



## Morrison Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

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December 3, 2008  
Midweek Advent Worship  
Pastor Randy Ott

First Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalm of the Day: Psalm 72  
Second Lesson: Jeremiah 23:5-6

### **The Days Are Coming**

The days are coming—a phrase you heard God say in both of our readings this evening. It's a phrase that's throughout the Old Testament where the Father talks about the coming of the One who would be our Savior.

It's kind of interesting how you get yourself prepared for someone coming, isn't it? I don't know what it's like in your house, but in our house, we spend a lot of time scurrying around with our heads cut off cleaning the house so people don't see actually how we live. They see the house as it should look.

I remember as a kid doing that also, making sure everything was done. But I remember as a kid not worrying so much what the house looked like, but being excited at times to see some of my cousins that I didn't get to see all that often. Or maybe when we were going to see them, it would be fun to go see the cousins that lived down around Detroit that we didn't get to see all that often.

Maybe you can relate to that, that anticipation of visiting someone or someone coming to see you or you going to see them, and the buildup, the excitement, the anticipation. Then you see them and you start doing things that cousins do, you know, chasing around doing all the things you know you're not supposed to do but you think you are going to be able to get away with it because your cousins are with you and your parents won't stomp on you or step on you as much. You get yourself in trouble. You do things you probably wouldn't do normally but you're all excited and it's a lot of fun because it's different and there's a thrill with it all. I remember that as a kid growing up.

But can you imagine if you were all excited to go down and see your cousins some place and you get there, and your cousin says "Hi" and then goes out the door and goes next door and plays with someone else and leaves you hanging there with nothing to do except talk to the adults? How do you think you might feel? Do you think it might brew a little while? Do you think you'd be checking the window, looking out there to see if they were coming back? Do you think after a while when they didn't come back you would get more and more angry? Do you think you might start acting out for a whole different reason than besides having fun with your cousins? Do you think you might be acting out now because you're hurt and you're really, really irritated? That wouldn't be much fun at all, now would it?

Think about how our God tells us that in time he would send the Savior, that the days would be coming when the Savior would come and he would be the righteous branch.

He would be the Lord our righteousness. Their God is saying “I myself, the Lord, I am going to come to you.” Think of how he was received. Did his people go off and play with a neighbor and leave him hanging? Did they do even more?

Did they chase him down the street, reject him, mock him, say “how can you be saying you’re the Savior” when he quoted from Isaiah when he sat in the synagogue. They said, “We know you. You’re Joseph’s son. How can you be saying today the Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing? You can’t be it.” Can you imagine if you were God how you would feel if you had made everything just the way you wanted so that in time you would enter into time to take away everyone’s sins, and everyone yawned and chased after something else. It’s a good thing you and I aren’t God, right? I don’t think we’d be so patient and loving as our God is.

And it’s not just his people that he is patient and loving with. God tells us he’s coming to save us. Think of how we prepare for this season, our most favorite time of the year, how we end up chasing after everything under the sun so that when God comes, when we get to that day that we have selected to celebrate his birth, sometimes it’s almost an afterthought because we’ve celebrated so much beforehand in every other way under the sun that, the eve before we’ve peaked, and now the festival itself? That’s a little tougher. We’ve got other things to do. We have the neighbor boy to go play with. We’d never do that to our God, now would we? Of course we would. We’re sinners. We’re wicked. We’re unrighteous. That’s why we so desperately need the Lord our righteousness, because we have decided at times to celebrate our God in our way, not in his way. He says, “Live for me. Make my Word and Sacraments your treasure.” We find other ways at times to celebrate his birth.

But our God comes to us, not only in time for us looking into the past, but he continually comes to us again and again. He reigns wisely. He does what is just and right in the land because he comes to us and tells us that he has taken away our sins, even our sin of going to play with the neighbor instead of him. He has removed it completely because he was perfect and righteous in our place. And he came in time, not just to be born, but to live perfectly and then to die. That’s a king who reigned wisely, who did what human wisdom never could have thought of. And he did it perfectly and he comes to us now and in his love and in his patience and says, “Focus on my light. In the darkness of your sin and the darkness of the world that you live in, focus on my light.”

Every week we light another candle on the Advent Wreath to remind us that the light is getting brighter because the day we celebrate his birth is coming nearer. But you and I can live in the glory of that light each and every day of our life because we know the Lord our righteousness. We know that we live in safety. We know that we can call on his name, not just in prayer and not just in praise, but we can call on his name by spending time with him, by finding our joy in him and by living in the glory of his light.

**Hymns: 12, 5:1,2**

**Psalm 72**

**Isaiah 11:1-10**

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of power,  
the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD -

and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.  
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Righteousness will be his belt  
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;  
and a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear,  
their young will lie down together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,  
and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

They will neither harm nor destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations  
will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

**Jeremiah 23:5-6**

"The days are coming," declares the LORD,  
"when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch,  
a King who will reign wisely  
and do what is just and right in the land.

In his days Judah will be saved  
and Israel will live in safety.

This is the name by which he will be called:  
The LORD Our Righteousness.