



Joel: God's
Promised Spirit

December 6, 2020
The Second Sunday of Advent



LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.riverofhopehutchinson.org
Worship on Sundays at 10:30

Call to Worship

One: Let us return to God,

All: **Who is gracious, full of mercy.**

One: God is slow to anger,

All: **Quick to love.**

One: Loath to punish.

All: **Let us return to God!**

Gathering

Gathering Songs – I Wonder as I Wander (Sara Shorter) & Come and Behold Him (Mike and Katie Weisenberger)

The Story with Kids

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 peace.

All: Because the world is broken and the wait is long, and sometimes we feel frozen by fear

One: And yet Peace comes in fits and starts.

All: A deep breath, a courageous truth, a humble heart.

One: "Prepare the way," she whispers,

All: For the Lord draws near to all who are weary.

One: Today, we light one candle for peace,

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

Let us pray together

Loving Lord, **when we have strayed, you have called us to come home to you. "Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." With all our hearts we return to you, and gratefully accept your gentle love, for the sake of the one whose spirit lives in us, Jesus Christ our loving Savior. Amen.**

The Word

Narrator: Our story and God's story continues with a reading from the prophet Joel

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.

Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

Stay tuned for the continuing saga that is our story and God's story.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Hymn- Let My Prayer Rise Up (Jim and Josiah Nelson)

(from Holden Evening Prayer)

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

All that we have and all that we are comes from God. Let us give back to God in a spirit of generosity. There will be enough.

Offering Song- People Look East (Nan Crary & Kristin)

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 light,

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, 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." Jesus, remember us, and teach us to pray:

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."

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.

If you gather on Facebook Premiere today, write your milestones in the comment section. Then after each person shares their milestone, the congregation is invited to respond by saying "MILESTONE!"

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- I Give You My Heart (Mike and Katie Weisenberger)

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.