

Advent 2 Dec. 6, 2020

Holden Prayer Around the Cross "In Silence We Wait" (Susan Briehl & Tom Witt)
Sundays and Seasons 2020 Augsburg Fortress, and license

Soft Instrumental "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Title Card - "*Christ comes to our heart in our home*"

Begin in Darkness "We begin in darkness"

Begin song Holden SP#24 Light and Darkness

[Carry in light to light the Christ Candle]

L1 The God of peace be with all of you.
And, also with you.

L1 Let us pray (pause):
Stir up our hearts, O God, to prepare a pathway for your Christ.
By his coming speak peace to your people and turn our hearts toward you,
That your steadfast love and faithfulness may dwell in all the earth.
Amen.

L2 As the days grow shorter and the nights longer,
we gather in the darkness to await the dawn of God's mercy.
Our prayer is woven of silence, scripture, and song.
The music is simple and easily learned.
And the time of silence will be long enough for you to breathe deeply,
Wide enough to wrap around us, and deep enough to become our prayer.

L1 As we await Christ's coming, let us give thanks for God's presence in the
darkness. Each bid will conclude with the words, "We praise you, O God."
Your response is "For the darkness and the light are both alike to you".
(pause) We praise you, O God.
For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

L2 For the darkness of waiting, of not knowing what is to come,
of staying ready and quiet and attentive, we praise you, O God.
For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

L1 For the darkness of staying silent, for the terror of having nothing to say, and
for the greater terror of needing to say nothing we praise you, O God.
For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

L2 For the darkness of loving in which it is safe to surrender, to let go of our self-protection, and to stop holding back our desire, we praise you, O God.
For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

L1 For the darkness of choosing, when you give us the moment, to speak, and act, and change, and we cannot know what we have set in motion, but we still have to take the risk, we praise you, O God.
For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

L2 For the darkness of hoping in a world that longs for you, for the wrestling and the laboring of all creation, for wholeness and justice and freedom, we praise you, O God.
For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

L1 [adapted prayer from p. 68]
Let us pray. (pause)
Holy God, Eternal Light, we wait in the glow of this Christ candle – a light, signs of our hope and your promise. We cry out for your dawn to illumine our lives, to pierce the darkness of our sin and sorrow, and to shine on this community, our neighborhoods, our nation, and your whole creation. Hear our prayers, O God, and strengthen our faith, through the One for whom we wait, Jesus Christ, Amen

CHANT *Stir Up Your Power* (SP39)

L1 Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. In your mercy, receive our prayers and by your power hasten the day when peace and justice kiss and steadfast love and faithfulness meet for the sake of the world you love.
Amen.

Sunday December 6, 2020

Advent Wreath (Sundays and Seasons p. 25)

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)

Confession & Forgiveness (Sundays and Seasons p. 24)

Blessed be God, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. Amen.

Together let us honestly and humbly confess the times that we have not lived as God desires.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

Loving and forgiving God,

We confess that we are held captive by sin.

In-spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.

We have not welcomed the stranger.

We have not loved our neighbor.

We have not been Christ to one another.

Restore us, O God.

Wake us up and turn us from our sin.

Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven and you are free - free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, +comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

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.

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

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.

The Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

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.**

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.**

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

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.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

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, Lord Jesus Christ

Hymn of the Day

All Earth is Hopeful

ELW 266

The Apostles' Creed (ELW p. 105)

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

P: God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

A: Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. We pray especially for the leaders of our nation. Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Leading God, teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know and those whose names are known only to you. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Offering

As the Dark Awaits the Dawn

ELW 261

Offering Prayer

Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **Amen.**

Words of Institution ELW p. 110 (Advent – Epiphany)

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup, we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (ELW p. 112)

Invitation to Communion

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here. Come, eat and drink.

Prayer after Communion

Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice.

In this bread and cup, you give us life forever.

In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, † now and forever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sending Hymn*He Came Down*

ELW 253