

## Cooma Anglican 1 December 2024 - 1st Order APBA - Advent 1

### Welcome

#### Hymn TIS 264 - Hark! a herald voice is calling:

Hark! a herald voice is calling: 'Christ is near,' it seems to say,  
'cast away the dreams of darkness, Waken, children of the day!'

Wakened by the solemn warning let the earth-bound soul arise;  
Christ, her sun, all sloth dispelling shines upon the morning skies.

Lo, the Lamb so long expected comes with pardon now from heav'n;  
let us meet him with repentance, pray that we may be forgiv'n.

So when love comes forth in judgment, debts and doubts and wrongs to clear,  
faithful may he find his servants watching till the dawn appear.

### Greeting

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

### Sentence of the Day

Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Luke 21:31

### Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

**Lord, have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit**

### Lighting the Advent Candle

Eternal God, You have taught us, and let this candle remind us, that the night is far spent and the day is at hand: keep us awake and alert, watching for your kingdom, and make us strong in faith, so that when Christ comes in glory to judge the earth, we make go joyfully to greet him; and, with all your saints, may worship you forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

### The Ministry of the Word

#### Jeremiah 33:14-16

<sup>14</sup> "'The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

<sup>15</sup> ““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. <sup>16</sup> 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 Righteous Savior.’

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### **Psalm 25:1-10**

<sup>1</sup> In you, LORD my God, I put my trust.

<sup>2</sup> **I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

<sup>3</sup> No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.

<sup>4</sup> **Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths.**

<sup>5</sup> Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

<sup>6</sup> **Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.**

<sup>7</sup> Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good.

<sup>8</sup> **Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.**

<sup>9</sup> He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

<sup>10</sup> **All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.**

### **1 Thessalonians 3:9-13**

<sup>9</sup> 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? <sup>10</sup> Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

<sup>11</sup> Now 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 your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. <sup>13</sup> 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.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### **Luke 21:25-38**

#### **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

<sup>25</sup> “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. <sup>26</sup> People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

<sup>29</sup> He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. <sup>30</sup> When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. <sup>31</sup> Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

<sup>32</sup> “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. <sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

<sup>34</sup> “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. <sup>35</sup> For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup> Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

<sup>37</sup> Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, <sup>38</sup> and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

## Sermon Jesus's Second Coming - Advent 1

### Question Time

### The Apostles' Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.**

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

### Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God forever.**

### Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

### The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

### Exhortation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us.

Yet also the danger is great if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour. Amend your lives and love your neighbour.

Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you. But first, let us make a humble confession of our sins to almighty God.

### **Confession**

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people, we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation against us.**

**We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings. Have mercy on us, most merciful Father. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hear the words of assurance for those who truly turn to Christ: If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the perfect offering for our sins. 1 John 2:1-2

### **Hymn TIS 137 For the beauty of the earth**

**For the beauty of the earth, For the beauty of the skies  
For the love which from our birth, Over and around us lies**

#### ***Chorus***

**Christ, our God, to you we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.**

**For the beauty of each hour, of the day and of the night  
Hill and vale and tree and flower, Sun and moon and stars of light *Chorus***

**For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight  
For the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight *Chorus***

**For the joy of human love Brother sister parent child  
Friends on earth and friends above, For all gentle thoughts and mild *Chorus***

**For each perfect gift divine To our race so freely given  
graces all of your design, flowers of earth and buds of heaven *Chorus***

**For Thy church that evermore  
Lifting holy hands above, Offers up on every shore the pure sacrifice of love *Chorus***

### **The Thanksgiving**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, Mighty Creator and Eternal God. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Glory to you, O Lord most high.**

### **Prayer of Approach**

**We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ

to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' Likewise after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' Amen.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

### **After Communion**

Almighty and everliving God, we heartily thank you that you graciously feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thus assure us of your favour and goodness towards us and that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs, through hope, of your eternal kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of your dear Son. And we humbly beseech you, heavenly Father, so to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end.

### **Hymn TIS 268 Joy to the world!**

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come;  
let earth receive its king;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing**

**Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns;  
let us our songs employ;  
while fields and streams, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

### **Notices**

#### **Dismissal**

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## Sermon - Jesus's Second Coming - Advent 1

Are you the sort of person who starts a project at the beginning or the end? I mean, do you start by considering the materials, the instructions and all the necessary steps required to get the outcome you want, or do you start by envisioning the perfect outcome, and work back to the necessary steps and materials. I was a project manager with defence for many years, and found that when building ships that both approaches have their advantages. You have to have a good idea of what the ship needs to look like and what it needs to do before you start, but you also need to understand the capability and capacity of your ship yard and workforce to build a successful ship. Today as we start advent, we will look at the season of advent in the second way, working from the end to the beginning. From Jesus's second coming to his first coming. However, before we get properly started in this sermon, we need a bit of background on the season of advent.

Who can tell me what advent is about?

Firstly, the word advent is from the Greek word to come, and we celebrate it for the 4 weeks leading up to Christmas. It is literally preparation for Jesus to come.

However, like the person that starts a project by envisioning the finished product, the first week of advent does not look at the beginning, the story of the first Christmas when Jesus came the first time, but to Jesus's second coming when he will return in glory on the last day.

Our gospel reading this morning is just one of many Bible passages that talks about Jesus' return. A key verse is verse 27 which says: At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Now I know that scholars have been arguing about the details of Jesus's return ever since he ascended into heaven, so I am not going to confuse you even more this morning by adding my own views. There are more than twenty different passages in the New Testament that say something about Jesus's second coming, and while they don't contradict each other, they have to be read very carefully to understand them. This morning I just want to touch on a couple of aspects that are clear, and some things that the Bible says we cannot know.

The first point is that Jesus will return.

In our gospel reading today, Jesus said that the Son of Man will come in the clouds with glory. Jesus always used the term 'Son of Man' of himself, although it could have other meanings. However, John 14:1-3 is clear. Jesus said "My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." John 14:2-3



In Acts 1:11, two angels in white told the disciples immediately after Jesus ascended into heaven: "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11

So, the fact that Jesus will return is without doubt, but the timing is a lot more difficult to understand. In fact, Jesus said that it is impossible for anyone to know when he would return because even he did not know before he ascended to heaven. In Mark's version of our gospel reading this morning, Jesus says that 'about the Son of man returning in the clouds, no one knows that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.' Mark 13:32.

We do know that it is not unreasonable for it to be a long time for Jesus to return. In Peter's second letter, he says that scoffers will come, saying "Where is this 'coming' he promised." Peter says <sup>8</sup> But do not forget this one thing, friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

Jesus said "this generation will not pass away until all these things happen.", and I thought Jesus meant that he expected to return before the generation he was talking to had died. This would have been within 80 years or so. Obviously Jesus didn't return then, so He meant either the generation who saw those things beginning to happen would not pass away before he return (in other words, from the start of the signs to the end would happen in one generation), or that the signs will start happening within his generation, but would not necessarily complete. This of course has happened: in his generation there were signs in the sun, moon and stars. Nations were in anguish and perplexity and people were fainting from terror, heavenly bodies were being shaken. These things were happening in Jesus's day, they are still happening, and will keep happening until Jesus returns. They keep happening to remind us that one day, Jesus will in fact return.

You see, God's timing is not out timing, and in his grace, he will ensure everyone will be given the opportunity to hear the gospel, repent and turn to him. As 2 Peter goes on to say: 'The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.' 2 Peter 3:8-9. He is not rushing back so that even more people have the opportunity to gain eternal life. And so, until he returns, Christians have the responsibility to share his good news so that more and more will repent and gain the eternal life he offers.

Another thing that is difficult to be sure of is the specific events when Jesus returns. We know that there will be signs, Jesus will return in glory in the clouds, the dead in Christ will be raised and living Christians will be caught up to meet the Lord in



the air and be with Him forever. We know that those who have died in Christ will have their redeemed souls and spirits united with a body similar to Christ's glorified body; and those who reject Christ will be judged and there will be a new heaven and a new earth, where there will be perfect righteousness. The Bible says these will happen, but I don't pretend to know or understand all that will happen, when, or in what order. I do know that at the end of it all, those who put their trust in Jesus will have eternal life in a Eden-like world with God and worshipping God. I do know that this is not something that we want to miss out on, or have anyone we know and love miss out on, and so we need to be ready.

And this leads us to the final thing that we do know about Jesus's return - how to make sure we are ready.

Luke tells us to "Be careful that your hearts are not weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life. We are to always be on the watch, and pray that we may be able to stand before Jesus.

1 Timothy tells us to watch our life and doctrine closely, because if we persevere in them, we will be saved. Similarly, Hebrews tells us to persevere, so when we have done the will of God (that is, kept our faith in Jesus), we will receive what he has promised. Jude tells us: build ourselves up in the most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, <sup>21</sup> keep ourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Jude 1:20-21

Ultimately, we are to live with our end, our eternal life in mind. The doctrine that Timothy refers to is salvation by faith, and the alternative is abandoning faith and following deceiving spirits and things taught by demons, works like avoiding marriage, certain foods and other good gifts of God. Works that won't ever make us right with God

Until Jesus returns, we are to keep our faith in his death and resurrection for us. This is the only basis on which we can stand before Jesus, the Son of Man when he returns. We don't know when he will return, or how everything will happen, but today, in the advent of his second coming, we need to remain prepared, trusting in his death and resurrection, and looking forward to the eternal life he promises us through his death and resurrection. Are you prepared?

Amen