

# Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP!** It is our prayer that this will be a time of worship and renewal for you, when you will encounter the living God revealed in Jesus Christ.

## INTRODUCTION

Mystery. The unexpected. Revelation. Paul hints at it in his letter to the Romans. Mary encounters it as the angel Gabriel greets her with the unexpected news that she will bear a child who will be the Son of God. She is confused and wonders out loud, "How can this be?" It is a question of faith we all ask when our plans are confused; confounded; interrupted by the mystery and wonder and revelation of God. And even as "God's how" remains an unfathomable mystery, "God's Who" is about to be revealed in a Child born to a virgin and born for the world. "Do not be afraid, you have found favour with God." It is the angel's message to Mary. It is God's message to us. It is the message of hope for all the world. For nothing is impossible with God!

## GATHERING

Let us join together to worship the God who fulfills all promises, Jesus Christ, the hope born of Mary, and the Holy Spirit, who fuels our hope as we await Christ's return.



“Jesus Christ You Are the Light of the World” (Holden Evening Prayer #2-Leader #5)

*Leader:*



Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world;

*All:*



the light no darkness can o - ver - come;

*Leader:*



Be with us in the new light of this morning;

*All:*



And chase away the shadows of our fear;

*Leader:*



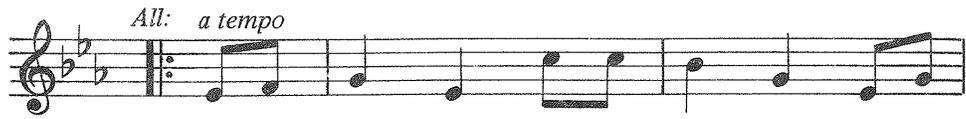
Let your light scat - ter the darkness,

*All:*



and shine within : your people here. —

“Joyous Light” (Holden Evening Prayer #3-Leader #6-7)



1. Joy-ous light of heav-'nly glo - ry, lov - ing  
 2. In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the  
 3. You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev - 'ry



glow of God's own face, you who sing cre - a - tion's  
 blaz - ing sun of dawn, of the light of peace and  
 danc - ing star of night, make us shine with gen - tle



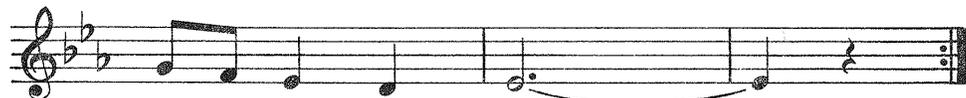
sto - ry, shine on ev 'ry land and race. Now as  
 wis - dom, we can hear your qui - et song. Love that  
 jus - tice, let us each re - flect your light. Might - y



Morning dawns around us we shall raise our songs to  
 fills the night with won - der, love that warms the wea - ry  
 God of all cre - a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our



you, God of day - break, God of shad - ows, come and  
 soul, Love that bursts all chains a - sun - der, set us  
 way, Lov - ing Spir - it of sal - va - tion, lead us



light our hearts a - new. \_\_\_\_\_  
 free and make us whole. \_\_\_\_\_  
 on to end - less day. \_\_\_\_\_

## CONFESSION

Reader 1 Jesus, who comes as new birth,  
Reader 2 **we have prepared for you  
with comfortable traditions and humble requests.**

Reader 1 We have memorialized your birth  
Reader 2 **as if it was a past act  
and not the bold declaration of a living God.**

Reader 1 We have rested in the safer hope of your work,  
Reader 2 **abandoning our call as co-creators of the Beloved Community,  
harming your children with our ill-informed action and comfort-  
catering inaction.**

Reader 2 **All this we humbly confess.**

Reader 1 Help us remember in this season of anticipation  
that we prepare not only for you,  
but because of you.

Reader 2 **Challenge us to examine our intentions,  
and to hold sacred both the act of preparing,  
and the transforming justice love of the one who comes.  
Amen**

## KYRIE

Reader 1 Forgive us Lord,  
We struggle to hope  
Reader 2 **Lord, have mercy**

Reader 1 Forgive us Lord,  
We struggle to love  
Reader 2 **Lord have mercy**

Reader 1 Forgive us Lord  
We struggle with anger  
Reader 2 **Lord have mercy**

**“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (vs 1,6,7)**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain*

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

O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;  
O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

O come, O King of nations, come,  
O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
refresh the hearts that long for you;  
restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Holy and Mighty One who sent Gabriel to Mary, you proclaim unbelievable things to your people generation after generation. You make your proclamations reality. As we wait for you coming anew this Christmas, give us faith like Mary, that it will be to us according to your will. Amen.

**ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING WEEK 3: When**

With voices rising, rising like incense

*\*light candle\**

We shout to you in hope, our God  
**We shout to you in hope, our God**

All around us is shouting  
From the TV pundits and the ALL CAPS tweets  
**To violence and rioting and picketing in our streets**  
**We want to turn it off and tune it out**

Yet we shout today, shout with hope  
**We shout like our ancestors when they blew the trumpet in Zion**  
We shout like the meadows and valleys  
**We shout like the resurrected given new life**  
We shout with the multitude at the last

Today we shout because our past and our future unite  
**We shout because we know that love incarnate leads to life everlasting**  
We shout in this moment because if we don't the stones themselves would cry out  
**We shout because nothing can steal our praise**  
We shout with joy, a joy that comes in the morning, a joy to the world

We shout to you in hope, our God  
**We shout to you in hope our God**  
You give us hope today

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**READING** Romans 16:25-27

A reading from Romans the 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter.

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith — to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

God's story, your story.  
**Thanks be to God!**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, Alleluia  
We prepare for you, O Lord  
**Your words give us hope for life with you**  
Alleluia

**GOSPEL** Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter.  
**Glory to you O Lord**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of our Lord  
**Praise to you O Christ**

**SOLO "Unexpected and Mysterious" (vs 1-2)**

Unexpected and mysterious is the gentle word of grace.  
Ever-loving and sustaining is the peace of God's embrace.  
If we falter in our courage and we doubt what we have known,  
God is faithful to console us as a mother tends her own.

In a momentary meeting of eternity and time,  
Mary learned that she would carry both the mortal and divine.  
Then she learned of God's compassion, of Elizabeth's great joy,  
and she ran to greet the woman who would recognize her boy.

**SERMON**

**SOLO "Unexpected and Mysterious" (vs 3)**

We are called to ponder mystery and await the coming Christ,  
to embody God's compassion for each fragile human life.  
God is with us in our longing to bring healing to the earth,  
while we watch with joy and wonder for the promised Savior's birth.

## APOSTLES' 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

**A** *Repeat continuously*

All:

(Hmmm) \_\_\_\_\_

God of mer - cy, hold us in love.

Song leader: For peace and salvation, we pray to you:

**Congregation: God of mercy, hold us in love.**

Prayer leader: Refresh your church, gracious God. As we prepare to welcome your Son, Immanuel, into our homes and our hearts this Christmas, come to Christians everywhere. Fill your people with hope and love so that your church may serve as a beacon of your light all year long. Let your praise well up with us and overflow, as together with one voice, we rejoice in your coming to give us hope.

Song leader: For peace between nations, for peace between peoples:

**Congregation: God of mercy, hold us in love.**

Song leader: Let your peace fill the hearts and minds of all who govern that there may be peace. We give you thanks for the scientists and researchers who have worked tirelessly to develop vaccines for COVID, and we pray that you will strengthen the resolve of governments to ensure that all people across the world will have access to them. May the light of your love shine so brightly that all people may come to know that all hope, all joy, all peace rests in you, Immanuel, God with us.

Song leader: For all of your servants who live out the gospel:

**Congregation: God of mercy, hold us in love.**

Prayer leader: Immanuel, God with us, we give thanks for all those who lead in worship today. Thanks that even now, especially now, we can gather together in this way, and praise you. Thanks that you continue to come in wonderful and surprising ways, just like you came to Mary. Open us up to be ready to receive you, to hear your voice and to say yes when you call. Watch over Walter and Pat Faber and Kevin and Diane Fjordbotten, and continue to be with our Sunday School students and their teachers. In hope, in peace, in joy in love, we await your coming and we give you thanks.

Song leader: Keep watch on our loved ones and keep us from danger:

**Congregation: God of mercy, hold us in love.**

Prayer leader: Come to all those in need, Jesus. Fill the emptiness and longing they have in their hearts with your hope. Especially be with Sharla, Debi, Renee, Marion, Arne, Eva, Olai and Suzy, Dave and Trudy, Lyle and Marlene, Olivia, Syd, Pastor Dick and Jan, Corrie, Patrick, Klaus, Harriet, Shirley, Eowyn, Catherine, Grace, Lilian, Margaret, Clayton, Montgomery, Rosemary, Landon, Wayne, Shellene, Elizabeth, Clayton, Judy and Ron, and all those suffering with or because of COVID. Comfort all who are grieving the loss of loved ones, and allow them to rest in your loving arms, Immanuel, knowing that you are with them giving them peace and filling them with hope.

Song leader: Help us, comfort us, all of our days:

**Congregation: Keep us, hold us, gracious God.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.

FINAL BLESSING (Holden Evening Prayer #12-Leader # 22-23)

*Leader:* *All:*

Let us bless our God: praise and thanks to you.

*Presider:*

May God, Cre - a - tor bless us and keep us, may

Christ be ev - er light for our lives, may the

Spir - it of Love be our guide and path, for

all of our days. \_\_\_\_\_

*All:*

A - men.

HYMN OF THE DAY "All Earth is Hopeful" (vs 1,2,4) ELW 266



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor  
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!  
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:  
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co\_a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el  
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task; this, the  
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -  
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -  
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how  
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -  
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.  
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.  
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.  
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
**By the power of the Holy Spirit may we abound in hope.**

As we are sent, so now we go in peace to love and serve our God.  
**Thanks be to God! We Will!**

### Images in Worship Broadcast

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/johndonaghy/22885862/> - John Donaghy

[https://mygreatmaster.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/mary\\_elizabeth\\_07.jpg](https://mygreatmaster.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/mary_elizabeth_07.jpg)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/swperman/221074981/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ebarney/4762865759/>

<tp://www.flickr.com/photos/ebarney/4762865759/>

Additional descriptions can be found at the Art in the Christian Tradition image library, a service of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/>. All images available via Creative Commons 3.0 License.

### COPYRIGHT PERMISSION

1. **“Jesus Christ You Are the Light of the World” “Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory” “Blessing”**  
Text: Greek hymn, 3rd cent., para. Marty Haugen, b. 1950; Music: Marty Haugen. Text & Music©1987 GIA Publications, Inc. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-712444
2. **“Emmanuel”** Text & Music: Steve Angrisano, bl 1965 ©2004. Published by OCP. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-712444
3. **“Unexpected and Mysterious”** Text: Jeannette M. Lindholm, b. 1961 Music: JEFFERSON © Augsburg Fortress 1978. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-712444.
4. **“All Earth is Hopeful”** Text: Alberto Taulé, be. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946, Music: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; arr. Skinner Chávez-Melo, b. 1944-1992. Text & Tune © 1972 Alberto Taulé, admin. Virgil C. Funk, tr.©1995 Madeleine Forell Marshall, admin. Augsburg Fortress; arr. © Estate of Skinner Chávez-Melo. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-712444.
5. **“Spoken Liturgy”** All liturgy and litanies are for public use, c. Disrupt Worship Project (or DWP). [adapted, Sem Kayla Sadowy, Rev Carla Christopher Wilson, Rev Michelle Magee, Rev. Collette Broady Grund, and Rev. Steve Jerbi .

"Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-712444. All rights reserved."