray Thee;
Evermore, as best I can,
Savior, I will homage pay Thee,
And in faith I will embrace,
Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.

4 Hail! Hosanna, David's Son!
Jesus, hear our supplication!
Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown,
Bring us blessing and salvation,
That forever we may sing:
Hail! Hosanna to our King.

Text: Johann Gottfried Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.
Text: Public domain

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**
P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**
P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Introit *Psalm 130:5–8; antiphon: Isaiah 64:1*

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence.
I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.
And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.
Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence.

Kyrie *LSB 152*

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
C **Amen.**

357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel *sts. 1, ref, 2, 4*

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear. Refrain

ref Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

2 O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things mightily;

To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go. Refrain

4 **O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,**
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.
Text: Public domain

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 7:10–17*

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.
Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
From the house of the Lord we bless you.

Epistle Reading *Romans 1:1–7*

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia and Verse *LSB 156*

C **Alleluia.**
Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

Holy Gospel Reading *Matthew 1:18–25*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

810 O God of God, O Light of Light

1 **O God of God, O Light of Light,**
O Prince of Peace and King of kings:
To you in heaven's glory bright
The song of praise forever rings.
To Him who sits upon the throne,
The Lamb once slain but raised again,
Be all the glory He has won,
All thanks and praise! Amen, amen.

2 **For deep in prophets' sacred page,**
And grand in poets' wingèd word,
Slowly in type, from age to age
The nations saw their coming Lord;
Till through the deep Judean night
Rang out the song, "Goodwill to men!"
Sung once by firstborn sons of light,
It echoes now, "Goodwill!" Amen.

3 **That life of truth, those deeds of love,**
That death so steeped in hate and scorn—
These all are past, and now above
He reigns, our King once crowned with thorn.
Lift up your heads, O mighty gates!
So sang that host beyond our ken.
Lift up your heads, your King awaits.
We lift them up. Amen, amen.

4 **Then raise to Christ a mighty song,**
And shout His name, His mercies tell!
Sing, heav'nly host, your praise prolong,
And all on earth, your anthem swell!
All hail, O Lamb for sinners slain!
Forever let the song ascend!
Worthy the Lamb, enthroned to reign,
All glory, pow'r! Amen, amen.

Text: John Julian, 1839–1913, alt.
Text: Public domain

Sermon "What Child Is This?" Romans 1:1-7

Nicene Creed

C **I believe in one God,**
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,

very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P …Lord, in your mercy:
C **Hear our prayer.**
P …through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C **Amen**

Offering

Offertory *LSB 159*

C **What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?**
I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord.
I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.
I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,
in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Preface *LSB 160*

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
P Lift up your hearts.
C **We lift them to the Lord.**
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**
P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus *LSB 161*

C **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:**
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Prayer of Thanksgiving *LSB 161*

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer *LSB 162*

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
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. Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✢ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✢ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pax Domini *LSB 163*

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C **Amen.**

Agnus Dei *LSB 163*

C **Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Distribution

Thank the Lord *LSB 164*

C **Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done.**
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name.
He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.
We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

Benediction *LSB 166*

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✢ give you peace.
C **Amen.**

343 Prepare the Royal Highway

1 **Prepare the royal highway;**
The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory
Foretold in sacred story: Refrain
ref **Hosanna to the Lord,**
For He fulfills God's Word!
2 **God's people, see Him coming:**
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! Refrain
3 **Then fling the gates wide open**
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him!
All nations, now adore Him! Refrain
4 **His is no earthly kingdom;**
It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness so abounding: Refrain

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt.
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