

Morning Prayer

The First Sunday of Advent, Year B

November 29, 2020

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=eig4MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3I2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: stb

Prelude

Announcements

The Lighting of the Candle



Presider: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People's Respondent: **Thanks be to God.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, in your resurrection you appeared as the Morning Star that knows no setting: Dawn upon the darkness of the human heart so that the darkness of this world may be overcome and your whole creation made new; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The number of candles is now lit according to the week of Advent, as the following is said:

God of hope, when Christ our Savior appears
**may he not find us asleep or idle,
but active in his service and ready for joy.**

Come, O Emmanuel,

You are the way, the truth and the life;

Come, living Savior,

come to your world, which waits for you. Amen

Opening Sentence

The Officiant says

Watch, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning, lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. *Mark 13:35, 36*

Opening Hymn

WLP 721

Signs of ending all around us

1. Signs of end-ings all a - round us—dark - ness, death, and win - ter days
2. Can it be that from our end - ings, new be - gin - nings you cre - ate?

shroud our lives in fear and sad - ness, numb - ing mouths that long to praise.
Life from death, and from our rend - ings, realms of whole - ness gen - er - ate?

Come, O Christ, and dwell a - mong us! Hear our cries, come set us free.
Take our fears, then, Lord, and turn them in - to hopes for life a - new:

Give us hope and faith and glad-ness. Show us what there yet can be.
Fad-ing light and dy-ing sea-son sing their Glo-ri-as to you.

Confession of Sin

The Presider says

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to set forth God's praise, to hear God's holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us keep silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by God's infinite goodness and mercy.

Silence is kept.

The People's Respondent, the Presider, and the People

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

The Priest says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter

Presider Lord, open our lips.

People **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

Our God and Savior now draws near:

O come let us worship.

Jubilate: Psalm 100

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *

serve the Lord with gladness

and come before his presence with a song.

Know this: The Lord himself is God; *

he himself has made us, and we are his;

we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;

go into his courts with praise; *

give thanks to him and call upon his Name.

For the Lord is good;

his mercy is everlasting; *

and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, ***
stir up your strength and come to help us.

³Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD God of hosts, ***
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?

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; *

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

¹⁶**Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁷And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

¹⁸**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Lessons

First Reading

Isaiah 64:1-9

A reading from the book of the prophet 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 16: The Song of Zechariah

Benedictus Dominus Deus

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, *
you have come to your people and set them free.

**You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, *
born of the house of your servant David.**

Through your holy prophets you promised of old
to save us from our enemies, *

from the hands of all who hate us,
**To show mercy to our forebears, *
and to remember your holy covenant.**

This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**Free to worship you without fear, *
holy and righteous before you,
all the days of our life.**

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

**To give God's people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

**To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn

Hymnal 62

Sleepers, wake!



1 "Sleep - ers, wake!" A voice a - stounds us, the shout of ram-part
2 Zi - on hears the watch - men sing - ing; her heart with joy - ful



guards sur-rounds us: "A - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, a - rise!"
hope is spring - ing, she wakes and hur - ries through the night.



Mid - night's peace their cry has bro - ken, their ur - gent sum-mons
Forth he comes, her Bride-groom glo - rious in strength of grace, in



clear - ly spo - ken: "The time has come, O maid - ens wise!
truth vic - to - rious: her star is risen, her light grows bright.



Rise up, and give us light; the Bride - groom is in sight.
Now come, most wor - thy Lord, God's Son, In - car - nate Word,



Al - le - lu - ia! Your lamps pre - pare and has - ten there,
Al - le - lu - ia! We fol - low all and heed your call



that you the wed - ding feast may share."
to come in - to the ban - quet hall.

Third Reading

Mark 13:24-37

A Reading from Mark.

[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."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**



Sermon

The Apostles' Creed

The People's Respondent, the Presider, and the People

**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 to the dead.
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 Prayers

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

The People's Respondent, the Presider, and the People

**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.**

V. Help us, O God our Savior;

R. Deliver us and forgive us our sins.

V. Look upon your congregation;

R. Give to your people the blessing of peace.

V. Declare your glory among the nations;

R. And your wonders among all peoples.

V. Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away;

R. Never forget the lives of your poor.

V. Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;

R. And your favor to those who are true of heart.

V. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;

R. So shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

A Collect for Renewal of Life

O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Collect for Guidance

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Mission

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Intercessions and thanksgivings

Presider Creator of the stars of night, the sun, and the moon, You are the light by which we wake and work. Be with us as we pray, "Illumine our darkness, and keep us alert."

Intercessor Surround your church, her leaders, and people, with your armor of light. We pray especially for our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Julio, Moises, Elizabeth, Donald and Craig. We pray for all ministers, priests, deacons, ministry teams, those in formation; and our sisters and brothers worshipping at Grace Church, Detroit; and All Saints', La Romana, and Good Samaritan, San Francisco, in the Dominican Republic. Strengthen them as they reach out to you in prayer and hope. Open their hearts to your will. **Illumine our darkness, and keep us alert.**

Silence is kept.

We pray for our leaders: especially Donald, our president; Joseph, our president-elect; Gretchen, our governor; and the Congress and courts of this land. Savior of the nations, guide those who govern, and awaken those they lead, that we may all live in the spirit of cooperation and share so that all have enough: food, care, and peace. **Illumine our darkness, and keep us alert.**

Silence is kept.

For people across the world whose spirits bend under the yoke of oppression and struggle, give the people of this community a sense of togetherness and support. Open our eyes to those who fall by the wayside and whose faces and needs remain invisible. **Illumine our darkness, and keep us alert.**

Silence is kept.

Lover of our souls, you continue to mold us in your image and hold us in your hands. We lift up all those who are facing illness. Today we pray for _____. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to their bodies. Calm their fears and let them experience the healing power of your love. Lend skill to the hands of their healers, and bless the means of their cure. Give them such confidence in the power of your grace that, even when they are afraid, they may put their whole trust in you.

Silence is kept.

Father of us all, we pray for those who have recently returned to your embrace and those who are broken with grief, [especially _____].

Silence is kept.

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; for this we pray. **Illumine our darkness, and keep us alert.**

Presider In union, O Lord with the faithful at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer our praise and thanksgiving. We present to you our souls and bodies with the earnest wish that we may always be united to you. And since we cannot now receive you sacramentally, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. We unite ourselves to you, and embrace you with all the affections of our souls. Let nothing ever separate us from you. **Amen.**

The Presider then says

My sisters and brothers, I invite you- wherever you are- to take into your hands the gifts you offer today. Gifts of food, gifts of money, gifts of whatever form, and join me as we offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good our vows to the Most High.

Let us pray.

Loving God and merciful Creator, whose hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: we come to you with thanksgiving and praise. We offer to you this day our gifts of time, talent, and possessions, knowing that all we are, and all we have, is a gift from you. Please accept these gifts, and help us to reach out to others as you, our God, have reached out to us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them:

Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

Concluding Hymn

Hymnal 56

O come, O come Emmanuel



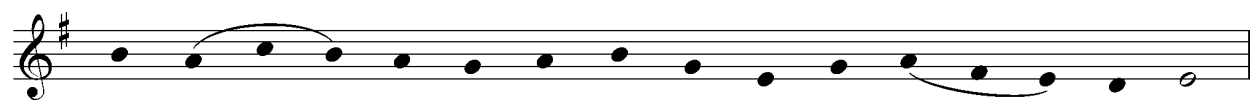
O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest



1 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
2 all things might - i - ly; to us the path of know - ledge



1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - joice, re - joice!
2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Dismissal and Blessing

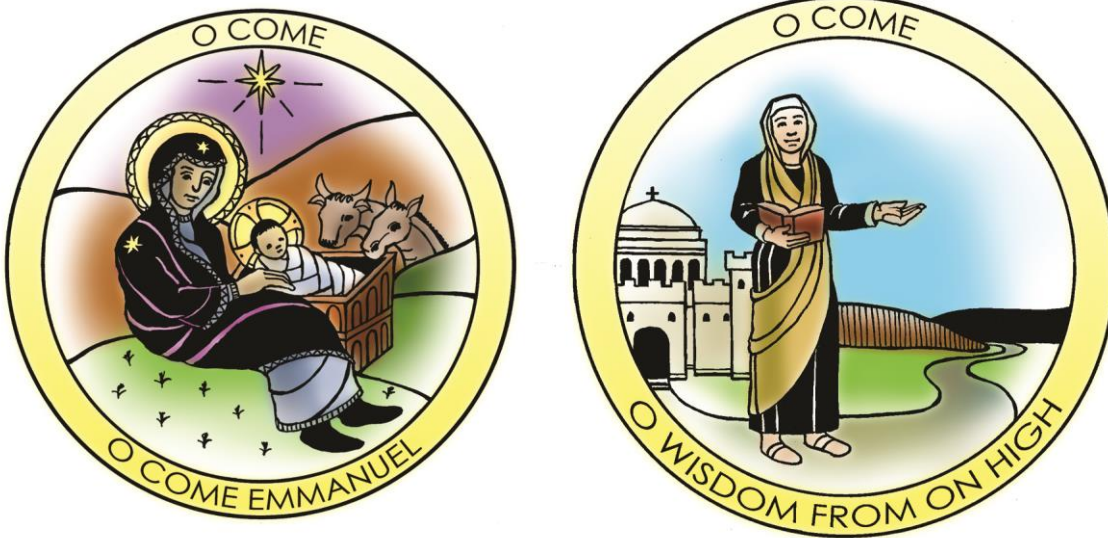
The priest blesses the people, saying

May our hearts be filled by our long-awaited Savior. May our community be graced with patient expectation. May Christ be with us in all the chaos. **Amen.**

May we learn to live in the Way of Emmanuel. May we have listening hearts, open minds, and generous spirits. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of God Almighty, **+** the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Postlude



REGARDING OFFERINGS TO ST. BARNABAS CHURCH

To make an offering to St Barnabas, please mail your check to the church: 20500 W Old US-12, Chelsea MI 48118-1309. Mail is being collected daily.

CONTINUING OUR DONATIONS OF FOOD AND FUNDS TO FAITH IN ACTION

Faith in Action is continuing to provide leadership in collecting donations to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas. They will be in need of our continuing help in the weeks of winter to come.

Needed right now: Shelf-stable groceries and financial donations; cleaning products and personal products are always needed, as these items cannot be purchased with food stamps. You may bring your donations to FIA, or to Nancy who will see that they get there.

If you bring food directly to FIA, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. Arrangements will be made for those who need to bring donations to the church; contact Nancy for details upcoming.

Donations to help us combat the continuing effects of the pandemic can be made by PayPal at www.faithinaction1.org, by Facebook, or by mailing a check to *Faith in Action*, 603 S. Main Street, Chelsea MI 48118. **If you need help, please call FIA at (734) 475-3305**

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Enrichment for Our Spiritual Journey

Compline: Night Prayer for Advent every Wednesday in Advent at 7:00 p.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81714578183?pwd=ZkhuMmoxTkh5No9nQ2V4SF1xeUMzQTo9> Meeting ID: 817 1457 8183 Passcode: 335034



The Way of Love material can be found here:
<https://episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love>

Join St Barnabas' twice-weekly Zoom check-in! Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Contact Marion if you need the link.

Watch Washington National Cathedral's live-streamed Eucharist and Daily Office services, <https://cathedral.org/calendar/>

Join in a short, weekly, meditation with Presiding Bishop Curry here:
<https://episcopalchurch.org/habits-of-grace>

Watch Bishop Bonnie Perry's sermons, <https://www.edomi.org/whatsheaid/sermons/>

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Upcoming Commemorations

- Nov. 29 Dorothy Day, Activist, Contemplative and Writer, 1980
- 30 St Andrew the Apostle
- Dec. 1 Charles de Foucauld, Monastic and Martyr, 1916
- Dec. 2 Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon, 1637;
and, Channing Moore Williams, Missionary Bishop in China & Japan, 1910
- Dec. 3 Francis Xavier, Priest and Missionary, 1552
- Dec. 4 John of Damascus, Priest and Theologian, c.760
- Dec. 5 Clement of Alexandria, Priest and Theologian, c.210



Advent 1 (B)

November 29, 2020

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

During Advent and Christmas, we will be using study prompts and other activities tied to the sermon for the week. Read the sermon aloud and follow-up with spoken responses to the two questions at the end. Find our full sermon compilation for individual, small group, or congregational use, *Sermons for Advent and Christmas 2020* at www.sermonsthatwork.org.

Waiting Upon the Lord

by the Rev. Canon Whitney Rice

Waiting is the hardest thing to do because it feels like you're not doing anything. And it seems twice as hard when you're young. When we're children, Christmas always seems eons away and we think the end of school or our birthday will never arrive.

And we 21st-century folks certainly have an ever-shrinking attention span; our wealth and technology allow us to access virtually anything we want any time we want. Everything is sooner, faster, now. And boy, do we love that speed, especially technological speed. Wait ten seconds to let a webpage load? Are you kidding? Get a faster connection! Wait five seconds for a document to print? What the heck is wrong with this printer? Wait to let yourself cool down before sending that email or posting that social media rant? Are you kidding? Go, go, go! You snooze, you lose, that's our motto. If anyone needs to learn the Advent virtue of waiting upon the Lord, it's us.

Virtually the only things we haven't been able to speed up or shorten are our basic biological processes. It still takes nine long months to have a baby, whether we want to wait that long or not. And so, if we want to be with Mary in her journey toward giving birth to Jesus, we need to settle into the long haul. We've already been busy doing other things for the first eight months, and now in her last month of pregnancy, we're just going to have to take these four weeks of Advent and wait.

Our scripture from Isaiah today has an interesting take on waiting. The writer is marveling at how different the God of Israel is from the other gods in the cultures of the time. And then the writer remembers, "When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From 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."

The prophet is surprised not just by the mighty deeds like earthquakes – the writer is equally stunned that here is a God who *works* for the people, and the people for whom God works are the people who wait for God.

What is it like to wait for God? Many of us know exactly what that is like. We wait for God to explain why a family member died too young. We wait for God to open a path out of a marriage that has ended, into a new place where healing might begin. We wait for God to reveal an open door back into a faith community when we've been hurt by so many churches before.

And of course, virtually this entire year has been a time of waiting. We've waited during lockdowns and quarantines. We've waited on masks and respirators and toilet paper. We've waited on test results for the coronavirus, wondering whether we are positive or not. We've waited endless weeks and months, not able to visit our loved ones in hospitals and nursing homes, in order to protect them.

We've waited on our kids going back to school and waited to see if our jobs would hold out during the crisis. We've waited on unemployment checks and stimulus checks. We've waited in line to vote and waited to see if our mail-in ballot went through, and then waited on the results of the election. We've waited for a vaccine. And we've waited and waited and waited to go back to church in the old ways that were familiar and comfortable to us.

2020 has been nothing but a year of waiting. Perhaps we are better equipped now than we ever have been to understand the oft-repeated Biblical mandate to wait upon the Lord. The Good News shared with us today is that God is working for us as we wait for God.

And we're actually doing two kinds of spiritual waiting right now. We're waiting for the coming of the Christ Child on Christmas Day, that glorious moment of incarnation when God comes to be with us in human form. That's a fixed endpoint that we know ahead of time. Come December 25, we will be celebrating Jesus' arrival.

But we're doing another kind of waiting. We're waiting for the signs of the Incarnation in our own lives. We're waiting to see the new and next way that God will be manifest in our own individual time and place. God is with us, but where and how? That is how we keep company with Mary: as the watchful sentinels always on the lookout for the new revelation waiting to be discovered among the everyday.

Patience is a hard-earned virtue, and many of us are deeply wearied by all the waiting we've had to do, all the times we've had to say no to ourselves and our children this year in order to stay safe and keep others safe. It might feel like 2020 is a year out of time, a wasted and empty expanse that consisted of nothing but life on hold.

But is that true? Was this time of waiting really wasted? Mary's time of waiting was almost as long as ours has been. What has been blossoming and growing in your heart during this time of waiting? What new thing is ready to be born in your spiritual community after having been forced to slow down and really ask what is most important about church? How has your family found new strengths and graces by the call to adapt and the sudden multiplication of time together and new challenges with school and work?

Mary's time of waiting was to a purpose. It had a goal and an end, and she faithfully pursued it with God's help. As you reflect on your waiting this year, what has God grown in you? What will be the gift you offer the world this Christmas as Mary did? It takes awake and alert eyes to see the grace even amid the suffering we've endured.

But the Good News is that the slow, necessary, at times painful work of being changed, of being made ready for incarnation, is not up to us alone. God is the agent of our transformation as we wait. Knowing that reminds us that we don't have to figure this out on our own. There is peace and comfort in the truth that as the endless days of waiting crawl by, God is active within us and our communities. Isaiah tells us in our scripture today, "Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." We are God's work of art, being painstakingly shaped into the vessel of incarnation that will bring the presence of Christ to the world. You are a masterwork. And a masterwork takes time.

And Paul reminds us of what we most need to hold on to through the long weary days of waiting for grace: "You are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end." Look back on this year and see the strength with which you endured its trials. See the creativity with which your spiritual community sought to walk together in new ways. See the call to justice and peace that rang even through our most bitter divides in society. And know that it has all led to this, the season of Advent, the time of upheaval and waiting, of change and pause, of grace and truth.

And so, we pray, and we stick together, and we love one another, and we wait upon the Lord. And Isaiah, the great prophet of the Advent season, announces the Good News: "Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Amen.

The Rev. Canon Whitney Rice serves as the Canon for Evangelism & Discipleship Development for the Diocese of Missouri. See more of her work at www.roofcrashersandhemgrabbers.com.

1. Compared to when you were a child, how do you handle waiting? Are you more patient? Less patient? Why?

2. Waiting upon the Lord is no easy task – especially given our rapidly-shrinking attention spans and the particular challenges of this past year. What is one thing you can do to wait more patiently and lovingly?

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Lighting of the Candle from Baptized for Life “Advent antiphons” 2020
Concluding prayer at the Intercessions adapted from *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951.
Dismissal prayer adapted from “Our Advent Prayer,” The Academy for Vocational Leadership, 2018.

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Our Mission:

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ,
and to serve Jesus by serving others
in the world, guided by the values of
Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



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