

4th Sunday of Advent



PRINCE OF PEACE

Sunday December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Welcome and Concerns of the Church

The “great light” prophesied by Isaiah in today’s text is echoed in the first strains of John’s Gospel good news: the light that brings peace—that saves the people from all that would extinguish it—has been there from the beginning. The Word is made flesh and dwells among us. This reign is now... will we believe it? Will we continue to put flesh on it, embodying the peace meant for all humanity?

Lighting the Advent Wreath: I believe

Prayer of the Day

Holy One,
we thank you for the glimpses we catch
of your gift of peace on earth.
Even in the midst of fear,
of challenge, of struggle—
even when we aren’t sure that
goodwill among us can be found,
ignite the flame of peace within us,
**People: ... that we might glow with its brilliance
from the inside out.**

[Congregation joins the song]

**I believe in the light,
I believe in the light,
that has come... that has come...
and is coming**

**I believe in God,
I believe in God,
even when... even when...
God is silent.**

**I believe in love,
I believe in love,
even when... even when...
I don’t feel it.**

**I believe in the sun,
I believe in the sun,
even when... even when...
it’s not shining.**

Pastor: Help us when we face the pain of life
to embrace your assurance that light is already here, and always coming.
Amen.

Children's Time to Shine

First Reading: Isaiah 9: 2-7 (*Common English Bible translation*)

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.

You have made the nation great;

you have increased its joy.

They rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest,

as those who divide plunder rejoice.

As on the day of Midian, you've shattered the yoke that burdened them,

the staff on their shoulders,

and the rod of their oppressor.

Because every boot of the thundering warriors,

and every garment rolled in blood

will be burned, fuel for the fire.

A child is born to us, a son is given to us,

and authority will be on his shoulders.

He will be named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be vast authority and endless peace

for David's throne and for his kingdom,

establishing and sustaining it

with justice and righteousness

now and forever.

Psalm 89.1-4, 19-26 (New Revised Standard Version)

¹ I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

**² I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

³ You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:

**⁴ I will establish your descendants forever,
and build your throne for all generations." *Selah***

¹⁹ Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:

"I have set the crown^[a] on one who is mighty,

I have exalted one chosen from the people.

**²⁰ I have found my servant David;
with my holy oil I have anointed him;**

²¹ my hand shall always remain with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

**²²The enemy shall not outwit him,
the wicked shall not humble him.**

²³ I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

**²⁴My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;
and in my name his horn shall be exalted.**

²⁵ I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

**²⁶He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!'**

Gospel: John 1: 1-18 *(Common English Bible translation)*

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

A man named John was sent from God. He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light.

The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world. The light was in the world, and the world came into being through the light, but the world didn't recognize the light. The light came to his own people, and his own people didn't welcome him.

But those who did welcome him, those who believed in his name, he authorized to become God's children, born not from blood nor from human desire or passion, but born from God.

The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John testified about him, crying out, "This is the one of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is greater than me because he existed before me.'"

From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace; as the Law was given through Moses, so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made God known.

The gospel of the Lord
Thanks be to God!

Message

Hymn of the Day **“Awake! Awake! and Greet the New Morn”** ²⁴²

Text: Marty Haugen, b.1950, © 1983, GIA Publications, Inc. Rejoice, Rejoice; 98988789

1. Awake! awake, and greet the new morn,
For angels herald its dawning,
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,
Behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor,
To bring all hearts together,
He opens wide the heav'nly door
And lives now inside us for ever.

2. To us, to all in sorrow and fear,
Emmanuel comes a-singing,
His humble song is quiet and near,
Yet fills the earth with its ringing;
Music to heal the broken soul
And hymns of loving kindness,
The thunder of his anthems roll
To shatter all hatred and blindness.

3. In darkest night his coming shall be,
When all the world is despairing,
As morning light so quiet and free,
So warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song,
The lame shall leap in wonder,
The weak be raised above the strong,
And weapons be broken asunder.

4. Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night,
Though dark the winter and cheerless,
The rising sun shall crown you with light,
Be strong and loving and fearless;
Love be our song and love our prayer,
And love, our endless story,
May God fill ev'ry day we share,
And bring us at last into glory.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

**On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

**the holy catholic Church the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Peace Announcements

Blue Christmas Outside, so dress warm Dec. 21 at 7 PM: This year has brought loss to many of us. Nothing is as it was before. On the longest night, we will gather to commemorate and lift up what has weighed us down. It will be a beautiful time to remember the one who speaks light in every darkness.

Christmas Eve 4PM Carols and the Christmas Story Both will be live streamed on Facebook or Join us outside around the trees!

The 2021 POP envelopes have arrived and are now available. If you would like to receive yours by mail, please email the office with your preferred address Attention Donna Plouffe princeofpeacebrockton@gmail.com or dplouffe16@gmail.com thank you very much!

Prayers of Intercession

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all you who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and other ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. We give thanks for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

May the creator of the stars of light fill you with hope,
The long expected Savior bless your Advent waiting with love,
And the unexpected Spirit guide your journey through these days.
And the Messenger of the Most High says, "Be not afraid!"
Amen.

Hymn: Introduction

"Go Tell It On the Mountain" 290 African American Spirituals with refrain; John W. Work, Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt. Music: Spiritual; GO TELL IT 78 76 76 76

1. While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light. *Ref.*

3. And lo, when they had heard it,
They all bowed down and prayed;
They traveled on together
To where the Babe was laid. *Ref.*

2. The shepherds feared and trembled
When high above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth. *Ref.*

4. Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn. *Ref.*

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

Dismissal

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

Thanks for joining us!

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