

AN ADVENT SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

NOVEMBER 29, 2020

Prelude

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
(Sleeper, wake, a voice is calling)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750), BWV 645

Welcome

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

As we light the Advent wreath, we pray: Emmanuel, God-with-us, bless us as we work for justice and peace in your world. **Amen.**

The Bidding Prayer

Presider Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world.

Almighty God, come and revive us. You call us to be salt of the earth, light of the world, and the leaven of humanity. Shine upon us and we shall be saved.

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

Intercessor O Emmanuel, we pray for your Church. Give us grace to live up to our vocation as your faithful disciples. We pray for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; for Mariann, our own Bishop; for all bishops and other ministers; and for all the holy people of God.

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

O God of justice and hope, we pray for our nation in these turbulent times, especially all those in positions of public trust—that they might inspire the confidence of a divided people, helping us heal and rebuild together.

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

O Savior of the world, draw near to those who are marginalized today, as you did when you walked this earth: the poor, the homeless, the outcasts, all those whose lives have been devastated by the pandemic. Guide our ongoing efforts in dismantling racism within our church and nation.

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

O Prince of Peace, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. Give them courage and hope, and bring them the joy of your salvation. We pray especially for . . . and those we name now, either silently or aloud . . .

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

O God of abundant mercy, we give thanks for . . . and those blessings which we name now, either silently or aloud . . .

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

O Alpha and Omega, we pray for those who have died, especially . . . and those we name now, either silently or aloud . . .

Our hearts are open; **Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

Presider Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to gather all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Opening Reflection The Rev. Ledlie I. Laughlin

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

COMFORT, O COMFORT MY PEOPLE, says your God. Speak 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. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every 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. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get 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!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He 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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord" from *Godspell* Stephen Schwartz (b. 1948)

The Gallery Choir

Text: Isaiah 40:3

THE SECOND LESSON

Jeremiah 31:31-34

A new covenant is promised which will be written in our hearts.

THE DAYS ARE SURELY COMING, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it

on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Music

O come, O come, Emmanuel
The St. Columba Ringers

arr. Barbara Kinyon (b. 1929)

THE THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet proclaims that God will come and save us.

THE WILDERNESS AND THE DRY LAND shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

People, look East
The St. Columba Singers

Traditional Besançon Carol
arr. Martin Shaw (1875–1958)

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.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.

Give up your strength, the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.

People, look East, and sing today: Love the Rose is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.

Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.

People, look East, and sing today: Love the Bird is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.

People, look East, and sing today: Love the Star is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.

Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.

People, look East, and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965)

THE FOURTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High.

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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

Dance and sing, for the Lord will be with us arr. Hal Hopson (b. 1933)
The Children's Choir

Dance and sing, for the Lord will be with us. Glory, hallelujah.

Peace and justice soon will be with us. Glory, hallelujah.

Clap your hands and sing: Glory, hallelujah.

Joyful voices ring. Glory, hallelujah.

Dance and sing, for the Lord will be with us. Glory, hallelujah.

Peace and justice soon will be with us. Glory, hallelujah.

Soon a Son will come through Jesse. His delight shall be the Lord.

He shall reign with truth and justice. Come, O Savior, come. *Refrain*

Wolf and lamb shall rest together, calf and lion shall join as friends.

Peace shall come to all the nations. Come, O Savior, come. *Refrain*

Text: Isaiah 11:1-7

THE FIFTH LESSON

John 1:1-16

The Word was made flesh and we have seen his glory.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and

lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

The holly and the ivy
Members of the Choirs

Traditional English carol
John Gardner (1917–2011)

The holly and the ivy, when they are both full grown,
of all the trees that are in the wood, the holly bears the crown.

*The rising of the sun, and the running of the deer,
the playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a blossom, as white as the lily flower;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, to be our sweet Saviour. *Refrain*

The holly bears a berry, as red as any blood;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, to do us sinners good. *Refrain*

The holly bears a prickly, as sharp as any thorn;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, on Christmas day in the morn. *Refrain*

The holly bears a bark, as bitter as any gall;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, for to redeem us all. *Refrain*

—Text: Traditional

Blessing

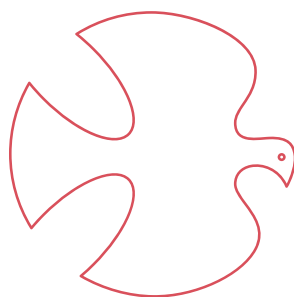
May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and
remain with you always. **Amen.**

Postlude

Toccata on "O come, O come, Emmanuel" Grimoaldo Macchia (b. 1972)

*The Holy Spirit inspires us to give generously, to extend Christ's mission in this place and the wider world.
Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/GivetoSCEC> to make your offering, or you can text to give using your phone.
Text "SCEC" to 73256 and you will receive a return text with instructions.*

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