

# Sermon followed by Service

November 28, 2021

Luke 19:28-40

The President doesn't fly coach; he doesn't drive a Pontiac G6. When the President travels, he rides in style; he rides to impress. When the President travels, it's show-time. If that's true today, it was even more true at the time of our lesson. When a king would come to town, if the king wanted to be seen as king, feared as king, obeyed as king, he would have to show it. So when a king came to town, it was show-time - time for the king to show his power, his glory and greatness - time for the king to awe and wow his people. And his people? If they wanted the king to see them and treat them as friend, and not as enemy, when a king would come to town, the people would come out to meet their king, cheer their king, pave the way for their king. When a king came to town, it was show-time.

And so, in our lesson, what do we see? It was show-time for Jesus - time for Jesus to show himself as King. So Jesus doesn't just walk into town, he rides as King. And his people? They don't just walk with Jesus; they put on a show. They pave the way ahead of Jesus with palm branches and cloaks, their jackets. They cheer and announce their King's arrival; they fill the air with shouts of glory - **"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"** And so we see Jesus, our Christ, our King, coming onto the scene, riding in glory.

But what does a closer look show us? It doesn't take much of a closer look to see that our King's ride is no glorious steed, no glorious war-horse; he's riding a donkey. And his royal retinue? No professional, armed, trained bodyguards; no soldiers marching, weapons banging; no trumpets blaring; no "friends of the king" at his side, power-brokers with money and power to do the king's bidding.

No. As Jesus rides, as this king comes onto the scene - he shows little to instill fear or stand-back-awe. His glory is more humble than glorious. His power more hidden than shown. As Jesus comes onto the scene, whether at Christmas, or riding into Jerusalem, or even today - as Jesus comes onto the scene he shows little to instill fear or awe.

Why? Jesus didn't come to instill fear or untouchable awe as Lord and King; Jesus came to bring comfort and peace. Jesus didn't come to gain a following for

himself, to feed his ego, to protect and project his ego. No, Jesus came to show his Father's heart, to project his Father's heart, to gain a following for his Father's heart. Jesus didn't come to rule some piece of this world; Jesus came to show and tell and invite the world into the blessings of heaven - grace, mercy, and peace.

And so when Jesus comes onto the scene, Jesus doesn't ride to impress with glory; he doesn't look to project fear and untouchable awe; he doesn't present himself as untouchable and unapproachable. He rides in humility, and presents himself as touchable, approachable, even hold-able.

We like that, don't we? Oh, sometimes we're like the disciples wishing Jesus would act more like a King here in this world, that he would show more glory, project more power and might, that he would set up his kingdom with us here and now. Sometimes we might wish Jesus would act more like a King here, that he would project more of his power and might - with more judgment, quicker judgment; that he would put his enemies and our enemies in their places right here, right now. That day is coming, but first we see Christmas and celebrate Christmas and celebrate Jesus as that little baby in the manger, the little baby in Mary's arms - touchable, hold-able. And not just touchable, hold-able for Mary and Joseph, but touchable, hold-able, for you and for me in the Lord's Supper. When Jesus comes onto the scene, he could come riding on the clouds with all the glory and judgment of heaven. And some day, he will! But first - isn't it neat that first he presents himself as approachable, touchable, hold-able - with grace and mercy and peace?

*Which picture of Jesus do you prefer - Jesus as Judge?*

*Or the Christmas Day Jesus?*

*What might happen if we were to focus exclusively on one or the other?*

*Is it alright to hope and pray that Jesus returns soon as Lord + Judge?*

*Has there ever been a time you weren't ready for his return?*

*Do you know anyone who isn't ready?*

And isn't it so terribly sad when we take advantage of his grace, mercy, and peace, when we abuse the way he presents himself as approachable, touchable, hold-able. We see it throughout history. In the garden of Eden, God presents himself as approachable - he walks and talks with Adam and Eve. But then Adam and Eve somehow think that listening to Satan's tempting is better than listening to God, that Satan is more trustworthy than God, that they can do better for themselves by disobeying God instead of walking with God. And when Jesus comes on the scene at Christmas, what does Herod the great do? When he hears

that God's King is born, Herod doesn't join the wise men in worshipping Jesus. No, Herod sees Jesus as two-bit competition to clear out. And now, in our lesson, what about Jesus' enemies? How did Jesus' enemies see Jesus? Not as glorious and holy - don't mess with him. No, they see Jesus as someone small they could boss around, someone small they could trip and trap, someone small they could slap around, someone they could get rid of with a Roman cross.

That was then. What about now? What about us? How often don't we use Jesus' humility - Jesus showing himself as approachable, touchable, hold-able - how often don't we use Jesus' humility as an excuse for our treating him poorly. Maybe we don't think of it that way. But somehow people - I'm not talking about people out there; I'm talking about people in Christ's church, people who call themselves Christians - somehow there are Christians who think that when Jesus calls and invites, it's alright not to answer, that it's alright to be too busy for Jesus. Somehow there are Christians who think that Jesus should be happy with their leftovers, that it's ok to be cheap with Jesus. Somehow there are Christians who think that it's ok to pick and choose from what Jesus says, and that Jesus should be happy that we think of him at all. Somehow there are Christians who think it's alright to disrespect Jesus. Do you know any Christians like that? I've been that Christian. How about you? Why? Why do we think it ok to disrespect Jesus? How can we be so willing to settle, so willing to take the easy way out in our walk with Jesus? Is it because Jesus presents himself as approachable, touchable, hold-able? Is it because Jesus presents himself with grace, mercy, and peace?

*Which trap are we more likely to fall into -  
seeing Jesus too fearfully and awe-fully?  
Or seeing Jesus too casually?*

And yet that's what he does. Jesus could present himself with all the glory of God; he could shock and awe; he could fill us with fear as unapproachable and untouchable. Instead, he comes to us as that tender baby born in Bethlehem - touchable, hold-able. He comes to us in his Word - with grace and truth - calling, inviting: "Come to me, follow me." He comes to us in his Supper - "my body for you; my blood for you." Yes, Jesus comes to us approachable, touchable, hold-able. He comes to us with peace from heaven, with forgiveness won at the cross; he comes to us with life and love from God.

So how will we greet him? In fear, standing back, far back? Casually, with hardly a thought, with hardly a budge of our heart? Wouldn't it be great to be part of that crowd we have in our lesson? Cheering Jesus! Paving the way for Jesus! Letting the world know what Jesus means to us! Letting the world know what Jesus can mean for them!

This season of Advent is the church's reminder, the church's nudge - it's time! It's time to be part of the crowd preparing the way for Jesus. It's time to be part of the crowd cheering Jesus. It's time to be part of the crowd letting the world know - Jesus is on his way! Jesus is on his way with life and love from God! Amen.

*How are you part of the crowd preparing the way for Jesus?  
How are you letting the world know - Jesus is on his way!*

*In our worship services, how do we show the transcendence, the awe, the holiness of God?  
In our worship services, how do we show the closeness of God - approachable, touchable, hold-able?*

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
*A Family Connecting in Christ*



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**L O R D**  
**C O M E S N E A R**

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**November 27 & 28, 2021**

**SERIES THEME**

***THE LORD COMES NEAR***

“Advent” comes from a Latin word that means “coming.” The season of Advent is the four week period before Christmas that the Church uses to connect the two “comings” of Christ. The first time the Lord came into our world it was as a tiny, helpless baby, born in a manger in Bethlehem. However, when Jesus comes again, it will be in all his power and glory with his angelic army behind him. He will be coming as judge at the end of time. Let us use these four weeks to see how the events of Jesus’ first coming remove all our fears about his second coming. We can hold our heads high when the Lord comes near.

**THEME OF THE DAY**

***WHEN THE LORD COMES NEAR, HE HUMBLING HIMSELF***

What would it be like to meet God? We know he is almighty and holy. He loathes sin. No wonder that when God appears to his Old Testament people, their first response is typically terror. But when Jesus Christ came into our world, he hid his glory and power. He humbled himself so that sinners would be drawn to him rather than driven away in fear.

**OFFERING**

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# The Service

## RITE OF DEDICATION

P: Today we are blessed to dedicate our new hymnals.

C: **We give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

P: Gracious Father, you call and gather us close. You delight in hearing the prayers and praise of your people.

C: **We thank you, Lord, for the privilege of being your people, for the blessing of worship, for the comfort and strength you give in this place, and for the praise and joy you prompt in our hearts.**

P: We thank you for your gifts of language and music, and for the two put together in liturgy and song.

C: **We thank you for the grace you show us here in Word and Sacrament.**

P: Lord, you gifted the many people who helped prepare this book. Their service to you and to us is a rich blessing. For those who have labored diligently in developing this worship book,

C: **We thank you, O Lord.**

P: For those who use their time and ability to assist our worship – for those who lead us in worship, for singers and all other musicians, for those who prepare your house each week, for talent with flowers, banners, and all other arts,

C: **We thank you, O Lord.**

P: Lord, we confess that we have not always put our hearts and minds into worship as you desire. Forgive our sins of approaching you too casually, carelessly, infrequently, for letting ourselves get distracted.

C: **Send your Holy Spirit so that the words and music of this hymnal become the sincere prayers and praise of our hearts.**

- P: Bless our use of old songs and forms, that we more deeply recognize our connection with your people of all times and value the heritage they have passed down to us.
- C: **Bless our use of new liturgies and songs, that we see anew the wonder of your ways and the privilege we have to praise you.**
- P: Bless our worship to be a blessing for us and those around us, for those who know you and those who don't yet know you.
- C: **Move us to commit ourselves – heart and mind – to worship that is to your glory and the good of your people.**
- P: To your glory, O Lord, and for the edification of your holy people we dedicate these hymnals, in the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.
- C: **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

*"Hosanna to the Living Lord"*  
Hymn 915

Hosanna to the living Lord! Hosanna to th' incarnate Word!  
To Christ, Creator, Savior, King, let earth, let heav'n hosanna Sing.

"Hosanna, Lord!" your angels cry; "Hosanna, Lord!" your saints reply.  
Throughout the earth, around your throne,  
your people sing in sweetest tone.

O Savior, with protecting care abide in this your house of prayer,  
Where we your parting promise claim, assembled in your sacred name.

O Spirit, all our sins forgive, and come within our hearts to live.  
Our souls shall be your temple pure and you will make our faith endure.

So, on that last and dreadful day, when earth and heav'n shall melt away,  
Your flock, redeemed from sinful stain,  
shall swell the sound of praise again.



## INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## CONFESSION

If we claim to be without sin,  
we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just  
and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins**

**with his innocent suffering and death.**

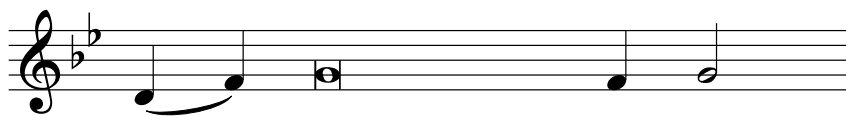
**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

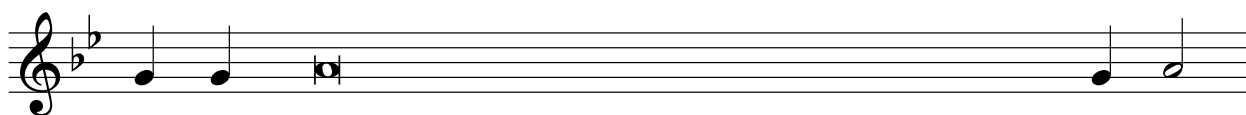
# LORD, HAVE MERCY (KYRIE)



In peace let us pray to the Lord.



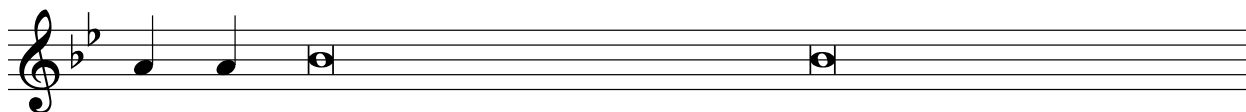
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



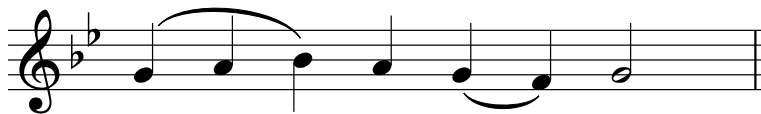
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



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.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and  
praise, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mer - cy.**  
Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.  
**A - - - men.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING**

**Jeremiah 33:14-16**

*In response to their sin, the Lord allowed the nation of Israel to be conquered and humbled. Yet, he promised that from David's royal line, a Savior would come to restore God's people.*

“‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.’”

“In those days and at that time  
 I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line;  
 he will do what is just and right in the land.  
 In those days Judah will be saved  
 and Jerusalem will live in safety.  
 This is the name by which it will be called:  
 The LORD Our Righteousness.”

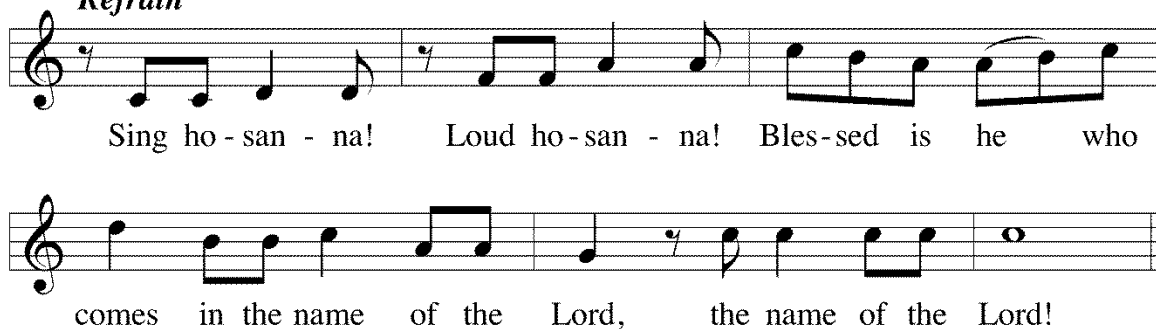
P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 24 (CWS)

*Refrain*



Sing ho - san - na! Loud ho - san - na! Bles - sed is he who  
 comes in the name of the Lord, the name of the Lord!

*Psalm Tone*



The earth is the LORD’S, and everything in it,  
 the world, and all who live in it;  
 for he founded it upon the seas  
 and established it upon the waters.

Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?  
 Who may stand in his holy place?  
 He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
 he will receive blessing from God his Savior.

*Refrain*

Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.  
Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.  
Who is he, this King of glory?  
The LORD Almighty—he is the King of glory.

**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.**

*Refrain*

## SECOND READING

## 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

*When the Lord comes near on Judgment Day, his followers will be found blameless and holy. Why? Because Christ sustains our faith using humble means - God's Word and sacraments.*

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*The cantor/choir sings the refrain and verse.*

*The congregation joins to sing the final refrain*

*Refrain*



Come to us, Emmanuel;  
come and set your people free.

*Refrain*

## GOSPEL

**Luke 19:28-40**

*Jesus enters Jerusalem humbly, riding a donkey to his death. By that death, the Lord of all becomes the Savior of all.*

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'"

Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

They replied, "The Lord needs it."

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

“I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

#### HYMN OF THE DAY

*“Prepare the Royal Highway”*

**Hymn 302**

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:  
Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s Word!

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!  
Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s Word!

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!  
Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s Word!

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:  
Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s Word!

## SERMON

### CONFESSION OF FAITH

### APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: Eternal Lord, give us peace as we ponder the good news that you forgive our sins in Christ. Lead us to see clearly the path you have laid out for us.

C: **Work in us so that we believe and live the Word we have heard today.**

P: Provide courage and compassion to all who preach and teach your Word. Fill them with a love like yours as they proclaim your grace to us and all people.

C: **Move us to love all ministers of the Word wherever they serve.**



P: Guard and guide the families of our congregation. Lead husbands and wives to love each other with commitment, respect, and patience. Help parents to grasp the eternal value of keeping their children close to Jesus all their lives. Grant joy to those who are single, and make them a blessing to others.

**C: Protect us from the temptations that surround us; give us pure hearts and minds.**

P: Provide wisdom and insight to those who make laws and set policies. Give us respect for those who protect us from crime. Lead us to value the rights of our fellow citizens and to defend those who cannot defend themselves.

**C: Bless our land with peace and prosperity so that the gospel may be proclaimed to all.**

P: Give us passion to share the story of your love with our family and friends. Overcome unbelief, and open the hearts of people everywhere to believe the good news that Jesus has forgiven their sins and opened the gates of heaven.

**C: Fill us with joy over every sinner who repents and comes to trust in you.**

P: Extend your healing power to those who are sick and suffering in body or mind. *Pour out your special blessing on . . . (here name the person and the cause of the petition).* Give patience and compassion to all who care for the sick and dying.

**C: Lift the eyes of the distressed to your love in Christ.**

P: Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

P: Gracious God, you govern and direct all things and you love all people. Hear our prayers, spoken and silent, and answer them in your wisdom and grace.

**C: In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

## HYMN

*"Savior of the Nations, Come"*

Hymn 301

Savior of the nations, come; Virgin's Son, make here your home.  
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.

Not by human flesh and blood, By the Spirit of our God  
Was the Word of God made flesh, Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child Of the virgin undefiled,  
Though by all the world disowned, Yet to be in heav'n enthroned!

From the Father's throne he came And ascended to the same,  
Captive leading death and hell -- High the song of triumph swell!

Praise to God the Father sing, Praise to God the Son, our King,  
Praise to God the Spirit be Ever and eternally.

## PRAYER

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning.  
May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being  
strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the  
blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives  
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

## BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

**Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN

*“Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes”*

**Hymn 313**

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;  
Let ev’ry heart prepare a throne And ev’ry voice a song.

He comes the pris’ners to release, In Satan’s bondage held.  
The gates of brass before him burst; The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind, The bleeding soul to cure,  
And with the treasures of his grace To enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, Your welcome shall proclaim,  
And heav’n’s eternal arches ring With your beloved name.

### Acknowledgments

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# Join Us For Wednesday Advent Worship!

## De-Stress from December Distress

Wednesday, December 1, at 3:30 and 6:30:

**Distressed with Calendar Stress?**

**De-Stress with Peace in Jesus!**

- Advent Supper at 4:30 pm - Hosted by the Women of St. John

Wednesday, December 8, at 3:30 and 6:30:

**Distressed with Money Stress?**

**De-Stress with True Treasure in Jesus!**

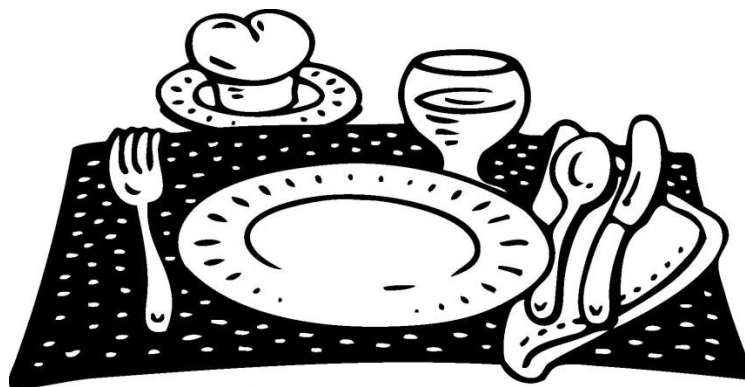
- Advent Supper at 4:30 pm - Hosted by Kris Murphy

Wednesday, December 15, at 3:30 and 6:30:

**Distressed with Family Stress?**

**De-Stress with Jesus as Your Brother!**

- Advent Supper at 4:30 pm - Hosted by St. John Youth Group



*Advent*  
**SUPPER**