



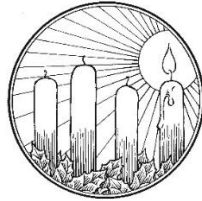
# ABOUT THE PROPERs

*An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service*



## First Sunday in Advent

November 30, 2025



### Imminent Arrival of the King

The First Sunday in Advent is traditionally known as “Ad Te Levavi” Sunday. The Sunday derives its name from the Latin words of the Introit (i.e. the opening verses) of the day: “To (*Ad*) You (*Te*), O Lord, I lift (*Levavi*) my soul” (Psalm 25:1). On the First Sunday in Advent, the Church turns her attention (i.e. “lifts her soul”) to the coming Messiah.

The king is an important person. His arrival can mean something quite different to us depending on our relationship with him. We might fear it if we expect him to punish us. We might welcome it if we expect him to bless us. Either way, we expect his arrival to be a big deal.

Advent marks the start of a new Church Year. We begin at the end, watching King Jesus ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, knowing full well that he will be killed before the end of the week. We rejoice that our King came down to earth from heaven to suffer and die in our place so we would be forgiven. That is why we anticipate his imminent arrival not with worry but with joy!

### First Reading <sup>1</sup>

Isaiah 2:1-5

The first chapter of Isaiah does not paint a pretty picture of Judah and Jerusalem. “Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption” (Isaiah 1:4). But today’s lesson from chapter two shows a completely different picture. Here one sees the glorious destiny that awaits her. In the last days, in the midst of the unexpected judgment, God comes with unexpected grace for his people. The people of chapter one are changed forever. In the coming kingdom many will say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD.” In the coming kingdom, God will teach the people his ways so that they walk in his paths. The coming of Christ defines our present time. We are at the doorstep of the impending age of the kingdom come. We join with Isaiah in living our lives in view of Christ’s unexpected coming: “Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD!”

### Second Reading <sup>3</sup>

Philippians 4:4-7

As we anticipate the coming deliverance, Paul says, “Rejoice always,” for “the Lord is near.” Let our Advent joy be expressed in prayer and thanksgiving that stem from God’s peace, given us in his transcendent gift of his Son as our Savior. So many parts of this sorted world seek to rob our joy in Christ. No wonder Paul told us twice: “I say it again, Rejoice!”

### Gospel <sup>1</sup>

Matthew 21:1-11

The great King comes to his city and to his temple! He could have come with all the power and glory of the Son of God. He could have ridden a thunderstorm as his chariot with legions of angels striding beside him and creation itself singing forth the praise of its Maker. But look how he comes: Not on the storm, but on a donkey; not accompanied by heavenly warriors, but by fishermen with a spotty record of faith; not to the sound of creation singing, but to the shouts of fickle pilgrims who cheered him on Sunday but would desert him by Friday. Why did he come so humbly? Because he came not to rule us, but to save us. He came, not to command us, but to invite us. He came not to demand anything from us, but to give everything for us. He comes in the name of the Lord to save us.

### Psalm of the Day <sup>4</sup>

Psalm 24 H

“Let the LORD Enter; He Is the King of Glory”

The Church sings Psalm 24 in services on the First Sunday in Advent and Palm Sunday, both anticipating the arrival of Christ the Lord. The psalm is a processional liturgy for the entrance of the King of glory into Zion. Martin Luther said, “Psalm 24 is a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ in all the world. It calls on the ‘doors’ of the world, that is, kings and princes, to make room for the kingdom of Christ; for they are the usual ones who rage against him (Psalms 1 and 2), and say, ‘Who is this King of glory?’”

## Gospel Acclamation

Philippians 2:10

“At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.” The name Jesus (the Greek form of Joshua) means, “the LORD (Yahweh) saves.” This child is called Jesus by divine right since he himself is “the Lord Who Saves.” As the angel said to Joseph: “He will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

## Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Protect us by your strength, and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

## Hymn of the Day

301 “Savior of the Nations, Come” (Ambrose, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546)

Originally written (in Latin) by the great fourth century theologian, Ambrose (and later translated into German by Martin Luther), this hymn was designated for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day – a fitting choice due to its focus on the miracle of the incarnation.

## Church Year Season<sup>3</sup>

Advent

Advent is a season of preparation and anticipation. The Church looks for the coming of her Savior in this threefold advent: his coming in the flesh as a baby in Bethlehem, his return in judgment on the Last Day, and his present coming to us in Word and Sacrament. The Church encompasses all these facets of the season in a single word that defines Advent worship: “Come!” Throughout the prayers, hymns, and readings that single word is our invitation, our anticipation, our sure and certain hope. Come, Lord Jesus!

## Colors & Symbolism

Blue

The traditional color for Advent is purple. Advent is a penitential season of preparation for Christmas; thus the color purple which symbolizes sorrow and repentance (along with royalty). Since another theme of Advent is hope and anticipation, the color blue (the sky) has come to be used in many churches to symbolize the believer’s hope and expectation of Jesus’ Second Coming.

## Minor Festivals

St. Andrew, Apostle (November 30)

Andrew and John were the first apostles to follow Christ (John 1:35-40). Andrew told his brother, Simon Peter that he had found the Messiah (John 1:42), and both were later called by Jesus to be “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). Tradition states that Andrew was martyred (perhaps on November 30<sup>th</sup>) on a special kind of cross (in the shape of an “X”) which has ever since borne his name. St. Andrew’s Day has been observed by the Christian Church as far back as the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

## Traditions & Customs

The Advent Wreath

A tradition of the Advent season is the lighting of candles on a wreath. Each light reminds us of Jesus, the Light of the world (John 8:12). Each Sunday we light an additional candle, providing a visual countdown to the celebration of Christ’s birth. On Christmas Eve we light the center candle, remembering Jesus’ nativity and the light and life that he brings (John 1:4,9).

## Nain Paraments

Advent

Superfrontal: “Come Lord Jesus” is the Advent (meaning “coming” or “arrival”) prayer of Christians who await Christ’s promised return (Revelation 22:7,12,20) on the Last Day (Revelation 22:17,20), and who desire to eagerly receive Jesus now in the Gospel. The stars are representative of the Church’s anticipation of Jesus’ return when he will “appear in the sky...with great power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30). The stars also remind us of God’s creative work. They especially remind us of Jesus, the bright Morning Star (Revelation 22:16) and Light of the World (John 8:12) who came to save us from the darkness of sin and death.

Lectern antependium: Chi (X) and Rho (P) are the first two letters in the Greek word for Christ (Χριστός). This ancient symbol represents Jesus and his office as the Messiah, the anointed King of kings and Savior of the world (Matthew 16:16).

Pulpit antependium: Alpha (Α) and Omega (Ω) are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. These two letters symbolize Jesus Christ, our eternal Lord and Savior, who is the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Revelation 22:13).

<sup>1</sup> Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year A”. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.

<sup>2</sup> Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year B”. Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

<sup>3</sup> Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year C”. Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.

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