



First Sunday in Advent December 2nd, 2018

Actively Waiting



Welcome to the First Sunday of the Christian Year. Christians around the world begin the new year with the season of Advent. In basic terms, through Advent (*advenire* – *to come*), we adopt a posture of *waiting for* the Christmas event – the birth of Jesus.

Understood more accurately and substantially, Advent is about not just waiting for the child Jesus – “God among us”, in isolation – but *waiting for* the kingdom, with its accompanying marks of justice and compassion. In essence then, Advent and Christmas affirms what Judaism and Christianity hold together, each in their distinctive ways: that history carries meaning, because of God’s involvement in it, for the purpose of building his kingdom. The conclusion to be drawn then is that, if history has meaning for God, it matters what we ourselves do in it and with it.

Advent and Christmas are tremendously significant seasons, for they require from us serious thought and action about our world, not simply sentimentality – a debased currency, to which Christmas is frequently reduced.

GATHERING

Announcements

Invitation and Greeting

In the name of God
In the name of the Son
In the name of the Spirit

The Lord be with you
And also with you

We are here
in the name of Jesus Christ

Hymn: Tell out my soul (TIS 161, Woodlands, Timothy Dudley Smith)

Lighting the Advent Candle of Hope

Hope Rising amid Human and Divine Struggle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHmQinli5Ug>

Candle is lit

People of God, come, for the light of hope draws us together.
From our solitude, we are called into community;

From our brokenness, we are called into wholeness;
from our fading, we are called into fullness;
and from our wandering, we are called to the path of new life.

Let us pray:

Holy Presence, we open ourselves today to you,
to the light and grey of life;
to the wisdom and the wondering;
to the now and the not yet,
of your presence.

***Guide us into this new season,
for we are a people on a journey,
often afraid of the unknown,
so afraid that we fall into silence***

In our worry and despair, for you O God, we wait...

We wait...

We wait...

We wait...

When tears threaten to overwhelm us, we wait...

We wait...

We wait...

We wait...

When we long for a fresh start and newness of heart, we wait...

We wait...

We wait...

We wait...

When we consider the state of our world, we wait...

We wait...

We wait...

We wait...

When we have done all that we can, for you,

O God, we wait...

Amen

The Peace

SMG (Sunday Morning Group)

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

First Thoughts about Living Hopefully

“The most tragic form of loss isn't the loss of security; it's the loss of the capacity to imagine that things could be different.”

Ernst Bloch

Every year we celebrate the holy season of Advent, O God. Every year we pray those beautiful prayers of longing and waiting, and sing those lovely songs of hope and promise.

Karl Rahner SJ

Our human compassion binds us the one to the other - not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.

Nelson Mandela

Hope is an acquired habit of thinking, attained through practice and self-discipline

Thomas Aquinas

Jeremiah 33:14-16 (Good News Translation) Nev Stutchbury

The context of Jeremiah 33:14-16 is important. In terms of the story in Jeremiah, the city of Jerusalem is under siege by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar and the people will shortly go into exile. Jeremiah is in prison. The people are about to lose everything that has given meaning to their lives – the temple, the city, king, priesthood, their homes, family etc. God seems to be silent, absent, and preoccupied with judging the people for past wrongs. But in terms of the literary context, Jeremiah 33:14-16 falls within that part of Jeremiah known as the Book of Consolation (Jeremiah 30-33), which as the name suggests, gives hope to the people.

¹⁴ The LORD said, “The time is coming when I will fulfill the promise that I made to the people of Israel and Judah. ¹⁵ At that time I will choose as king a righteous descendant of David. That king will do what is right and just throughout the land. ¹⁶ The people of Judah and of Jerusalem will be rescued and will live in safety. The city will be called ‘The LORD Our Salvation.’

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Luke 21:25-36 (Good News Translation)

Mike Tickell

Luke appears to espouse the common expectation that the climax of history will include the liberation of Jerusalem from its enemies and the establishment there of the kingdom of God with Jesus the Son of Man as its Messiah. It belongs within a tradition according to which the nations would then come to Zion and there would be a true kingdom of peace. It is important to note that this forms the backdrop of his story of Jesus and of its main themes: the coming reign/kingdom of God, and the good news for the poor. Such concerns are not spiritualised away, even if they now stand in Luke amid the colourful imagery of heavenly portents, earthquakes, natural disasters and the like. As with the horror, so also the hope can only be imagined. The language of dreams or visions becomes appropriate when we seek to grasp the unknown and to build reality from threads of tradition.

²⁵ “There will be strange things happening to the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth whole countries will be in despair, afraid of the roar of the sea and the raging tides. ²⁶ People will faint from fear as they wait for what is coming over the whole earth, for the powers in space will be driven from their courses. ²⁷ Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your salvation is near.”

²⁹ Then Jesus told them this parable: “Think of the fig tree and all the other trees. ³⁰ When you see their leaves beginning to appear, you know that summer is near. ³¹ In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the Kingdom of God is about to come.

³² “Remember that all these things will take place before the people now living have all died. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴ “Be careful not to let yourselves become occupied with too much feasting and drinking and with the worries of this life, or that Day may suddenly catch you ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all people everywhere on earth. ³⁶ Be on watch and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all those things that will happen and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ

“Actively Waiting with Vanuatu” – Christmas Bowl

Some Thoughts:

Offering

Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

Prayer of Dedication

EUCCHARIST

Hymn: Seek O Seek the Lord (TiS 464, Venantius, James Phillip McAuley)

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Let us lift up our 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.***

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for your love is forever
and you have raised the crucified Christ from the dead.

You created all things and placed Christ as the cornerstone.
You made your grace known to Israel in the wilderness,
and through your prophets you pledged
your everlasting love and constant faithfulness.

You anointed your child, Jesus,
with the Holy Spirit and power,
and he went about doing good
and healing all who were oppressed by evil.
He was put to death, hung on a tree,
but you raised him on the third day,
and allowed him to appear, first to Mary Magdalene
and then to your other chosen witnesses.
So now we praise you within the gates of justice
and raise our glad songs of victory
for you have become our saviour
and hidden our lives in Christ in glory.

Therefore we join with all the company of heaven in their song

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest***

Through him, in him and because of him,
We affirm the Church's faith

***Christ has died.
Christ has risen.
Christ will come again.***

Institution

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***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.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
나라이 임하옵시며
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
땅에서도 이루어지이다.
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
우리가 우리에게
죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
다만 악에서 구하옵소서
대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Breaking of the Bread

Christ is the bread of joy
Who shares food with sinners.

Christ is the cup of life,
Who revives the faint-hearted

Let us receive what we are;
Let us become what we receive.

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Wisdom of God,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Word made flesh,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Liberator of creation
grant us peace.

Communion

Distribution

We come forward as a family to partake of the elements together at the Communion Table. The cup on the right-hand side as you face the table is unfermented grape juice and the cup on the left-hand side is alcoholic wine.

Prayer after Communion

God of heaven and earth,
 you make us one in Christ.

Inspire us with new vision of the sabbath
 becoming a community marked by the freedom to serve.

Give us strength to walk together

In Christ's name

Amen

Prayers of the People:

Sunday Morning Group

The one who prays ends each petition with the words, *may we be people of hope*, and the congregational response, *through how we live and what we do*

Closing Hymn: Come thou long expected Jesus (TiS 272, Stuttgart, C. Wesley)

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is life!

Let us live hopefully, not just optimistically;
Actively waiting for the incarnation of God among us,
Actively waiting for the kingdom

Our service has ended

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

Going Out: Shalom (TiS 778, Somos del Señor, Elise Shoemaker Eslinger)

We sing twice

Musical Postlude

Organist:

Tony Ireland

