

3 December 2006  
Advent 1

St. Athanasius Lutheran Church  
Vienna, VA

## Jesu Juva

“Our Coming King”

Text: Luke 19:28-40; Jeremiah 33:14-16

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

***Behold, your King is coming to you; righteous and having salvation.*** (Introit Antiphon)

That sentence is what the season of Advent is all about. Your King is coming to you. And not just any king, but the King of the universe. The creator of all that is. Your creator. The One to whom you owe your physical life, your spiritual life, and all that you are and have. This King, your King is coming to you.

But this is, in fact, nothing new for our God. If He is anything, if He wants to be known in any way, it is as a *coming* God – a God who comes *to* His people, *for* His people, to be *with* His people. And this from the very beginning, for right after Adam and Eve plunged themselves and our world into sin, God did not stand afar off, in condemnation and judgment, but *came to them*, searching for them. “***Where are you?***” the Father calls out to His wayward children. (Gen 3:9) And after that still He came: to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; to Moses and Joshua; to David and Solomon; and in the Tabernacle and Temple to dwell with His people.

But, as we heard from Jeremiah, ***the days are coming*** when our coming God was going to come in a *new* way. When ***the Lord our righteousness*** will be born into the house and lineage of David. The Lord, the Almighty God, the creator of all things, will come and be born as a man. And, Jeremiah tells us, He will do so ***to execute justice and righteousness; to save***, that His people may ***dwell securely***.

*And so He came.* The babe in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in the manger is Immanuel, God with us. (Mt 1:23) God in human flesh.

*And so He came.* The God in human flesh riding on the back of a colt, riding into Jerusalem to save His people. To save His people by executing justice and righteousness – not by requiring it of them, but by taking it upon Himself. Fulfilling His perfect justice and righteousness upon the cross. **Taking** His justice and judgment against our sin upon Himself, and **giving** His righteousness and His forgiveness to us.

*And so He came.* According to plan. From crib, to colt, to cross – our God, our King, coming to us, that we might be saved.

*And so He came* again this morning! Yes, He is not done. Our God and King came today to little Caleb. Our King who once rode a colt into Jerusalem rode in the waters of Holy Baptism into Caleb's heart. Our creator God came to Caleb to create the new life of faith in him. Our Saviour who was born as a baby came to this baby, that His perfect life be Caleb's life, that His cross be Caleb's cross, and that His resurrection be Caleb's resurrection. He came, that little Caleb be rescued from the death of sin and given the life of Heaven.

*And so He came* again this morning – but not only for little Caleb! *Our Saviour came* this morning also **for you**. For you He came riding on the words of the Absolution, forgiving you all your sins. For you He comes riding in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, giving you His body and blood to forgive, renew, and strengthen you. For you He comes, that you who have spent another week in the struggle against sin and death might be rescued from your sin and given the life of Heaven.

*Yes, He comes to you,* according to plan. From font, to Word, to Supper, our God, our King, our Saviour, coming to us, giving these gifts to you, that we might be saved. No matter how young, no matter how old. No matter how rich, no matter how poor. No matter who you are, He comes to you. He comes **for** you.

***Behold, your King is coming to you . . .***

*But do you care?* I say that in all seriousness, because I think sometimes we take this for granted; that we do not realize what a wonder this is, that our God and King comes to us!

For I think of the excitement and wonder of the Christmas season now upon us – the excitement of children waiting for *Christmas* to come, and the wonder and joy of the gifts they receive . . . and I wonder: where is my excitement, wonder, and joy? At the coming not of Santa, but of my God, my King, my Saviour for me. At the coming of Christ the Lord. At the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation that I receive from Him. Gifts far more valuable than the gifts of this world, which will break or wear out or be tossed aside in just a short time. . . . *Do I care?*

Or perhaps we are like children who try to be good one month out of twelve, because Santa is watching and their gifts depend on it! While the other eleven months they give it little thought. . . . Is that you and me, coming in repentance one day out of seven, to receive our gifts, but giving it all little thought the other 6 days of the week? Using the freedom as license to sin; neglecting the Word and prayer; living as if God's Word and forgiveness

make no difference in my life outside these walls? . . . *Do I care?*

***Behold, your King is coming to you . . .***

I know that you care. But I know also your sin, and the weakness of your human nature. Mine as well. So repent. For the truth is that we do not love God as we ought, above all things. We do not love our neighbor as we ought, serving them and not sinning against them. Even after our Lord has come to us, forgiven our sin, given us His Spirit, and made us His children – still, we have our sinful flesh still clinging to us. Dragging us down. We choose the wrong and not the right. We let the things of this world overshadow what is truly important. We listen to the lies and deceptions of Satan. We turn and go our own way. We treasure and lust after the things that do not last . . .

So now ponder the fact: *your Saviour-King is coming to you!* Yes, though we are unworthy, *He comes to us*. Is this not a wonder? That He turns not away from us, but as He came to Eden, to Jerusalem, *He now comes to us*. Calling us as a Father to His wayward children. Calling us from our shame and sin, and coming to us with His forgiveness that we go and sin no more. Coming with His life that we go and live a new life. Coming to us, not because we're good, because we're not! Coming to us, not because we deserve it, because we don't! But coming to us, because we need Him. Because we could not go to Him. Not little Caleb, not you and me. Our sin is too great for us, but it is not too great for Him!

*And so He comes now*, because it is not too late. He comes, calling us to repentance, calling us to faith, calling us to come and receive His gifts, calling us to live in Him alone.

*And so He comes now*, as Saviour, for He will soon come again as Judge. On that day He will come in all His glory, riding no longer in the humble means of Word and water and bread and wine, but on the clouds of Heaven. He comes now to prepare us for that day. That we be ready. That we sing on that day ***“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!”*** Just as the crowds in Jerusalem proclaimed when Jesus came to them then, and just as we proclaim now as Jesus comes to us in Holy Communion. The same Jesus, the same precious coming.

Yes, *today He comes*, and today, little Caleb takes His place with us in proclaiming our coming Saviour. He may not yet know the words, but it is with the same faith that He now cries out; with all the crowds to whom Jesus came. The crowds of those who were once blind or lame or deaf, but could now see and run and hear, *because Jesus came to them*. The crowds of those like Lazarus who were once dead, but now alive *because Jesus came to them*. The crowds of those who were unbelieving, but now believing *because Jesus came to them*. Today, you, me, and little Caleb take our place with them, *because Jesus has come to us*.

***Behold, your King is coming to you . . .*** from crib, to colt, to cross; from font, to Word, to Supper; coming . . . until He comes again, *one last time*, in glory. Same Jesus, same King, same Saviour, same gifts. He comes now, to give you life. He comes now, to give you a kingdom not of this world. He comes now, for you. *Saviour of the Nations, come!* (LW #13)  
Come now, and lead us home.

In the Name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.