



DOVE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday, November 29, 2020

The First Sunday of Advent

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Pastor Stephen Springer

Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

PROLOGUE

Kevin Seal, pipe organ

Praeludium on Veni, Veni, Emmanuel
Leo Sowerby (1895-1968)

Today marks the first Sunday of Advent, the beginning of the liturgical year, and the beginning of our season of anticipation and waiting that culminates with the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day. This year more than any other calls for "comfort food" in our lives, whether that food be literal, spiritual, or musical. Arguably, no other hymn for this season is more familiar and comforting than "O Come O Come Emmanuel," which originated as a paraphrase of the "O" antiphons which are to be sung in the days leading up to Christmas, each antiphon beginning with the word "O". This Advent, we will begin our worship each Sunday with two verses of this great hymn, and our organ preludes each Sunday will also feature various compositions based on the hymn, all by different composers. This Sunday, our prelude is by American Leo Sowerby, a prominent composer, organist, and church musician who won the Pulitzer Prize in music in 1946.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
whose forgiveness is sure
and whose steadfast love endures forever.
Amen.

Together let us honestly and humbly confess
that we have not lived as God desires.
Silence is kept for reflection.

**Loving and forgiving God,
we confess that we are held captive by sin.
In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.
We have not welcomed the stranger;
we have not loved our neighbor;
we have not been Christ to one another.
Restore us, O God.
Wake us up and turn us from our sin.
Renew us each day in the light of Christ.
Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news:
by God's endless grace
your sins are forgiven, and you are free—
free from all that holds you back
and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.
May you be strengthened in God's love,
† comforted by Christ's peace,
and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

All sing in unison:

**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 you, O Israel.**

**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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

GREETING AND 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.

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.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9

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.

A reading from Isaiah.

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY (ELW): Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

The refrain is first introduced by the leader, then repeated by the assembly.



- ¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on 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? REFRAIN**
- 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. REFRAIN**
- ¹⁸And so will we never turn a- | way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.
- ¹⁹**Restore us, O Lord| God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved. REFRAIN**

SECOND READING: I Corinthians 1:3-9

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.

A reading from First Corinthians.

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW #175

The assembly sings the Alleluia before and after the gospel verse.

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Cantor: Show us your steadfast | love, O Lord,*
and grant us | your salvation. (Psalm 85:7)

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

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

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[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

Pastor Steve Springer



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard on the way;
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,



pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
 Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
 as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
 veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:



Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.
 he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
 comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.
 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829–1885, alt.
 Music: PICARDY, French folk tune, 17th cent.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

After each petition: "Lord in your mercy," the assembly responds **"Hear our prayer."**

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

Almighty God, you are the creator and sustainer of your church, and we are its body. We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Revive us and our message of hope and love for all.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We have prayed and sung your praises, but today we are in the midst of troubling times. We struggle with political and racial turmoil, and we cannot predict the end or outcome of the pandemic gripping the entire world. Let your hand be upon us, keeping us strong. We wait and watch eagerly to welcome you among us, knowing that you have called us into fellowship, you are faithful, and in you our lives are enriched, expectant, enduring.
Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. As the seasons change, many are in crisis. We pray for the homeless facing severe weather, for the unemployed or underemployed, and for those in poverty or facing food insecurity. Relieve their burdens, sustain their bodies, and ease their minds.
Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and illness. Many feel heightened hopelessness and aloneness. Ease their suffering, and lift their spirits by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit. Heal the hurts of all your people, those we know and name before you, and those whose names are never lifted up.
Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, especially Ronn. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work. We praise you that we are among the saints for whom the darkness and powers of hell have been vanquished. We pray that we may one day join those who have gone before us in ceaseless alleluias.
Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

MEDITATION

Alleluia Bell Choir

The Call (from Five Mystical Songs)
Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Ralph Vaughan Williams Five Mystical Songs is a setting of four poems by 17th-century Welsh poet George Herbert, originally written for Baritone and Orchestra. The third of these poems, called "The Call," makes up the fourth movement of the work. While the overall theme of the work is Easter and the Resurrection of Christ, this particular song invites the various elements of spiritual life to enter into the singers life, making it an appropriate song for this season of prayer and waiting. Today, in a role reversal, our Organist Kevin Seal will sing, and our Minister of Music, Art and Liturgy Eric Holtan will play the organ.

COMMISSION

Pastor Stephen Springer

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.



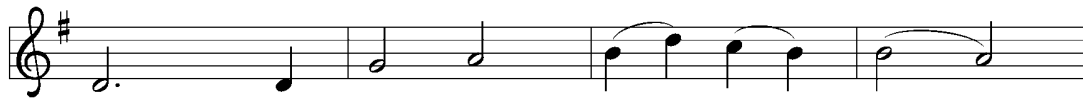
1 Lo! he comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
 2 Now re - demp - tion, long - ex - pect - ed,
 3 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore thee,



once for our sal - va - tion slain;
 comes in sol - emn splen - dor near;
 high on thine e - ter - nal throne;



thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
 all the saints this world re - ject - ed
 Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,



join to sing the glad re - frain:
 thrill the trum - pet sound to hear:
 claim the king - dom as thine own.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -



lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
 lu - ia! See the day of God ap - pear!
 lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
 Music: HELMSLEY, Thomas Olivers, 1725–1799

EPILOGUE

Kevin Seal, pipe organ

Macht hoch die Tür, die Tor mach weit (Make high the doors, the gates make wide)
Helmut Walcha (1907-1991)

"Make High the Doors" is a popular German Advent hymn, written in 1623 to celebrate the inauguration of a German Lutheran church. Helmut Walcha was a 20th-century organist, teacher, and composer, and his setting is jubilant and dance-like, featuring the tune in the pedal solo line that begins the piece and then in the manuals in block chords.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Assisting Minister: Dianne Huston
Lector: John Hoelter
Cantor: Eric Holtan