

Advent Week 1: The Sunday of HOPE



Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection, alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymns:

Hymn 1: "Wake, Awake For Night is Flying"

Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNYJtHMC0pw>

Lyrics

1. Wake, awake, for night is flying,

The watchmen on the heights are crying;
Awake, Jerusalem, at last!
Midnight hears the welcome voices,
And at the thrilling cry rejoices:
Come forth, ye virgins, night is past!
The Bridegroom comes, awake,
Your lamps with gladness take;
Hallelujah!
And for His marriage-feast prepare,
For ye must go to meet Him there.

2. Zion hears the watchmen singing,
And all her heart with joy is springing,
She wakes, she rises from her gloom;
For her Lord comes down all-glorious,
The strong in grace, in truth victorious,
Her Star is risen, her Light is come!
Ah come, Thou blessed Lord,
O Jesus, Son of God,
Hallelujah!
We follow till the halls we see
Where Thou hast bid us sup with Thee!

3. Now let all the heavens adore Thee,
And men and angels sing before Thee,
With harp and cymbal's clearest tone;
Of one pearl each shining portal,
Where we are with the choir immortal
Of angels round Thy dazzling throne;
Nor eye hath seen, nor ear
Hath yet attain'd to hear
What there is ours,
But we rejoice, and sing to Thee
Our hymn of joy eternally.

Hymn History: This was written by Philipp Nicolai, a German Lutheran pastor, in the late 1500s, after the Reformation. It was written during a year like ours: a year of plague with lots of suffering and death.

Nicolai lived at the parsonage and overlooked the cemetery where he had buried many of his community. He wrote, "Then day by day I wrote out my meditations, found myself, thank God! wonderfully well, comforted in heart, joyful in spirit, and truly content; gave to my manuscript the name and title of a *Mirror of Joy*, and took this so composed *Frewden-Spiegel* to leave behind me (if God should call me from this world) as the token of my peaceful, joyful, Christian departure, or (if God should spare me in health) to comfort other sufferers whom He should also visit with the pestilence."

Hymn 2: "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending"

Listen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_Ahm3jDvdQ

Lyrics

1 Once for favored sinners slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

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

3 Ev'ry island, sea, and mountain,
heav'n and earth, shall flee away;
all who hate him must, confounded,
hear the trump proclaim the day:
Come to judgment! Come to judgment!
Come to judgment, come away!

4 Now Redemption, long expected,
see in solemn pomp appear!
All his saints, by man rejected,
now shall meet him in the air.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

See the day of God appear!

5 Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the pow'r and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own.
O come quickly, O come quickly;
alleluia! come, Lord, come.

Hymn History: Charles Wesley's (1707-1788) hymn "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending" uses events of the past to remind us who we are in our faith, to set a vision of what the future holds, and to state who our God is (Living in the Now, Not Yet, as we Lutherans might say). Charles Wesley wrote it under a title of hymns pertaining to the category of "Thy Kingdom Come!," one of the first petitions of The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:10, KJV). Charles Wesley, having enumerated a comprehensive list of intercessory needs, establishes that God, in Christ, is the cosmic "monarch" of all earthly kings, nations, institutions, individuals in need, and all religions and theologies, and philosophies found on earth, even if they do not recognize God.