

FAITH AT FIVE

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER 2020

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Our liturgy this evening draws from the Anglican Church in Scotland, where Roddy Hamilton created a Liturgy for Holy Eucharist where children — children of all ages — are present. Today is the third Sunday in Advent, and the focus of today is on JOY. We are a community drawn together by God's Love, Grace & Joy where all people are valued and loved. In this and every age, people are called to offer support to one another and all people, likewise, to depend on one another. We thank God for binding us together as a human family within all of creation. Wherever you are in your life and in your journey in faith, we welcome you to this Worship Experience and pray God's Blessing over this time of worship and over your life.

Gathering Music (Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen)

Daniel J. Evans

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.
Come, bow before him now, with reverence and fear.
In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;
he burns with holy fire, with splendor he is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of Light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place;
he comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace.
No work too hard for him, in faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

Invitation

Come everyone who wants to come.
Come if you can recite the creeds,
Come if you can't remember the words to "Jesus Loves Me";
Come if you've been in the church since birth,
Come if you've lost your way a few times but found your way here today;
Come if you like to study theology,
Come if you like to finger paint;
Come if you like tradition and ritual and ceremony,
Come if you like balloons and laughter and jumping in puddles.
Come if you like all these things
and find the wonder of heaven in them all.

Come as you are:
old and young.
Just as you are:
one family,
right now,
each of you,
every one of you,
and have a place right here with
one another.

Opening Sentences

In the beginning, when it was dark, God said, "Let there be light."
And there was light.

(The sign of light - a lighted candle - is placed on a central table.)

In the beginning, when it was quiet, The Word was with God.
And the Word was God.

(The sign of the Word - an open Bible - is placed on the table.)

When the time was right, God sent His Son.
He came among us and was one of us.

(The Sign of the Son - a cross - is placed on the table.)

Song of Prayer: *(Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen)*

tune: Hyfrydol

Come thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine allsufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

Leader The God of Love is with us.

People **The Spirit of love is in us.**

Leader Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen**

Leader Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, to you our hearts are open and our inmost desires are known. We cannot hide our most intimate secrets from you. We ask you to be present at all times in our thoughts and our hearts, and to purify them, so that we may love you with the love of the Holy Spirit and praise your name with humility and joy; Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is **Hope**, the second candle is **Peace**, and the third candle is **Joy**. Let us pray: Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. **Amen.**

Hymn of Praise: *(Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen)*

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Dayspring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

The Word of God: A Reading from Isaiah (61:1–4, 8–11)

The Spirit of the Lord God has taken control of me! The Lord has chosen and sent me to tell the oppressed the good news, to heal the brokenhearted, and to announce freedom for prisoners and captives. This is the year when the Lord God will show kindness to us and punish our enemies. The Lord has sent me to comfort those who mourn, especially in Jerusalem. He sent me to give them flowers in place of their sorrow, olive oil in place of tears, and joyous praise in place of broken hearts. They will be called “Trees of Justice,” planted by the Lord to honor his name. Then they will rebuild cities that have been in ruins for many generations. I, the Lord, love justice! But I hate robbery and injustice. My people, I solemnly promise to reward you with an eternal agreement. Your descendants will be known in every nation. All who see them will realize that they have been blessed, by me, the Lord. I celebrate and shout because of my Lord God. His saving power and justice are the very clothes I wear. They are more beautiful than the jewelry worn by a bride or a groom. The Lord will bring about justice and praise in every nation on earth, like flowers blooming in a garden.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

1 Thessalonians 5: 16–24

Always be joyful and never stop praying. Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ. This is what God wants you to do. Don’t turn away God’s Spirit or ignore prophecies. Put everything to the test. Accept what is good and don’t have anything to do with evil. I pray that God, who gives peace, will make you completely holy. And may your spirit, soul, and body be kept healthy and faultless until our Lord Jesus Christ returns. The one who chose you can be trusted, and he will do this.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn:

Eventide

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy Name— the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children’s children and for evermore!

The Song of Mary

The Holy Gospel:

Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. (1:6–8, 19–28)

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

God sent a man named John, who came to tell about the light and to lead all people to have faith. John wasn’t that light. He came only to tell about the light. The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and temple helpers to ask John who he was. He told them plainly, “I am not the Messiah.” Then when they asked him if he were Elijah, he said, “No, I am not!” And when they asked if he were the Prophet, he also said “No!” Finally, they said, “Who are you then? We have to give an answer to the ones who sent us. Tell us who you are!” John answered in the words of the prophet Isaiah, “I am only someone shouting in the desert, ‘Get the road ready for the Lord!’” Some Pharisees had also been sent to John. They asked him, “Why are you baptizing people,

(Continued overleaf.)

if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?” John told them, “I use water to baptize people. But here with you is someone you don’t know. Even though I came first, I am not good enough to untie his sandals.” John said this as he was baptizing east of the Jordan River in Bethany.

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Message:

Affirmation of Faith

**You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.**

Prayers of the People

Leader Lord Jesus Christ,
People **Be with us, within us, behind us and before us.**

Leader We bind ourselves, O God, today, to the strong name of the Trinity,
People **And we name you: Three in One, One in Three; and claim our place in your
community of love.**

Leader We are embraced, loving God, in the community that is the heart not just of our
church, but also in the community that is the very heart of who you are,
People **Three in One; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Leader Within that great love, we are held and treasured. Lord, hear our prayers this evening;
People **We pray for our hurting world.**

Leader That war-makers will find peace. That the hungry will find food. That refugees
will find shelter. That injustice will be answered with all that is right and good.
People **We pray for all who suffer.**

Leader For those we love dearly. For those we barely know. For those whose suffering, we
have ignored. Be present in the healing touch of all hands that help the sick and
suffering. And send your Spirit to comfort and protect all who need you.
People **We pray for all who struggle.**

Leader For those who cannot see a way through broken relationships, difficult financial realities, emotional darkness, and deep, deep loneliness. May we find you even in the most helpless places. And may we, your people, be present also in those places, bringing Good News and hope to all who are longing for the true life that only you can provide.

People **We pray for all who are joyful.**

Leader We rejoice at the promise of new life, and the goodness of each new day. We celebrate the movement through milestones: births, graduations, new jobs, new relationships; and the hopes that they bring. We remember those moments of blessing in our own lives and we thank you for the opportunity to use our lives to your glory, to live lives that are full and worthy of your calling.

We lift up to you, Lord, the prayers that you've placed on our hearts in our own words at this time...

We will intentionally PAUSE for the community present to share their requests, thanksgivings, desires, hopes & joys either out loud or silently.

We bind ourselves, O God, today, to the strong name of the Trinity.

People **And we name you: Three in One, One in Three: and claim our place in your community of love.**

Leader Lord Jesus Christ

People **Be with us, within us, behind us, before us. Amen.**

Confession of Sin

Happy are those whose sins are forgiven, whose wrongs are pardoned.
I will confess my sins to the Lord, I will not conceal my wrongdoings.

Silence

God forgives and heals us.

We need your healing, merciful God:

give us true repentance.

Some sins are plain to us;

some escape us,

some we cannot face.

Forgive us;

set us free to hear your word to us;

set us free to serve you.

God forgives you.

Forgive others;

forgive yourself.

Silence

Through Christ, God has put away your sin:
approach your God in peace.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Music at the Offertory: "You are my all in all" (Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All thanks and praise
are yours at all times and in all places,
our true and loving God;
through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word,
the Wisdom from on high by whom you
created all things.
You laid the foundations of the world
and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb;
You brought forth all creatures of the earth
and gave breath to humankind.
Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing,
all you create is a sign of hope for our journey;
And so as the morning stars sing your praises
we join the heavenly beings and all creation
as we shout with joy:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one
who comes in the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all,
your Word has never been silent;
you called a people to yourself,
as a light to the nations,
you delivered them from bondage
and led them to a land of promise.
Of your grace, you gave Jesus
to be human, to share our life,
to proclaim the coming of your holy reign
and give himself for us, a fragrant offering.
Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
you have freed us from sin,
brought us into your life,
reconciled us to you,
and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he
died for us Jesus took bread,
and when he had given thanks to you,
he broke it, gave it to his friends and said:
“Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”
After supper Jesus took the cup of wine,
said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said:
“Drink this, all of you:
this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood,
poured out for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”
And so, remembering all that was done for us:
the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension,
longing for Christ’s coming in glory,
and presenting to you these gifts
your earth has formed and human
hands have made,
we acclaim you, O Christ:

**Dying, you destroyed our death.
Rising, you restored our life.
Christ Jesus, come in glory!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these gifts of bread and wine
that they may be to us
the Body and Blood of your Christ.
Grant that we, burning with your Spirit’s power,
may be a people of hope, justice and love.

Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ,
and in the fullness of time gather us
with all your people
into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
we worship you our God and Creator
in voices of unending praise.

Blessed are you now and for ever. **AMEN.**

Lord's Prayer (*Celebrant and 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 for ever. Amen.**

We break this bread
to share in the Body of Christ.
**We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.**

Music during Eucharist: (*Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen*)

John Foley

*One bread, one body, one Lord of all, one cup of blessing which we bless.
And we though many throughout the earth, we are one body in this one Lord.*

Gentile or Jew, servant or free, woman or man, no more. *Refrain.*

Many the gifts, many the works, one in the Lord of all. *Refrain.*

Grain for the fields, scattered and grown, gathered to one for all. *Refrain.*

Post-Communion Prayer (*Celebrant and People*)

**Loving God,
we give you thanks
for restoring us in your image
and nourishing us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.
Now send us forth
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Night Prayer

Lord,
It is night.

The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
What has not been done has not been done;
Let it be.

The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world
And in our lives rest in you.

The night is quiet.
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
All dear to us,
And all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.
Let us look expectantly to a new day,
New joys,
New possibilities.

In your name we pray. **AMEN**

Blessing

Life is short, and we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind, and the blessing of God be with you always. **AMEN.**

Closing Song

Give thanks with a grateful heart;
Give thanks to the Holy One;
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son.

And now let the weak say, "I am strong,"
Let the poor say, "I am rich,
Because of what the Lord has done for us"

Dismissal



MT. LEBANON CHAPEL

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