



## Daniel's Hope in God

November 29, 2020  
*The First Sunday of Advent*



[www.riverofhopehutchinson.org](http://www.riverofhopehutchinson.org)  
Worship on Sundays at 10:30

### Call to Worship

One: Our God is a living God

**All: Who shall endure forever!**

One: God's kingdom cannot be destroyed,

**All: For its reign knows no end.**

One: God delivers and rescues those in trouble,

**All: Working wonders in heaven and earth.**

# Gathering

Gathering Songs – Above All (Jim and Josiah Nelson) &  
The Lord is my Strength (Jim and Sara Nelson)

The Word with the kids

Welcome

No Longer Strangers Prayer

Let us pray together. God of the Stranger, **we wait for you to come among us and yet, you tell us you are already here. You are here in the hunger of a stranger, the handshake of a friend, the hug of a loved one. Give us eyes to see you in the face of everyone we meet. May we greet all people, friend and stranger, as we would greet you. Amen.**

## Lighting of the Advent Wreath

(Adapted from One Candle Liturgy, Rev. Karen Ware Jackson)

One: Today we light one candle for hope.

**All: Because the world is broken and the wait is long, but hope just won't let go.**

One: Hope holds space for all our longings.

**All: Hope lingers on the edge of harsh reality like the dawn gently awakening the sky.**

One: "Keep awake," she whispers,

**All: "for the world is being made new."**

One: Today, we light one candle for hope

**All: Christ is with us**

Hymn – Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory (Nan Crary and Kristin)

## Greeting

Wherever you are on your journey of faith, we believe God meets you right where you are. We gather in the name of our Triune God – Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit-- Our God of hope who is always with you!

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Protective God,

**You guarded over your faithful servant Daniel when his life was threatened, because he refused to dishonor you. Show us the power that the smallest acts of faith may have to influence the world for good, by the help of your Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## The Word

(Read by Kurt Schulz)

**Narrator:** Our story and God's story continues with a reading from Daniel 6:6-27

**Narrator 1:** So the presidents and satraps conspired and came to the king and said to him,

**Narrator 2:** O King Darius, live forever! All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever prays to anyone, divine or human, for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions. Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.

**Narrator 1:** Therefore King Darius signed the document and interdict. Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him, just as he had done previously. The conspirators came and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God. Then they approached the king and said concerning the interdict,

**Narrator 2:** O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human, within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions?

**Narrator 1:** The king answered, the thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.

**Narrator 2:** Then they responded to the king, Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the interdict you have signed, but he is saying his prayers three times a day.

**Narrator 1:** When the king heard the charge, he was very much distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down he made every effort to rescue him. Then the conspirators came to the king and said to him,

**Narrator 2:** Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.

**Narrator 1:** Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!

**Narrator 2:** A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

**Narrator 1:** Then, at break of day, the king got up and hurried to the den of lions. When he came near the den where Daniel was, he cried out anxiously to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver you from the lions?

**Narrator 2:** Daniel then said to the king, O king, live forever! My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong.

**Narrator 1:** Then the king was exceedingly glad and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. The king gave a command, and those who had accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. Before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered them and broke all their

bones in pieces. Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world:

**Narrator 2:** May you have abundant prosperity! I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: For he is the living God, enduring forever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion has no end. He delivers and rescues, he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth; for he has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.

**Narrator 1:** Stay tuned for the continuing saga that is our story and God's story.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

*A word of thanks to feminist and womanist theologians, especially ELCA candidate for ministry Elle Dowd, who have helped me think about these texts and this season of Advent in a new way.*

## Hymn- Let My Prayer Rise Up (from Holden Evening Prayer) (Jim and Josiah Nelson)

*As we sing together, we know that God hears all our prayers, those spoken aloud and those carried in the quiet of our hearts.*

*For those gathering on the Facebook Premiere, you are invited to write your prayers in the comment section on the right side of your screen. Wherever we are this day, God is with us, and God hears our prayers.*

## Prayers of the People

*Together we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.*

Each petition will close with the words: God of Hope  
And we invite you to please respond: **Hear our prayer.**

## Offering

*Thank you for your continued generosity and for all the ways you support God's ministry here at River of Hope. If you'd like more information on how to participate in Simply Giving, please contact [office@riverofhopehutchinson.org](mailto:office@riverofhopehutchinson.org).*

## Offering Song – Take My Life, That I May Be (Jim & Sara Nelson)

# The Feast

## Setting the Table

*The children lead us in prayer as we prepare for God's feast:*

Let's pray: **Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest. And let these gifts to us be blest. Blest be God who is our bread, may all the world be clothed and fed. Amen.**

## Confession

Now ready to be welcomed at Christ's table, let us first confess that God is God and we are not.

God of grace,

**We confess that we have not loved our neighbors and this world you have made.**

**We have not looked to your kingdom, but have looked to building our own.**

**We want more and more and we want bigger and better.**

**We have squeezed the margins until there is nothing left.**

**Forgive us for not looking to your kingdom that is coming,**

**that encompasses all, that is not full of things, but full of life and the promise of hope.**

**Your kingdom includes all of creation, all people, all of our sisters and brothers whom we have squeezed out. Forgive us. Call us to open our tightly clenched fists, to let go of what we have been holding onto, and allow your kingdom, your love, to be our life.**

*Silence*

## Assurance of Forgiveness

God is doing something new, and it won't look anything like we want it to. It's how God works best. God will lead us through, transform our lives, forgive long before we ever do. God does not define you as the things you've done but as a Child of God. Trust in God: You are forgiven. As far as the east is from the west, so far God removes your sin from you. God will see you through to the new kingdom, into new life. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## *Thanksgiving at the Table*

The Lord is 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.**

In the night when Jesus was betrayed by his best friends, he took bread. He blessed it and broke it and gave it to these same friends saying, "Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup, blessed it and gave it for all to drink saying, "This is the new covenant, the new promise, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught

**Our Father, in heaven, holy is your name.**

**Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread and 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 and the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

## Invitation to the Meal

*This is not my table or River of Hope's table, but rather this is Christ's table and all are welcome. If you hunger and thirst for grace and mercy that comes through Jesus Christ, then Christ has set this table just for you. Bring all that you are and all that you have to the table. You will be fed. You are forgiven. There is enough.*

*"This is the body of Christ given for you and the blood of Christ shed for you."*

## Hymn- Just As I Am, Without One Plea (Nan Crary & Kristin)

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray. **Almighty God, we give you thanks that you have fed us with your body and blood. In your grace and by your Spirit, help us to be what we celebrate, the body of Christ in the world. Renewed in this meal, send us out to reflect your love. Through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

# The Sending

Why does our church exist? What is our purpose?

**We go out to transform lives through Jesus Christ.**

## **MILESTONES**

*"It's time for milestones - a time where we join together as a community to share the big, small, good, and hard milestones in our life. Splash in the water this morning and remember that God joins us in hearing these milestones today."*

*"You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore (chorus only)" will be sung as we share our milestones together at home.*

## **Blessing** (by Rev. Elizabeth Rawlings, Disrupt Worship Project)

May you find time for rest this season

May you create space to prepare

May the Lord our God fill you with hope

May Jesus Christ be ever present in your heart

May the Holy Spirit illuminate your way

**Amen**

## **Sending Song – Soon and Very Soon** (Nan Crary & Kristin)

Go in peace, Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

## **Music to Send You Out**

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Liturgy adapted from Disrupt Worship Project, and One Candle by Rev. Karen Ware Jackson. Sermon images from Unsplash.com.