



Order of Service for Sunday, December 5, 2021

Second Sunday of Advent

*** - stand if you wish to, and are able.**

Thank you for joining us today.

For Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Prayer List, [visit this week's E-Pistle here](#), where you can also subscribe to receive it by email, if you like:

Prelude, *Variations on a Kanon by Pachelbel*, Peter Black
(Please use this time for quiet reflection and preparation for worship)

Welcome & Announcements

Lighting of Altar Candles & Ringing in the Hour

Let us recognize the light of the world within us and ring in the hour of worship.

Advent Candle Song

*A candle is burning, a candle of peace;
a candle to signal that conflict must cease.
For Jesus is coming to show us the way,
a message of Peace humbly laid in the hay*

Call to Worship (Isaiah 2, Romans 13)

One: The voice of one cries out in the wilderness;

Many: Get ready! Prepare for the Way of God!

One: Turn away from despair and hopelessness;

Many: Get ready! Prepare for the Way of God!

One: Make way for the Light coming into the world;

Many: Get ready! Prepare for the Way of God!

One: Come, live in the way of love and peace.

Many: Get ready! Prepare for the Way of God!

Opening Hymn, *Comfort, Comfort, O My People (New Century Hymnal No.101)

Unison Prayer

Loving God, today, on this second Sunday of Advent, we light a candle for peace, as a sign of the approaching sunrise, a reminder that we are called to prepare the way for peace. As we light these candles, place your deep peace in us, that we may help to make a way, risking peace each day, for your sake, and the sake of your Kin-dom of Peace. We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, and the Holy Spirit who guides us. Amen.

Assurance of Grace and Peace

One: Peace be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Let us offer one another a sign of Peace.

***Passing the Peace,** *Spirit, Fill Me*

*Spirit come and fill me, fill me with your peace,
fill me with your joy and your love.
Spirit come and show me, show me how to care,
show me how to share your light.
Help me give my hand to those in need,
let my heart be open to receive.
When we share your love, we can work together
to heal this broken world.
Spirit come and fill us, fill us with your peace,
fill us with your joy and your love,
Spirit come and show us, show us how to care,
show us how to share your light.*

Words of Integration & Guidance, by Rev. Crystal St. Marie Lewis

I had been taught that Jesus was uniquely God, and that humans lacked the capacity to achieve such a powerful union with the Divine. This perspective had made Jesus so unlike me that I could hardly relate to him at all. It wasn't until I realized that Jesus would likely not buy into the Christian tradition's effort to turn him into a superman of sorts. He himself said that those who follow his example would do "greater things" than what had been recorded about him in the Gospels. I began to view the incarnation story as "myth," which Saint Stephanus described as "*something that never occurred, but is always happening*" — and I found that the incarnation was more powerful for me than ever when read as myth. The incarnation is a process that we can all participate in. When we do justice, act mercifully, stand up for the truth and fight to free the oppressed, those are acts of incarnation. Those acts are acts of embodied love, and where there is love, there is God. I no longer view Christmas as a commemoration of the day when a cosmic superman came to Earth. I now understand Advent as a time of renewed focus and commitment to the lifestyle exhibited by Jesus. During Advent, I try to determine if the Spirit of God is found in the way I live my life. Am I bringing justice, healing, mercy, love and acceptance to the world? And more importantly — Am I standing for truth? The story of God "coming down" to Earth reminds me that this world matters. For me, the narrative about Jesus being "born of a virgin" is now a symbol for how the Creator's will for justice and mercy can be carried out by people of all walks of life, regardless of their social status, gender or age. And the miracles remind me that anything is possible in a world where people are willing to unselfishly empty themselves. I find this understanding of the incarnation more life-giving than any Christian doctrine I have ever known, and I am grateful for the change in perspective.

Prepare Ye the Way

The Words of Holy Scripture

One: A Reading of Scripture from Malachi 3:1-4

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Lesson

One: The Holy Gospel according to Luke 3:1-6

Many: **Glory to you, O Christ.**

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Homily "Prepare Ye the Way," Rev. Salvatore Sapienza

Offering & Offertory *"Beautiful City"*
from the musical, "Godspell," Composer: Stephen Schwartz
Max Brown and Peter Black

Make Ready

Joys & Concerns/Tibetan Prayer Bell

One: Thanks be to God!

Many: **Alleluia!**

One: O God,

Many: **Hear our prayer.**

***Doxology** *Give Thanks to the Lord*

*Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good
and God's mercy shall endure.
For God alone has done marv'lous things,
give thanks unto the Lord.
God made the earth and heaven
with a strong and mighty hand.
God has moved us to sing, proclaim this song!
Give thanks unto our God.*

***Celebration of Holy Communion**

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God.

Many: It is good to give God thanks & praise

***Creation's Praise** *Sanctus (Patriquin)*

*Holy holy holy,
God of power and might;
Heaven and earth are full,
are full of your glory:
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes,
who comes in God's name.
Hosanna in the high – est!*

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

Receive the Bread of Life. **Amen.**

The Cup of Love, the Drink of Compassion. **Amen.**

Give Us This Day

***Prayer of Thanksgiving & the Lord's Prayer**

Our Mother/Father, always and everywhere,
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen.

***Hymn of Sending** *Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old*
(*Black New Century Hymnal No. 108*)

***Benediction**

Postlude, *Peace in the Valley*, Peter Black

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and the work of our service groups here:

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