

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, November 27, 2022

Introduction to the day

The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Musical Introduction: Hope Is a Star

Soloist: Hope is a Star that shines in the night,
Leading us on 'till the morning is bright.
Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
Giving a promise of safety and worth.

Congregation sings:

Hope Is a Star
Congregational Part

Words by BRIAN WREN Music by JOEL RANEY

When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be
first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall
be a - fraid, none shall be a - fraid.

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CANDLE LIGHTING: First Sunday of Advent—Hope

In this season of Advent, we remember that Christ is coming to bring us hope.

For those of us bound by bitterness and anger,

Christ is coming to bring us hope.

For those of us feeling trapped and misunderstood,

Christ is coming to bring us hope.

For those of us burdened with ceaseless worry,

Christ is coming to bring us hope.

For those of us whose lives feel out of control,

Christ is coming to bring us hope.

Candle Lighting

One candle is lit on the Advent wreath.

Reader: In this season of Advent, as we look forward to Christmas, we take time to celebrate and to remember. On this, the first Sunday, as we light the first candle, we celebrate hope. Hope for a better world and a better tomorrow. We also remember that we are God's instruments of hope here on earth, and God calls us to spread the message of hope.

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PRAYER

Pastor: Most merciful God, we thank you for the hope that shines like a star in the night. With your promise, we can look forward to a better tomorrow. Fill our hearts with the love that hope brings to all humankind during times of distress. In your name, O Lord, we pray. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. **Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.**

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

God of new beginnings, we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation.

Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord. **Amen.**

OPENING SONG: Come Now, O Prince of Peace (247)

- 1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
- 2 Come now, O God of love, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
- 3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.
- 4 Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

Text: Geon-yong Lee; tr. Marion Pope. Used by permission: 2022 onelicense.net A-712659.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. 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.**

CANTICLE OF ANTICIPATION:

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn (242 v. 1)

Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,
For angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,
Behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor,
To bring all hearts together,
He opens wide the heav'nly door
And lives now inside us forever.

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FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. ³Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. ⁵O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 122

¹I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”

²**Now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

³Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity with itself;

⁴**to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, the assembly of Israel, to praise the name of the LORD.**

⁵For there are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

⁶**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you.**

⁷Peace be within your walls and quietness within your towers.

⁸**For the sake of my kindred and companions, I pray for your prosperity.**

⁹Because of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek to do you good.”

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶“About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But 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. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: “God Empowers Us to Live with Hope”

HYMN OF THE DAY: Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers (244 v. 1 & 2)

1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing,
And darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising
And soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
At midnight comes the cry.

2 The watchers on the mountain
Proclaim the bridegroom near;
Go forth as he approaches
With alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting;
The gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory;
The bridegroom is at hand.

Text: Laurentius Laurenti; tr. Sarah B. Findlater. Music: Swedish folk tune.

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 again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

God of all, your children everywhere cry out for mercy. Awaken the global church to the urgent needs of our time. Break down barriers of culture and custom and unite people of all faiths in your redemptive and healing work. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of wonder, the earth's beauty and abundance is your gift. Teach us your ways of sharing resources and caring for life. Guard fragile habitats, preserve the wild places, and protect endangered plants and animals. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of peace, you judge the nations. Beat our weapons into tools for serving the neighbor. Strengthen the resolve of all who work for an end to war. We pray for lasting peace in the land of Jesus' birth. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of lovingkindness, you desire fullness of life for everyone. Fill those who hunger. Comfort the grieving and attend to those near death. Bring help and hope to any who are sick or needing your care. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of community, you are present when we gather in your name. Guide congregations in transition or conflict. Give wisdom to congregational councils, call committees, and ministry leaders. Keep us alert to unexpected opportunities for mission. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of promise, your goodness is everlasting. We give thanks for the lives of the faithful who now rest in you. We trust that you will bring us into the company of all the saints with rejoicing. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN (Sunday only): Come to the Table

Come to the table of mercy,
Prepared with the wine and the bread.
All who are hungry and thirsty,
Come, and your souls will be fed.
Come at the Lord's invitation;
Receive from his nail-scarred hand.
Eat of the bread of salvation;
Drink of the blood of the Lamb.

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

God, the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: People, Look East (v. 1)

1 People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.

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