



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 24 **November 30, 2025**
Advent I

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 24:36-44

“But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus: the Gift of Hope! Amen.

This week I did a bit of house cleaning in my office. Trust me when I say a bit.....I put my white and green chasuble into the cupboard where they have their place. I glanced at the blue chasuble just for a moment and began to vision the upcoming season of Advent. The colours.....blue upon blue, the advent wreath with three blue candles and the stunning pink candle, and the white Christ candle in the centre. Standing, I could hear some of the great Advent carols that we will be singing. What struck me again is we are entering into this exciting season called Advent.

The Advent season is a time in the Christian church where we observe a period of waiting and preparing. The texts or lessons for Advent point towards the theme of apocalyptic nature; describing or prophesying the end of the world; the end of time. And along with this; the theme is Parousia or the second coming of Jesus is highlighted.

Given this, two elements from St. Matthew's passage stood out to me this week.

The first is that the central thrust to the passage is promise. It is easy to miss, given the somewhat dire warnings about the future coming of the Son. Yet Jesus is speaking to his

disciples, and at the heart of this brief apocalyptic section is his promise that when he comes, he “will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other “(vs. 31).

The second element is the sheer *unexpectedness* of the events Jesus talks about. No one knows – neither angels nor even he himself – no one knows when this will take place except, the Father. And it’s this element of the uncertainty that we can relate to in our lives.

Life is so unexpected – have you ever thought about this? We are regularly caught off guard – sometimes joyfully, but often not. Forest fires, our spring floods and other natural disasters represent the dangerous and unpredictable nature of our life in this world on a grand scale. But a miscarriage, lost job, heart attack, death of a loved one, or so many other personal, emotional, and unanticipated set backs can all take us back and threaten any semblance of order we’d imaged we’d created for ourselves.

And here is the thing, we know this. In fact, we regularly try to protect ourselves against such personal disasters. Not only via health, life and automobile insurance, but also by a host of other ways: perhaps by not taking a risk on a dream for fear of failure, or by shielding ourselves from possible disappointments in life or relationships, or by numbing ourselves to the pain of others lest it haunt us with the possibility of our own loss. We *know* life is precarious, unpredictable, and for these reasons also precious, but we often deny or are afraid to speak of that fact.

So, I am wondering during the next four weeks of Advent if we set aside sometime to take stock of our lives, asking what it is that we most fear about an uncertain future, and then remember the promise that whether or not our immediate fears are realized, we were created for more than fear because Jesus, the Son of Man and Son of God whose coming birth we anticipate, has promised to come always to be both *with* us and *for* us.

This promise does not insulate us from an uncertain future, but it does promise that we will not face that future alone. Come hell or high water – and this seems as appropriate a phrase as any to capture much of this passage from Matthew – Jesus will be at our side, granting us courage in the face of life’s adversities and remaining with us even through death, drawing us into new life.

If we believe this is true, then what might we dare? What might we venture or risk, knowing that all loss and disappointment, as difficult as they may be, are also occasions to experience more deeply the healing presence of the one who came, comes, and will come again, always for us and all the world?

As the days grow shorter and the darkness grows, we light Advent candles each week to remind us that we do not face the darkness alone but that, indeed, the light of the world has come, shining on in the darkness to illumine our lives and lead us forth not in fear but courage ... and even joy. The passage appointed for this first Sunday in Advent is surely a challenging one, yet perhaps it provides an opportunity for us to pause for a moment and name some of the anxiety of this challenging life and, in light of Jesus’ promise, to leave that anxiety behind.

My Friends in Christ. In light of the promise that Jesus is always *with* us and *for* us , I wish to close this teaching time with a prayer which will anchor us in Jesus' promise of presence and blessing, the one thing that is sure and certain amid all the uncertainties of this life.

Let us pray.....

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

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STTLC Communiqué

In Our Prayers Today.....

Mike Harrington, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Bobby Keuhl, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori, and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

J. Wilmot Harvey Educational Bursary applications for post-secondary students are available in the office and must be submitted to the church secretary by November 30th.

Poinsettia Plants for Christmas – Those wishing to donate towards the purchase of poinsettias to adorn the chancel area and Jubilee Hall, please contact the church office by Monday, December 15th and mark your donation "Poinsettia" on your offering envelope. Thank you for your consideration.