

Order of Worship for December 6, 2020

The Second Sunday in Advent

Prelude

Welcome

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.

Advent Wreath Lighting Week 2:

With voices rising, rising like incense,
We reach to you in hope, our God
We reach to you in hope, our God
It is hard, in these days, to have hope
To invest in things we do not understand
To believe in things we have not experienced
To trust that all will be well
But you, O God, are a keeper of promises
You promised to create a nation, and you did

You promised a savior, and you dwelt among us
You promised forgiveness, and you give it
We grasp for you in hope
We await your return with expectation
We look to the renewal of all things with joy
We prepare for you through acts of love

Lighting of 2 Advent Candles

Hymn: O Come O Come Emmanuel, vs. 1

O come, o come, Emmanuel And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, o Israel.

Confession

Jesus, who comes as new birth,
we have prepared for you
with comfortable traditions and humble requests.
We have memorialized your birth
as if it was a past act
and not the bold declaration of a living God.
We have rested in the safer hope of your work,
abandoning our call as co-creators of the Beloved Community,
harming your children with our ill-informed action and comfort-catering inaction.
All this we humbly confess.
Help us remember in this season of anticipation
that we prepare not only for you,
but because of you.

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

Forgiveness

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the **+** Son, and 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.

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

1 You have been gracious to your land, O Lord;

you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

**2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

8 I 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.**

10 Steadfast 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.**

12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**13 Righteousness shall go before the Lord
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

Heaven and Earth (Psalm 85) by Richard Bruxvoort-Colligan

Refrain:

**Heaven and earth will meet and
marry**

Heaven and earth together

Verse 1:

Pure justice kissing peace

Oh, finally harmony

Sky reaches, touching ground

Oh, all things in unity

Verse 2:

Pure goodness pours like rain

**Oh, faithfulness sprouts and
thrives**

Revive the people's joy

Oh, healing for every tribe

Verse 3:
All things in harmony
Oh, sky reaches, touching
ground

Wherever there are two
Oh, may only love be done

Children's Sermon

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

1 Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
2 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.

3 A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the
Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for
our God.

4 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.

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

6 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.
7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
8 The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
9 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!"
10 See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
11 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.

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

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

2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

3 the 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."

**Sermon by The Rev. Dr. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl
Interim Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod**

Hymn: It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

**1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.**

**2 Still through the cloven skies they
come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.**

**3 And you, beneath life's crushing
load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!**

**4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing**

Apostle's 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

God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

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.

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. Sustain the work of scientists, researchers, and health care workers, especially during this stressful time of pandemic. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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 leaders at every level of government, that they might be guided by wisdom and compassion as they make decisions. Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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. We pray especially for all those who are struggling during this Covid-19 pandemic-- those who are sick, those who are dying, those who mourn the loss of loved ones, those who are overwhelmed, those who are struggling to get by, those who are simply longing of any kind of good news. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work. Make their generous lives an example for all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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

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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

Friends of Jesus, receive nourishment for your journey. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Receive the body of Christ, given for you.
Receive the blood of Christ, shed for you.

All are invited to eat and drink the communion elements they brought with them. If desired, individuals from the same household may serve each other.

Prayer after Communion

God of the welcome table,
in this meal we have feasted on your goodness
and have been united by your presence among us.
Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts
so that we may share your neighborly love with all,
through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life.
Amen.

Hymn: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

**1. Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;**

**Ox and ass before him bow,
And he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!**

**2. Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
And we are blest forever more.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!**

**3. Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
To gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!**

Blessing

May you find time for rest this season
May you create space to prepare
May the Lord our God fill you with hope
May Jesus Christ be ever present in your heart
May the Holy Spirit illuminate your way
Amen

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.
And have fun doing it.
We will! Amen!

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BY THE NUMBERS

Check Register Balance 11/20/2020
\$10,493.31
Operating Bank Loan: \$4,912.27
PPP Loan Balance:\$16,984 (Forgiven)

Offering: 11/29/2020
Current: \$1,070
Benevolence: \$52
Improvement: \$85
Parsonage Internet: \$60
NS Benevolence: \$125
Jesup Ministerial: \$265

Announcements:

Virtual Christmas Pageant: This year, our Christmas Eve service will be a virtual Christmas Pageant, with the United Methodist church. We will also have a virtual choir as part of this service! If you would like to participate in the virtual choir, but need help with technology, please contact Pastor Kristen.

Virtual Choirs for online Christmas Eve service:

*******All individuals and families** are invited to record themselves singing along with Silent Night, which may be found [here](https://youtu.be/wqndI4QtjE4): <https://youtu.be/wqndI4QtjE4> It works the best to listen on one device (like a computer or ipad) and record yourself on another device (like a phone). If you are able, please hold a lit candle while you sing. If you would like to participate but don't have the technology, or you need help, please let Pastor Kristen know. And if you feel self-conscious singing by yourself, please know that in the virtual choir, you will be singing along with lots of other people and nobody will be able to hear your individual voice. We are hoping for as much participation as possible!

*******Children** are also invited to record themselves singing along with Go Tell It On The Mountain, which may be found [here](https://youtu.be/EsJh-3HQNrM): <https://youtu.be/EsJh-3HQNrM> Again, it works best to listen on one device while recording on another. If you would like to participate but don't have the technology, or you need help, please let Pastor Kristen know.

Videos can be sent by text message to Pastor Kristen at 563-212-1366, sent via Facebook Messenger, or uploaded to [this Google drive](#):

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/130Pk5BwOoEWSCVMpW9Fxyz7E_spx7-Ed **Please send on or before December 15, if possible.**

Homebound members: Mary Jo Sullivan is at Grand View in Oelwein

Military members: Jordan Leach is home from Sheppard AFB TX. Both he and Justin are at the 185th Air Refueling Wing in Sioux City, IA. If you know of anyone else serving in the armed forces, please contact the church office (secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org) or (827-6626). We'd like to remember them in our prayers.

Prayer Requests: We know that this is currently an especially stressful time for health care workers and school employees. If you would like to include a healthcare worker or school employee by name (first name only) in the prayers of intercession for this season, please tell Pastor Kristen (pastor@americanlutheranjesup.org) or Jessica (secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org) or (827-6626).

Advent Sermon Series: The sermons for the Sundays in Advent will be from members of the synod staff of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. The Sermons will be based on the ELCA World Hunger Advent Study, [God With Us](#). A copy of this study may be downloaded from our church website.

Worship and Music met November 17, 2020: We discussed ideas for upcoming Advent and Christmas worship and music. We are hoping to give ALC members a better connection to worship with common activities such as an Advent kit that includes music, candles, devotions, and children's activities. Materials will be available to be picked up on Shirley Bergman's porch, 1115 6th St, across from church. We are excited to offer opportunities for families to tape music for Christmas services and the joint ALC/UMC pageant! You will hear more about this. Pastor Kristen will work on a hymn list for Jessica, Charlie, and Shirley to tape upcoming music.

Advent resources: We will have Advent resources available for pickup on the porch of Shirley Bergman's house, across 6th street from the church. These will be available throughout the season of Advent. Each household is invited to take a pack of tea light candles (for making a home Advent wreath), an Advent devotional booklet, and a church Christmas songbook. In addition, families can take packets of children's bulletins for each of their children (bulletins are available for readers and pre-readers), copies of the words to "Go Tell it On the Mountain," and battery powered candles. Please return candles and songbooks after the Christmas season is over.

Christmas gifts for Bremwood Lutheran Home: For many years, our congregation has provided Christmas gifts for the residents of Bremwood Lutheran Residential Treatment Center in Waverly. This year, due to the pandemic, Bremwood has suggested Walmart gift cards instead of an actual Christmas gift that is shopped for. This offers the opportunity to remember their residents while minimizing exposure to the coronavirus for those making donations. Counselors will shop for the residents utilizing the gift cards. If you would like to donate, you can drop off gift cards at the home of Mary Adams, 1215 Hawley Street, Jesup. A table has been set up inside the walk-in garage door for you to drop off your donations. The door will be open until 7 PM each day. You may also donate money through the church, marking "Bremwood" on your donation. Financial gifts for Bremwood must be received by December 14th to allow time for the counselors to shop. If you have questions you may call Mary at 827-3365 or (319) 269-3478. Thank you for your continued generosity.