

THE SEASON OF ADVENT



ADVENT SERVICE OF WORSHIP

December 2, 2020

5:30 PM

PRAYER FOR MEDITATION: *God of grace, ever faithful to your promises, the earth rejoices in hope of our Savior's coming and looks forward with longing to his return at the end of time. Prepare our hearts to receive him when he comes, for he is Lord forever and ever. Amen.*

WELCOME

Rev. John White

OPENING SENTENCES

Rev. John White

Leader: Our soul waits for the Lord;

People: *God is our help and shield.*

Leader: Our heart is glad in the Lord, because we trust in God's holy name.

Leader: *Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us even as we hope in you.*

PRELUDE

Prelude on VENI EMMANUEL

Callahan

Dr. Terry McRoberts

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Courtney Bowen

Leader: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People: *Lift our eyes from earth to see the wonders of the heavens.*

Leader: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People: *Fill each heart with carols of joy, songs of gladness.*

Leader: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People: *Bring peace to earth, shelter to the homeless, and food to the hungry.*

Leader: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People: *Bring healing to the sick, the abused, and the hurting.*

Leader: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People: *Show us with forgiveness and blessing, hope and laughter. Let your love clothe us as dew on the morning grass.*

Leader: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

People: *Give us hope that we might sing in the midst of sorrow, believe in the midst of doubt, and light candles in the midst of darkness.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Rev. Courtney Bowen

God with us, we have a long list of things we want to see on Christmas Eve. Experiences we want to have, feelings we want to feel, friends and family we want to hug, songs we want to sing, and even cookies we want to eat. We hold all that before you today. Some of these things may be realized. Many will not. But still, Christmas will come. You still show up in our world and fill us with awe and wonder. You will once again renew our hearts and minds to fully hope, (*continued*)

to express unconditional love, to share contagious joy, and find peace – peace that passes all understanding. We release to you the ghosts of Christmas past and ask for the Spirit to fill us with energy and imagination for the Christmas that is to come. In your Holy name, we pray. Amen.

HYMN #92 (*Susannah White*) *While We Are Waiting, Come* WAITING

FIRST READING *Isaiah 11:1-10* *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

MOMENT FOR MEDITATION

HYMN #82 (*Susannah White*) *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* HYFRYDOL

SECOND READING *Mark 1:1-8* *Rev. John White*

MOMENT FOR MEDITATION

EVENING PRAYERS AND THE LORD’S PRAYER *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

Leader: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of light and darkness.

People: *In this holy season, when the sun’s light is swallowed up by the growing darkness of the night, you renew your promise to reveal among us the splendor of your glory, made flesh and visible to us in Jesus Christ, your Son.*

Leader: Through the prophets you teach us to hope for his reign of peace.
Through the outpouring of your Spirit you give sight to our souls, that we may see your glory in the presence of Christ.

Strengthen us where we are weak, support us in our efforts to do your will, and free our tongues to sing your praise, for to you all honor and blessing are due, now and forever.

People: *Give us your peace, O God, that we may rejoice in your goodness to us and to all your children, and be thankful for your love revealed in Jesus Christ.*

Leader: Especially we thank you for people who reveal your truth and righteousness, for courage to be bold disciples, for those who show hospitality, for surprises that have blessed us, for the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

People: *Give us your peace, O God, that we may be confident of your care for us and all your children, as we remember the needs of others.*

Leader: Especially we pray for friends and relatives who are far away, neighbors in special need,

(continued)

those who suffer hunger and thirst,
those who work at night while others sleep,

People: *Give us your peace, O God, that we may approach you open-handed and open-hearted as we offer you our thanksgivings and our prayers for those we now name before you...*

(congregation members are invited to name prayer concerns aloud. After each prayer concern is voiced, the leader will say "Lord in your mercy" and the congregation responds, "Hear our prayer.")

Leader: Lord in your mercy,

People: *Hear our prayer.*

Leader: God of hope and joy, the day draws near when the glory of your Son will brighten the night of the waiting world.

People: *Let no sorrow hinder the joy of those who seek him. Let no sin obscure the vision of wisdom seen by those who find him. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray saying, "Our Father, who art in heaven..."*

THIRD READING

Luke 1:26-33

Rev. Courtney Bowen

MOMENT FOR MEDITATION

ADVENT REFLECTION

Rev. John White

*WORDS OF FAITH

Rev. Courtney Bowen

Leader: During this Advent season, we give thanks to God for the most precious gift of Jesus Christ.

People: *Christ is our peace, our light, and our never-ending source of wisdom and love.*

Leader: With joy, we look forward to the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem!

People: *With hope, we anticipate the second coming of the Messiah, whose reign will be forever and ever!*

Leader: With love, we seek to build up the body of Christ, caring for our neighbors and the needy.

People: *With thanksgiving, we celebrate the life-giving presence of God's Holy Spirit in our lives each day. The Christ Child has come to us and is coming again soon. Come, Lord Jesus!*

HYMN #100 (*Susannah White*)

Canticle of the Turning

STAR OF THE
COUNTY DOWN

BENEDICTION

Rev. John White

POSTLUDE

Voluntary and Fughetta on STUTTGART
Dr. Terry McRoberts

Callahan