

Church of the divine love

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 1, 2024 10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Prayer before worship – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #56, vs. 1 & 2 – **O come, O come, Emmanuel**

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung)

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Jeremiah 33:14-16**

Psalm 25:1-9

Second Lesson: **1 Thessalonians 3:9-13**

Gradual Hymn #61 – **Sleepers awake!**

Gospel: **Luke 21:25-36**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #57 – **Lo! he comes with clouds descending**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer B	page 367
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #640 – Watchman, tell us of the night	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer For the Parish	page 817
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #72 – Hark! the glad sound!	
Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday December 1st, 2024

Jeremiah 33: 14-16; Psalm 25: 1-9; 1 Thessalonian 3: 9-13; Luke 21: 25-36.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Do you ever feel like your life is out of kilter and you're a hot mess? Do you ever feel like you're out of sync with yourself, others, or God? When have the walls of your life been breached, your security violated, and your life overrun by circumstances bigger and more powerful than you? When has your life been turned upside down? When have circumstances left you with no plan and no foreseeable way forward? Do you ever feel like you're a stranger in your own life? Do you ever feel as if you're living in a foreign land where nothing fits or feels right? Have you ever wished for the good old days and the way things used to be? Do you sometimes just want to go home? Are you waiting for something to come but not even sure what it is you're waiting for?

If you answered yes to any of those questions and you know what any of those situations are like, then you also know what it's like to live in the tension between the reality of what is and what will be. It's a time of waiting in the darkness of not knowing. That in between place is the Season of Advent. The gap between what is and what will be is a place of anticipation and expectancy. It's the birthplace of hope

and the canyon from which God calls. The community to which Jeremiah is speaking in today's Old Testament reading (**Jeremiah 33:14-16**) is living in that tension. The Babylonian army has devastated Jerusalem. Some of the Jews have been deported from their homeland. Others are occupied citizens in their own land. And Jeremiah is in prison. It's a time of turmoil and chaos, and my guess is that we all know what that's like.

How are we to live in the gap between what is and what will be? How do we hold that tension when it feels like it's pulling us apart? Or as the psalmist asks, "How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (**Psalms 137:4**)? Hope is our only way forward and the only sane attitude in life, and it's what Jeremiah offers in today's Old Testament reading. "The days will surely come," says the Lord: When I will fulfill the promise, I made; A righteous Branch will spring up; and Justice and righteousness will be done in the land. Those are big words from a man who is in prison, big words for a people who have been overrun, deported or occupied. They are words of hope but we have to be careful that we don't misunderstand what hope is. Hope is not passively waiting for God to show up and do something. That's just wishful thinking or wishful praying.

To live in hope means remaining open to the future and refusing to let the present moment close us in. It's the belief that the future is always better, not because it necessarily will be, but because it might be. The future holds a potential or possibility for something more or better than the actual reality of the present moment. That's our hope throughout the Season of Advent. Every time we live in hope, we are trusting that "there is nothing too hard for [God]" (**Jeremiah 32:17**), and that "for God all things are possible" (**Matthew 19:26**). Hope, however, is not something we have. It comes to us as a call asking for a response. Maybe that's why, in today's gospel (**Luke 21:25-36**), Jesus says, "Stand up and raise your heads." Maybe that's the response to hope's call. When there are signs in the sun, moon, and stars; when there is distress among nations; when people are fainting from fear and foreboding of what is coming; when the powers of heaven are shaken; when it looks like things are getting worse "stand up and raise your heads." "Stand up and raise your heads" when you want to run away. "Stand up and raise your heads" when you want to duck and hide. "Stand up and raise your heads" when you are tired and overwhelmed. "Stand up and raise your heads" when everything seems hopeless. It is as if Jesus is saying, "Don't just sit there. Do something. Get a new perspective. Look from a higher vantage point. Recognize what can be changed and then make the change. That's what it means to live in hope. More often than not that change is about us, not the circumstances.

What if you and I are the righteous Branch God is causing to spring up? What if you and I are the ones to execute justice and righteousness in this land? What if you and I, in whatever circumstances we find ourselves today, were to stand up and raise our heads? I wonder what we would see. I wonder what hope would call us to be or do. What comes up for you when you look toward or think about your future? We all have a future and we all deal with it in our lives. Some look toward the future with fear, anxiety, and worry. "People will," Jesus says, "faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world." When have you felt like that? Others look to the future with hope, eagerness, and optimism. They "stand up and raise their heads" with anticipation and expectancy. When have you jumped out of bed ready to get the new day started, and excited about the possibilities of what might be? My

grandmother called it being “journey-proud.” She said she was too excited to sleep. She wanted to get going. When have you been journey-proud? Most of us, I suspect, live with both of those outlooks. Which predominates for you today? What is the future you dread? What is the future you want and anticipate? What parts of your life are fearful and what parts are journey-proud?

Regardless of which it is, the force of the future is to prevent the present from closing in on us, from closing us up. Advent pries open the present by promising us the possibility of something new, the chance of something different, something that will transform the present into something else. The unforeseeable future always holds the possibility of the impossible. The unforeseen future is, however, always unfolding, always calling us forward, always asking of us a response. So, let’s not be too quick to name or judge it as good or bad, joyful or sorrowful, desired or unwanted. We just don’t know. We cannot name the impossible. To name or judge the impossible would be to relativize it and close ourselves off from the advent of God. In Advent the unforeseeable future comes to us as a chance for something new, for a new birth, for the expectation, the hope, the hope against hope, in a transforming future. Advent does not promise an escape from the circumstances of our lives or the world. The promise of Advent, the possibility of the impossible, is revealed and fulfilled in the midst of those circumstances.

I don’t know what the future holds for you and neither do you. But I know this. Those things I just listed: faith, hope, love, courage, compassion, beauty, forgiveness, healing, are the voice of Advent. They speak the possibility of a new life, a transformed life, and they call to us from the most improbable, unforeseen, and impossible places of our lives. They will pull you into and through the rest of this day. And when you wake up tomorrow morning, guess what? They will be there, waiting for you and calling your name. Yes, the Advent seasons of our lives can be long, difficult, and painful. But we never face those seasons without the signs of hope and reassurance, signs that point to the one who is coming. May we prepare ourselves and stay on guard. As we wait for the birth of baby Jesus, may we understand our anticipation as part of our recommitment to living in the Kingdom of God that is coming with great glory. **Amen.**

Please remember to turn in your pledge card by Sunday, Dec. 1st

1 ADVENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
MONDAY	8:30 PM	AA MEETING
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM 8:30 PM	THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS SALE AA MEETING

SAURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS SALE
2 ADVENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
	11:15 AM	VESTRY MEETING

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Roe Prosser	Deb Giordano
Coffee	Prossers	Dana Kenn

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Sister Eddie	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	John Rocco	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Lynette
Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Christopher	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Annie	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del

Donna A.	Kate Jones	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Ciara
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent
Michael & Family	Matthew Treasure	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Joseph	

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.
Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email
Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart, and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,

Lay my life before you,

How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn

but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that

all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

