**advent 1- december 3, 2023, zion, philipsburg**

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**POEM FOR THE START OF ADVENT**

What will set us journeying in search of the Christ this Advent?

How far are we prepared to go out of our way to look for the signs of His coming, and to prepare a path?

How will we travel through this season?

Will we be burdened by responsibilities and tasks, loaded with others’ expectations, overwhelmed by their needs? Will we be full of joy or weary of grief?

What will guide our steps in these weeks?

Will we follow a thread of longing, the hint of an alternative pathway, the words and music of the gathered community?

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Advent awaits us. Let us place our feet on the road and begin the journey.

May we find in familiar words, rituals and customs the birth of the new thing that awaits us.

~ written by Ann Siddall, and posted on the **Stillpoint Spirituality Centre and Faith Community**website. <http://stillpointsa.org.au/prayer/prayers-and-liturgies/>

**advent wreath lighting and litany- FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light.

Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near.

**You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world.**

You show up in our lives at unexpected times.

**Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival.**

**We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour,**

**you hurry to gather all people to your peace.**

**Amen.**

**announcments**

**GATHERING SONG*Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!* (ELW 246)**

1 Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding!  
"Christ is near," we hear it say.  
"Cast away the works of darkness,  
all you children of the day!"  
  
2 Wakened by the solemn warning,  
from earth's bondage let us rise;  
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling,  
shines upon the morning skies.  
  
3 See the Lamb, so long expected,  
come with pardon down from heav'n.  
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,  
one and all, to be forgiv'n;  
  
4 So, when next he comes in glory  
and the world is wrapped in fear,  
he will shield us with his mercy  
and with words of love draw near.  
  
5 Honor, glory, might, and blessing  
to the Father and the Son  
with the everlasting Spirit  
while unending ages run!

**GREETING (ELW p. 184)**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**KYRIE (ELW p. 184)**

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE*Now the Feast and Celebration* (ELW 167)**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 188)**

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9**

A reading from Isaiah.

*This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

1O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— 2as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
 3When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. 4From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.  
 5You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways.  
 But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
 6We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
 7There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you;  
 for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
 8Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
  we are all the work of your hand.  
 9Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever.  
  Now consider, we are all your people.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19**

1Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.  
 2**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,** **stir up your strength and come to help us.**  
 3Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.  
 4**O Lord God of hosts,** **how long will your anger fume when your | people pray?**  
 5You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.  
 6**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,** **and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**  
 7Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.  
 17**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,** **the one you have made so strong for yourself.**  
 18And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.  
 19**Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;** **let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

**SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

*As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.*

3Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
 4I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, 5for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—6just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—7so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. 8He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 188)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?** **You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.** **Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia.** **Alleluia, alleluia.**

**GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

[Jesus said:] 24“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened,  
  and the moon will not give its light, 25and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
  and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.  
26Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. 27Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.  
 28“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.  
 32“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 189)**

*The assembly is seated.*

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257) verses 1-4**

1 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.  
  
2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way. Refrain  
  
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,  
as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain  
  
4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free  
your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain

**CREED (ELW p. 189)**

With the whole church, let us profess the words of our faith with the 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**

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God’s day of restoration. *A brief silence.*

Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, so they are able to spread your joy to a world in need. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief *especially* Sarah, Chris, John, Vivian, Felix, Erin, Elizabeth, Zoli, Donna, Nick, Alea, Nancy’s sister Jane, our members in long term care Robert, Beatty, Evelyn and Rob, and those we name either out loud or in the silence of our hearts. . Deliver all in any need. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal presence Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 189)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**OFFERING*Wait for the Lord* (ELW 262)**

**OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 190)**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

**DIALOGUE (ELW p. 190)**

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.**

**PREFACE (ELW p. 190)**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 190)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,** **God of pow’r and might,** **heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.** **Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.** **Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope,

we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty. When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

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 life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again

in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith,

increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 191)**

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**

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.

Come, take your place at the table.

**COMMUNION (ELW p. 191)**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 191)**

**communion hymns** **#253, #487**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 191)**

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING**

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ☩ remain upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG*Come Now, O Prince of Peace:* (ELW 247)**

1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.  
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.  
  
2 Come now, O God of love, make us one body.  
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.  
  
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.  
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.  
  
4 Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.  
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Keep awake.

**Thanks be to God.**

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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