



December 19th, 2021
Advent IV

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.

Advent IV - Love

The Love of God-With-Us does not come as mere feeling, or sentimental fluff.

Love cannot be imposed from on high. Love is our greatest commandment – tending tenderly to God, to other, and to self.

The Love of God-With-Us is love in action, radical love practices: redistribution of resources and risks, solidarity with those most exposed to threat, hospitality to caravans, refugees, migrants, and sojourners, caring for those we've been taught to despise, or fear. This love is fierce, and tender. It defied unjust rules and flattens hierarchies or value.

The Love of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly alienation.
Love is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly.
Love invites our expectation, and demands our participation.
Prepare the way, for Love enfleshed.
May Love 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 2, 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 love,

In the midst of unbearable times, when we are unable to see better days ahead, you draw us together in community to be reminded of the story of your Love, present throughout the ages. May we love one another as you love us, that we might have the courage to believe in your promised future, however impossible it may seem.

Amen.

First Reading: Micah 5:2-6

But God will give them over to their enemies until the time when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the remnant of the ruler's sisters and brothers will return to the Children of Israel.

The ruler will rise up to shepherd them in the strength of YHWH,
by the power of the Name of YHWH their God.

They will live in security, for now the ruler's greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

They'll say, "This at last is the one
who will be our peace!

When Assyria invades our land
and tramples our fortresses,
we will raise up against the invaders
seven –no, eight! –shepherds,
leaders of the people.

They will shepherd Assyria with the sword,
the land of Nimrod with drawn sword.

Our ruler will deliver us from the Assyrians,
when they invade our land,
and encroach on our frontiers!"

Then the remnant of Jacob,
surrounded by many peoples,
will be like the dew that YHWH sends,
like showers on the grass
that do not depend on human effort
or wait with any longing
for any mortal to provide for them

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 19

Shepherd of Israel, hear us,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned on the cherubim, shine out!
Shine out before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh!
**Awaken your power
and come to save us!**
O God, return to us-
let your face smile on us, and we will be saved!
YHWH, God of Hosts,
**how much longer will you fume
while your people pray?**
You fed us on the bread of tears,
and made us drink our tears in such measure;
**you now let our neighbors ridicule us
and our enemies treat us with scorn.**
O God of Hosts, return to us -
let your face smile on us and we will be saved!
YHWH, God of Hosts, return to us-
let your face smile on us and we will be saved!

Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 1st chapter.

Within a few days Mary set out and hurried to the hill country to the town of Judah, where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth.

As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why am I so favored, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me? The moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who believed that what our God said to her would be accomplished!"

Mary said,

"My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.

For you have looked with favor

upon your lowly servant,

and from this day forward

all generations will call me blessed.

For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me,
and holy is your Name.

Your mercy reaches from age to age
for those who fear you.

You have shown strength with your arm;
you have scattered the proud in their conceit;
you have deposed the mighty from their thrones
and raised up the lowly to high places.

You have filled the hungry with good things,
while you have sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of Israel your servant,
mindful of your mercy—
the promise you made to our ancestors—
to Sarah and Abraham
and their descendants forever."

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day: O Come, O Come Emmanuel - ELW 257, v. 1, 2, 6, 1

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.

Nurturing God, you give us life and care for our every need. Use the church's gifts and ministries for your service, bringing your word to all who seek your transforming grace,
Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creator God, you proclaim your boundless love for all that you have made. Renew barren lands, polluted waters, and melting ice caps. Make us servants of your creation that brings forth abundant life.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Righteous God, you bring down the mighty and lift up the lowly. Strengthen those who seek justice. Bless the work of community organizers, activists, journalists, and all who call our attention to imbalances of power.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Compassionate God, you proclaim your love and mercy. Show your loving kindness to teen parents and those who are pregnant. Comfort those struggling with infertility or the loss of a child. Strengthen those faced with difficult decisions around parenthood, and remove obstacles from their path as they endeavor to choose the path that will bear the most love and joy in their life.

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

Offering Prayer

God of our waiting and watching,
we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives
to the service of all your people.
Prepare the way before us
as we meet you in this simple meal,
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.
Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving Liturgy

Preface - TFWS 2257-a

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God...
...And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus - TFWS 2257-b

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ...
...And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Memorial Acclamation - TFWS 2257-c

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here...
...Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Great Amen - TFWS 2257-d

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.**

Communion Instructions & Distribution

Prayer after Communion

Most High God,
you have come among us at this table.
By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.
Amen.

Announcements (see end of worship bulletin)

Blessing

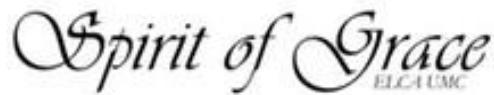
The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope and love
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus, for whom we wait.
Amen.

Sending Song: People Look East - ELW 248, v. 1, 3, 4

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.



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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

Christmas Tree Decorating

Thank you to Alan Yenne and Craig Terry for the donation of a Christmas Tree for our Sanctuary! All are invited to join us after worship as we prepare for Christmas by decorating the tree and enjoying cookies, coffee, and cocoa.

Happy Hands Holiday Sale

The Happy Hands Holiday sale concludes after worship today! If you are with us in person, take some time to look over these handmade items and consider them for gifts this holiday season.

Board Meeting

The Spirit of Grace Board will be meeting this Monday, December 20th, at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

Community Solstice Walk - Mon, Dec 20th at 6 PM, Rhinegarten Park, White Salmon

Hosted by Columbia Gorge Peace Village and Bethel Church. This is a quiet, contemplative walk, giving you a chance to pause in the hectic holiday season. There will be candles to share, but please bring a lantern, or a candle, rather than flashlights. The walk will stay on the paved pathway through the park and the Threshold Choir singers will offer quiet music. Starting at 6:30, Peace Village leaders will offer songs and storytelling for all to participate in. Hot drinks and sweets provided (if you have cookies to share, bring them!). Please come and enjoy. All are welcome!

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. **This week we will be exploring the sense of Smell!** 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.

Church Office Holiday Hours

The church office will be closed on Thursday, December 23rd and Thursday, December 30th.

Christmas Eve Readers

We are still in need of one more reader for Christmas Eve worship! Contact Linda Boris or email office@hoodriverchurch.com if you would like to help.

Christmas Eve Worship

Our Christmas Eve service of Lessons & Carols will be this Friday at 7:00pm, both in-person and live-streamed to our FB page. There will be no service on Christmas Day, and we will gather together on Sunday, December 26th at 10:00am for worship on the first Sunday of Christmas.

Attributions

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

Come Now, O Prince of Peace - Geonyong Lee (no date given)

O Come O Come Emmanuel text sts. 2, 6 1997 Augsburg Fortress

People Look East Words by permission of David Higham Assoc. Ltd.

Confession & Forgiveness, Prayers of Intercession, and Communion Liturgy from Sundays & Seasons, 2021 Augsburg Fortress

Christmas Eve Worship

A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
PROVIDED BY

Spirit of Grace

A LUTHERAN - METHODIST
COOPERATIVE CHURCH

In the interest of everyone's safety, all in attendance
will be required to wear a face mask. Full vaccination
against COVID-19 is highly encouraged.

A live-stream of the service can also be accessed at
facebook.com/hoodriverchurch

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