

**Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,**  
**ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY**

1<sup>st</sup> December    First Sunday in Advent

**HYMNS:**    2   19   6   840   334   4

THE LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

**M:** The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I shall raise up to David a righteous branch, a King who will reign and do what is just and right in the land.

**C:** **This is the name by which He will be called: the Lord our Righteousness.**

**Prayer:** **Lord, You let Your people wait for four thousand years while You were preparing the coming of their salvation. Send us Your Holy Spirit, that we may, through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, rightly prepare for His coming into our hearts, and for His final coming. Amen**

**INTROIT:**    Psalm 25:1-10

I am lifting up my soul to You, O LORD.

O my God, I trust in You; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies triumph over me!

Certainly, no one who waits in hope for You will be put to shame. Those who are unfaithful for no reason will be put to shame.

Make Your ways known to me, O LORD, teach me Your paths!

Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation!

I wait in hope for You all the day.

Remember, O LORD, Your compassionate and merciful deeds, because they have existed from eternity!

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my rebellious acts! According to Your mercy, remember me, for Your goodness' sake, O LORD.

The LORD is good and upright, therefore He teaches sinners in the way. He leads humble people in justice, and He teaches humble people His way.

All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth, for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.

**COLLECT:**    Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance: for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**READINGS:**    Jeremiah 33:14-16    The time of salvation is coming.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13    Holy and without fault when Jesus comes.

Luke 19:28-40    Blessed is the King!

### Jeremiah 33:14-16

<sup>14</sup> “Look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I shall fulfil the gracious promise that I have made to the family of Israel and to the family of Judah. <sup>15</sup> In those days and at that time I shall cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and He will put justice and righteousness into effect in the land. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which the city will be called: ‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’”

### 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

<sup>9</sup> For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy that we have in the presence of our God because of you? <sup>10</sup> We are most earnestly praying day and night that we may see your faces and supply what is lacking in your faith. <sup>11</sup> May our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you! <sup>12</sup> May the Lord make you grow in love and overflow with it for one another and for all people, just as we do to you, <sup>13</sup> that He may strengthen your hearts to be blameless and holy before our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones! Amen.

### Luke 19:28-40

<sup>28</sup> After Jesus had said this, He continued His way in front of them up to Jerusalem. <sup>29</sup> When He came near Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, as it was called, He sent two of His disciples. <sup>30</sup> He said, “Go into the village ahead of you! As you enter, you will find a colt tied up on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it! <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it!’”

<sup>32</sup> The men whom He had sent went and found it just as He had told them.

<sup>33</sup> While they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

<sup>34</sup> They said, “Because the Lord needs it.”

<sup>35</sup> They brought the colt to Jesus, put their garments on the colt and seated Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup> As He was riding along, people kept spreading their garments on the road. <sup>37</sup> As He was already coming near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully and loudly for all the miracles they had seen. <sup>38</sup> They said: “**Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord!** In heaven peace, and glory in the highest heavens!”

<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd told Him, “Teacher, order Your disciples to be quiet!”

<sup>40</sup> He answered them, “I tell you, if these keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

# BLESSED IS THE KING WHO IS COMING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!

## Sermon for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent 2024 - Luke 19:28-40

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is our Gospel read before, Luke 19:28-40:

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

As you can tell from the change in the colour of the paraments and the presence of the Advent wreath, as well as from one candle being lit on the Advent wreath, today is the First Sunday in Advent.

The traditional Gospel reading for the First Sunday in Advent is the account of Jesus entering Jerusalem to the acclaim of the crowds, as you just heard. But now you may be wondering, “*The triumphal entry into Jerusalem—isn’t that a reading for Palm Sunday? Why are we getting a Palm Sunday reading here in Advent?*” And well may you wonder. Yes, this Gospel reading is about something that occurred on Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week.

However, there is a reason why the account of Jesus entering Jerusalem has historically been placed at the beginning of the Advent season, and that is because Advent is all about the coming of our King. The word “Advent” even means “coming.” This season is about *preparing for the coming of our Lord:* His coming as prophesied of old; His coming in the flesh at Christmas; His coming as the humble King riding into Jerusalem; His coming among us now in Word and Sacrament; and Christ’s coming again on the Last Day as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Advent is the season of anticipating and welcoming the coming of our King, and this Palm Sunday reading does a fine job of helping us do just that. What the crowds in our text cry out is our theme for this morning: “**Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord!**”

Now, consider that the First Sunday in Advent is also the first Sunday of a brand-new church year, and the featured Gospel for this new church year that starts today is the Gospel, according to St. Luke. This reading from Luke 19 is a fitting introduction to how we shall hear Luke over the coming year. The Gospel of Luke opens and ends in Jerusalem. Indeed, you can see Luke as one long journey to Jerusalem. That is the focal point, what Christ will be doing there. Jesus will continue “**His way in front of them up to Jerusalem.**” That is where He will accomplish His mission of saving mankind. Today shows Jesus entering Jerusalem to do that through His sacrificial death and victorious resurrection for our salvation.

So, our reading today is most fitting both in terms of setting the tone for the season of Advent and as an entry into the year of St. Luke. But more than that, this text helps us anticipate and welcome the coming of our King, the King who comes in the name of the Lord.

Luke writes, **“Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord! In heaven peace, and glory in the highest heavens!”** Why were the crowds shouting precisely that statement of praise? Why would those words be on their mind? Well, a couple of reasons. One, these were Jewish pilgrims coming to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. It was a pilgrimage festival, and so many people were heading into town from all over the place. One of the appointed psalms to be sung at Passover time was Psalm 118, which says: *“Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you all from the house of the LORD”* (v.19). So, these crowds of disciples are basically quoting from that psalm and applying it to Jesus. They see Jesus as fulfilling this passage, that He is the one being prophesied, that He is the King who is coming in the name of the LORD.

There is a word for this promised King, and that is the word “Messiah.” The Messiah, the Anointed One, prophesied of old, who would be the great and mighty King, the strong Deliverer who would come and rescue His people and save them from all their enemies. The Messiah, the Christ, would be the King promised to King David that one of his descendants would sit on his throne and establish an everlasting kingdom of peace and blessing. So when the crowds shout, **“Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord!”** they acknowledge Jesus as that very Messiah.

Why? On what basis would they say that? Well, many of these Jewish pilgrims had come from Galilee, Jesus’ home turf, where they had witnessed the many mighty works of Jesus, works of blessing that befits the messianic signs: healing the sick, casting out demons, feeding the multitudes, even raising the dead. Who could do these things but the Messiah sent from heaven? They had heard with their ears the marvellous wisdom coming from Christ’s lips: preaching repentance and the coming of the kingdom of heaven in their midst, teaching the true meaning of God’s Law, cutting through the layers that the scribes and the Pharisees had laid upon it. They had heard Jesus forgive sins and seen His compassion and mercy in action. His divine authority in word and deed had marked Jesus out as the Messiah long promised, so now they welcomed Him as such.

**“Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord! In heaven peace, and glory in the highest heavens!”** Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Wow, that sounds a lot like what the angels sang at Jesus’ birth! *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people whom He favours!”* (Luke 2:14). Yes, Christ’s coming, both at His birth and here on His way to the cross—Christ’s coming establishes peace between heaven and earth, and thus gives all glory to God in the highest.

How so? Well, that peace was broken by our sins. Mankind had rebelled against God and turned against Him. Adam and Eve did it, and we do it too. We have broken the right relationship we originally had with God by not listening to His Word and by acting against it. You and I, each one of us, want to be our own god so that we can decide what is right and wrong. This is sin, the original sin that lurks inside each one of us and comes out in various acts of rebellion, sometimes subtle, sometimes blatant. This is sin, and it separates us from God, puts alienation and enmity between us—between us and God, first

of all, and secondly, between us and other people, since God would have us love and forgive one another and live in peace. But our own sin and selfishness disrupt that peace.

So Christ had to come to reconnect us to God, to reconcile us back to God. Jesus would be the One to reestablish that peace. He did it by bearing our sins in His body on the cross. Our sins are atoned for. Our rebellion is forgiven. Peace with God once more is made. Only Jesus, the Son of God in the flesh, could do this. Only His blood, shed on the cross, could be enough to win our forgiveness. He does it! And the gift is yours! *“Look! Your King is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious”* (Zech. 9:9).

This is a righteousness that puts us right with God. This is a salvation that saves us from death itself! Righteousness, peace, salvation—these are the gifts our King is bringing us today, and He will come again to wrap it all up. Everlasting life. A renewed creation, freed from all the damage that sin brought. Resurrected bodies, whole and sound, no longer subject to decay or disease or death. Perfect fellowship with all the saints who have ever lived, and we shall all be reunited. This is what is in store for each one of us, because of this King riding into Jerusalem. This is what we look forward to, when our King returns in glory.

So, how do we welcome this King? With the crowds of old, we shout our praise and cannot keep silent. **“As He was already coming near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully and loudly for all the miracles they had seen.”**<sup>38</sup> They said: **“Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord! In heaven peace, and glory in the highest heavens!”**

Dear friends, Christ is drawing near. Christmas is drawing near, and we rejoice knowing that the Son of God took on human flesh to be our brother. Jesus is drawing near today to forgive us of our sins and to give us His life and salvation.

And Jesus is drawing near to bring an end to the misery and despair of this old world. So much misery and turmoil surround us. Nations are in crisis. Evil is on the march. Sin and sickness and sadness are on every side and inside us as well. How long, O Lord, how long? *“Stir up your power, O Lord, and come, that by your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by your mighty deliverance.”*

Dear friends, Christ is coming. We don’t know when that day will be, but we know *it is coming*. Christ has promised it. We have His Word on it, and His Word never fails to come to pass.

So for now, we wait, anticipate His coming, and prepare for it. There are sins to repent of, people to love, a message to proclaim to all the world, hymns to be sung, and joys to be rejoiced over. Make no mistake, our King is coming. **“Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord! In heaven, peace, and glory in the highest heavens!”** Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## PRAYER FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Almighty God and Father, we thank and praise You for Your promises of mercy and deliverance, which You have fulfilled in the coming of Your Son Jesus Christ. He is indeed the Light to reveal You to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

As Your faithful people in every age have believed Your Word, grant that we, too, may believe it, and one day inherit Your heavenly promises. As Your people of old looked forward with longing to the coming of the Messiah, grant that we, too, may joyfully welcome Jesus into our hearts, and be saved by Him from the power of sin, Satan, and death.

Lead us by Your Spirit to a deep awareness of our need of repentance. Teach us to hate what is evil and to love what is good. Strengthen us when our enemies try to lead us into sin. Direct our lives in ways that are holy and right, that we may serve and glorify You in all things.

Cause Your saving light to shine in all corners of the earth, that people everywhere may know Your love in Christ Jesus, and join that great number of Your people who say: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Grant peace to the nations of the earth. Look with special favour on our own country, and on all its citizens. Guide all who rule over us, that they may learn to know You as the only true God, and may seek to do Your will in all things.

Bless all who have gathered in Your house today to hear Your precious Word. Grant strength, comfort, and understanding to those who are sick or troubled, to those who are sad and depressed, to those who are enduring hardships, and to all others who are in any bodily or spiritual need. Grant them perseverance, and the joy of Your abiding presence.

We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who has come to deliver us, who has died to save us, and risen to justify us, and who is always alive to intercede for us. Amen.

### **Article: The Season of Advent**

Advent is the season of preparation to receive the coming Lord Jesus. Let the following verses be for you a call to worship and prepare the way in your heart for the Saviour:

"So the LORD God said to the serpent . . . 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head . . .'" (Genesis 3:14-15)

"A virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Emmanuel . . . which means 'God with us.'" (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23)

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

"The angel said to her . . . 'You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be called the Son of the most high . . . his kingdom will never end.'" (Luke 1:30-33)

“When the set time had fully arrived, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.” (Galatians 4:4-5)

“And the angel said (to the shepherds), ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’ “ (Luke 2:10-14)

“He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. . . born of God.” (John 1: 11-13)

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.” (Acts 16:31)

### **Children’s Message:**

Have you ever been caught doing something you shouldn’t? Have you ever said a bad word or done something else that is a sin? Imagine you had a glass jar, and every time you did something terrible, you had to put a coin in it. Let’s call it the Naughty Jar. The Naughty Jar would probably soon fill up!

Now, I suspect that if any of us had to put a coin in the Naughty Jar every time we did something bad, we would soon run out of coins! That’s because we all sin so much all the time!

When Jesus came to save us, His jar was empty. Jesus had no sin. A word for that is “blameless.” Jesus didn’t do anything wrong. Even when evil people or the devil tried, they couldn’t get Jesus to give in to sin. But when He went to the cross and died for us, He took all our sins and put them in His jar. Jesus died for all your sins. Every sin had to be paid for and put in the Naughty Jar. So, His jar became full. Was that fair? No, because He didn’t sin. Then why did He do it? Because He didn’t want you to be punished for those sins. He loves you and wants you to be with Him forever. He wants our “hearts to be blameless and holy before our God and Father” (1 Thessalonians 3:13).

*Thank you, Jesus, for taking away my sins so I can live with You forever. Help me forgive others as You forgive me. Amen.*



## WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

<b>8 December 2 Advent</b>	<b>15 December 3 Advent</b>	<b>22 December 4 Advent</b>
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC	8.30am OAK HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.15am GRN HC  7.00pm MARBURG (Children's Christmas Program)	9.00am LOWOOD LR  9.30am TMBA HC incorporating the Downs Children's Christmas Service
<b>Sunday, 8 December</b>		
READINGS: Malachi 3:1-7b;                      Philippians 1:2-11;                      Luke 3:1-20		
HYMNS: 9 13 317 (311 842) 11		
<b>Sunday, 15 December</b>		
READINGS: Zephaniah 3:14-20;                      Philippians 4:44-7;                      Luke 7:18-35		
HYMNS: 3 1 402 (754 161) 17		
<b>Sunday, 22 December</b>		
READINGS: Micah 5:2-5a;                      Hebrews 10:5-10;                      Luke 1:39-56		
HYMNS: 14 7 431 633		

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF SERVICES FOR 8 and 15 DECEMBER!**

Tonight, 7.00pm. Advent tea at Aubigny. Could each family please bring a plate and something for dessert?

Wednesday, 4 December, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Bethlehem Toowoomba. This will be our break-up for the year. We shall hold Bible Study in the hall and exchange gifts (please bring a gift to the value of \$10.00), followed by lunch at the Toowoomba Hockey Club. (There will be no choosing of a verse or an item of interest.)

Saturday, 7 December, 7.00pm, YAY (Young Adults and Youth) is on at Aubigny, with the hall open from 6:30pm. Please bring yourself, your Bible, and a plate to share for supper, for an evening of games, food, socialising, and a devotion.

Friday, 20 December. 7.30pm. Carols Evening at Trinity Oakey.

Christmas Day Services: 7.30am MARBURG HC                      10.00am OAKEY HC