

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



November 28th, 2021

Advent I

Prelude

Welcome

Advent Litany

We come to know you, Holy One, as Wisdom Incarnate, as Flickering Flame, as Spirit of Life, as Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, Enfleshed.

You come to us as the Stranger, and the Strange.

Often we do not recognize you.

Often we turn away from your gifts and your demands.

Yet you come to us in the Wilderness, in the Impossible Made Possible, in Silence and Singing and Sighs Too Deep for Words.

You abhor dominance, mastery, fear, and control.

You are made known to us in Vulnerability, and Courage, and Divesting from the Powers of Empire.

We come to you this Advent in need, with longing, in pain, captive to fear, desiring a more just world, a more livable life for all of us, for the earth, for every living thing caught and held in this inescapable network of mutual interdependence we call this one wild and precious Life.

We long for you.

We long for healing.

We long for liberation.

We long for different systems and patterns of relating.

And so, this Advent, we pause.

We breathe.

We pray.

We dig deep.

We reach out.

We rise up.

We remember.

We vision.

We sit with the pain.

We stay with the trouble.

We wait, expectant.

We light candles.

We labor.

We open to You, and to one another, and to the Sacred Mystery that is Emmanuel, God-With-Us, Love Incarnate, Divinity Enfleshed.

Advent I - Hope

The Hope of God-With-Us does not come as guaranteed outcome, or predetermined plan, or promise of a happy ending.

Hope cannot be imposed from on high. Hope cannot be commanded.

The Hope of God-With-Us is courageous, risky, unfolding, indeterminate.

The Hope of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly complacency.

Hope is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly.

Hope invites our expectation, and demands our participation.

Prepare the way, for hope with courage.

May Hope be birthed among, within, and through us this Advent.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Come Now, O Prince of Peace - ELW 247
verse 1, sung three times

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who alone does wonders
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God for whom we wait,
in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.
Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.
Amen.

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!
Through the power of the Holy Spirit,
✠ your sins are forgiven.
You are children of the Most High,
inheritors of the eternal promise,
and recipients of divine mercy.
God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.
Amen.

Greeting & Prayer of the Day

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.

Let us pray.

God of change and new life,

In a world where hope feels far off and distant, you remind us that our ultimate source of hope arrived in the most unexpected of ways. Open our eyes and our hearts to your divine glimmers of hope in your world this Advent season, that we might be prepared for the changes you are drawing us towards. In the name of Christ, our source of hope, we pray.

Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I promised them. In those days and at that time I will raise up a righteous branch from the line of David, who will bring justice and integrity to this land. In those days, Judah will be safe and Jerusalem will be secure. They will call the land, "YHWH is our Justice."

Word of God, Word of Life
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25:1-10

To you, YHWH
I lift my soul.
My God, I trust in you;
don't let my enemies triumph over me.
No - none who hope in you will be ashamed,
but shame will come to the wantonly treacherous.

Show me your ways, YHWH!
Teach me your paths!
Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation.
I wait all the day long for you.
Remember your mercies, YHWH, your love –
your ancient and unwavering love!
Pardon the sins of my youth
and my rebellious ways;
remember me because of your love,
because of your goodness, YHWH!
And how good and upright you are, YHWH!
You instruct sinners in the path,
you guide the humble in what is right,
and teach them your way.
All of your paths, YHWH,
are full of love and faithfulness
for those who keep your Covenant and your Testimonies.

Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 21st chapter.

Signs will appear in the sun, the moon, and the stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish, distraught at the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the earth. The powers in the heavens will be shaken. After that, people will see the Chosen One coming on a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up straight and raise your heads, because your ransom is near at hand.

And he told them a parable, "Look at the fig tree, or any other tree. You see when they're budding and know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things happening, know that the reign of God is near. The truth is, this generation will not pass away until all this takes place. The heavens and the earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Be on your guard lest your spirits become bloated with indulgence, drunkenness, and worldly cares. That day will suddenly close in on you like a trap. It will come upon all who dwell on the face of the earth, so be on your watch. Pray constantly for the strength to escape whatever comes, and to stand secure before the Chosen One.

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day: Toda la Tierra (All Earth is Waiting) - UMH 210

A New Creed - Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada

Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together:

**We are not alone
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our redeemer and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Joys & Concerns

If you have any joys, concerns, or prayer requests to share, please type them into the comment section of the livestream so that we may lift them up together as a community.

Prayers of the People

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of promises kept and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters throughout our country and our world - for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Offering

Thanksgiving for the Word

O God of justice and love,
We give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of
your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the
end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior, to whom,
with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the
language you are most familiar with - the language of your heart.

**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.**

Announcements (see end of worship bulletin)

Blessing

The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope and love
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus, for whom we wait.
Amen.

Sending Song: Prepare the Royal Highway - ELW 264

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.

Spirit of Grace
ELCA-UMC

1140 Tucker Rd. Hood River, OR 97031

541-386-3993

www.hoodriverchurch.org

Church Office Hours

Closed on Fridays

Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

M-W 9-12, or by appointment

spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com

Jennifer Fowler, Office Assistant

Mon 9:30-2, Wednesday 9:00-2, Thursday 9:00-2

office@hoodriverchurch.com

Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant

Tuesday 10-1

Announcements

Charge Conference

At 5:30 pm tonight Rev. Tim Overton-Harris, District Superintendent of the UMC Oregon-Idaho Conference, will be visiting Spirit of Grace in person for our annual Fall Charge Conference. This is an opportunity for Rev. Tim to check in with us and hear about the life and ministry of our congregation. While attendance is not required, any member of Spirit of Grace is welcome and encouraged to attend in order to share their experiences from the past two years with Rev. Tim. Anyone who volunteers or serves in a leadership capacity at Spirit of Grace is highly encouraged to attend as well, in order to share a more full picture of our life and ministry here in Hood River. If you would like to participate via Zoom, there will be a log in link available on our website later this afternoon.

Christmas Tree for Our Sanctuary

If you would like to provide a Christmas Tree for the Sanctuary, please contact the church office. We would like to decorate the sanctuary and tree on Dec 19th.

Advent Midweek Worship

You are invited to join us on Wednesdays at 6:30pm via Zoom this Advent as we explore the ways our bodily senses form our faith and shape our spirituality. Each service will include music and readings, as well as an embodied practice, followed by a time of fellowship. Log in information can be found on our website at hoodriverchurch.com beginning the week of November 28th.

Attributions

Advent Wreath litany - enfleshed, 2018, Rev. Anna Blaedel