

# Week 1: The Light of Grace

## Hope: Zechariah

### Order of Service

*And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you. Psalm 39:7*

#### **Opening Hymn Hark the Glad Sound LSB #349**

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,  
Thy welcome shall proclaim,  
And heav'n's eternal arches ring  
With thy belovèd name.

#### **Invocation and Lighting of the Advent Candle**

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

**C Amen.**

*(One purple candle is lit on the Advent wreath.)*

**P** Today we light the first of our Advent candles, the candle of hope.

**C** **“O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.”** (Psalm 39:7)

**P** Across the centuries, the people of God waited in hope for the promised Messiah, the Savior. As the time came near for the promise to be fulfilled, the Lord sent an angel to tell the priest Zechariah that Zechariah and his wife would have a son. That son, to be named John, would announce the coming of the Messiah and prepare Israel to welcome the Savior.

**C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.”**

P John would proclaim the dawn of hope for Israel. He would baptize people as a sign of repentance, preparing them for the Savior, the Lamb of God, who was coming to take their sins away. When the right time came, God’s promise was fulfilled in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.”**

P We have seen the promise fulfilled. The Savior has come! He has died and risen to set us free. Now we wait in hope for his return on the Last Day. Jesus has promised, “Surely I am coming soon!”

**C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!**

### **Confession and Absolution**

P Let us confess our sins to God, trusting in his mercy for the sake of Jesus our Lord.

**C Almighty God, you have called us to a living hope in Jesus. Yet so often we do not reflect that hope in our lives. We turn away from the promises of your Word. We walk in our own selfish ways instead of following in Jesus’ footsteps. We do not love others as we should, and we are not always willing to share our hope with the people around us. Have mercy on us and forgive us.**

P God has had mercy on us. He sent his Son to be our Savior and for his sake forgives our sins. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.”**

### **Hymn of Response ... Amazing Grace LSB #744**

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.

The Lord has promised good to me,  
His Word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.

**Prayer of the Day**

**Old Testament Reading ... Isaiah 51:1-5**

**Epistle Reading ... Romans 5:1-5**

**Gospel Reading ... Luke 1:67-79**

**Sermon Hymn ... Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord LSB #352**

Let the earth now praise the Lord,  
Who has truly kept his word  
And at last to us did send  
Christ, the sinner's help and friend.

What the fathers most desired,  
What the prophets' heart inspired,  
What they longed for many a year,  
Stands fulfilled in glory here.

**Sermon**

**Hymn of Response ... Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord LSB #352**

Abram's promised great reward,  
Zion's helper, Jacob's Lord—  
Him of two-fold race behold—  
Truly came, as long foretold.

As your coming was in peace,  
Quiet, full of gentleness,  
Let the same mind dwell in me  
Which is yours eternally.

**Apostles' Creed**

**C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.**

**Offering**

**Prayers**

*Each petition concludes with the following response:*

P Our God and Savior,

**C Fill us with hope and guide us into the way of peace.**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Benediction (Romans 5:1-2; Romans 15:13)**

P Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**C Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**

P May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

**C Amen.**

**Closing Hymn ... Savior of the Nations, Come LSB #332**

Savior of the nations, come,  
Virgin's Son, make here thy home!  
Marvel now, O heaven and earth,  
That the Lord chose such a birth.

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

From the Father forth he came  
And returneth to the same,  
Captive leading death and hell—  
High the song of triumph swell!

Thou, the Father's only Son,  
Hast o'er sin the vict'ry won.  
Boundless shall thy kingdom be;  
When shall we its glories see?

Brightly doth thy manger shine,  
Glorious is its light divine.  
Let not sin o'ercloud this light;  
Ever be our faith thus bright.