

Celebration of Worship

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2017

9:30 A.M.

We welcome you to worship. We are glad that you are here! Nursery and Preschool care is available if you need it. The Young and Young at Heart are welcomed to the front early on for a special time in the service. Please sign the Friendship Pads so that we can get to know you better, and join us for coffee in the Narthex after the service.

Thought for Reflection

“Part of the problem with end-times theology is that western people see time as a line. We think in terms of a beginning, middle and end. Thus, to consider the ‘end times’ is to anticipate the end of the-world-as-we-know-it...when history will cease to be. But the biblical texts for Advent point in another, more mysterious direction – that time is not a line at all! Rather, time is held in the being of God. Indeed, time is timeless. Think about it for just a moment: What do the divisions past, present and future really mean? When does the present slip to the past? When does the future arrive? When is the now of the present? Isn’t time much more a wonder, a spiritual or philosophical question, than a line? If we enter the Advent journey with a different perspective on time, the apocalyptic texts speak afresh...This is the dance of time, grace-filled steps that enact God’s vision that the end-times are all times; that all times are the end-times. In this spirit of times-enfolded in time, we walk through Advent. Jesus has been born, but we act as if we are still waiting. Christ will return, yet Christ has already come.”

Diana Butler Bass

Order of Worship

PRELUDE *Berceuse* Vierne

WELCOME

RINGING THE CHURCH BELL

INVITATION TO WORSHIP (responsively) *Based on Isaiah 9:1-7*

One: The people who have walked in darkness

All: Have seen a great light.

One: They have been filled with joy,

All: Like the joy of discovering great riches.

One: Their burdens have been lifted;

All: Their chains have been broken.

One: All weapons of war,

All: All the blood-soaked garments,

One: Will be burned and forgotten.

All: For to us a Child is born!

One: To us a Son is given!

All: And he will rule,

One: And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor!

All: Mighty God!

One: Everlasting Father!

All: Prince of Peace!

One: And he will reign forever.

All: And there will be peace,

One: And justice,

All: And righteousness,

One: Forever!

All: Amen!

(We light the first candle, which is the Prophet’s Candle.)

* Please stand, if you are able.

* HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* # 9

WORDS FOR THE YOUNG AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

Message

When Will It Be Time?

Prayer

(Children in Preschool through Grade 2 are dismissed for Praise & Play.)

MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY

People, Look East

arr. Wagner

Praise Ringers

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON *I Corinthians 1:3-9*

p. 926

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 13:24-37

p. 826

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

MEDITATION

The Hope of Christ’s Return

Pastor Larry De Vuyst

A PROPHET’S MONOLOGUE

A Prayer of Confession

Prophet: And his name shall be called Wonderful!

Reader: Really?

Prophet: Counselor!

Reader: Uh-huh.

Prophet: Mighty God!

Reader: Is that so?

Prophet: Everlasting Father!

Reader: Well,

Prophet: Prince of Peace!

Reader: You don't say.

Prophet: Forgive us, Lord, for such matter-of-fact responses to your majesty and holiness,

People: And grace and love.

Prophet: And as we enter the season of preparation for your coming into our lives,

People: Remind us again of the honor,

Prophet: And the wonder,

All: Of knowing you. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Based on Isaiah 63:7-9

I will tell of the kindness of the Lord, of the deeds for which he is to be praised. I will tell of all the Lord has done for us, which he has accomplished according to his compassion and kindness. "Surely, they are my people." And so, he has become our Savior. In all our distress God, too, was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved us! In his love and mercy he redeemed us, lifted us up and carried us. Praise God for our salvation! Amen.

ANTHEM

Advent Hymn

Besig

Chancel Choir

Evening has come in shadows of gray, and the winter wind blows bitter and cold.

All of the world in silence awaits the child the prophets have foretold.

Let us now prepare our hearts to receive him, filled with hope and free from fear.

Soon he will come to all who believe. The true Messiah will soon appear.

Come, thou long expected Jesus born to set thy people free.

Through the power of love redeemed us, let us find our rest in Thee.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King.

Born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

He will come to guide and teach us, sent to earth from heaven above.

Come thou long expected Jesus, warm our hearts with peace, and with love.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The Invitation

The Great Thanksgiving

The Communion

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (Debts/debtors)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* HYMN *Comfort, Comfort You My People* # 3

* BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE