

Worship Service for Sunday, December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

ACS Holy Communion Setting 12

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.

**We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.**

We are complicit in systems of exploitation.

We choose comfort over courage.

We are careless with creation's bounty.

Look upon us with mercy.

Turn our hearts again to you.

**Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.**

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In the tender compassion of ✝ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* (ELW 242)

One or more of the following may be sung: hymns, psalms; a prayer for God's mercy; a song of praise.

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen

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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.

KYRIE

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

SONG OF PRAISE *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257)

3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Sermon and Lighting the Advent Wreath: Advent 2

**We praise you, O God, for this circle of light
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.**

**As we light the candles on this wreath,
kindle within us the fire of your Spirit,
that we may be light shining in the darkness.**

**Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.**

**Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.**

Light two candles.

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE *This Little Light of Mine* (ELW 677)

1 This little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

2 Ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah.

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her
that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry out!” And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!”

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Choir sings the refrain and then all will repeat the refrain. The Assisting Minister will sing the verses, and everyone will sing the refrain as indicated.

Righ - teous - ness shall pre -
 pare a path - way for God.

Psalm 85:13

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Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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- ¹You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;
 you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.
- ²**You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people
 and blotted out | all their sins.**
- ⁸I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying;
 for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their | hearts
 to you.
- ⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you,
 that your glory may dwell | in our land. R**
- ¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;
 righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.
- ¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,
 and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.**
- ¹²The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,
 and our land will | yield its increase.
- ¹³**Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD
 and shall prepare for | God a pathway. R**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter.

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the

letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *Pastor Sara Wirth*

HYMN OF THE DAY *Comfort, Comfort Now My People (ELW 256)*

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

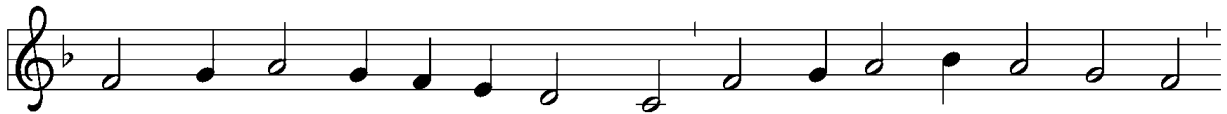
We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Comfort, Comfort Now My People



1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseauxes de David*, Geneva, 1551

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal (*especially*). Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season (*especially*). Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together,

God our provider,

by your merciful hand

abundance springs up from the earth.

Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.

**Let them be a sign of your steadfast love
and faithfulness for all people,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
 God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your
 glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.
Come, take your place at the table.

COMMUNION

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN *Christ, Be Our Light* (ELW 715)

COMMUNION HYMN *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!* (ELW 246)

TABLE BLESSING

PM: And now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

AM: Let us pray together

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✝ remain upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* (ELW 249)

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
way for God with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite

Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.