

GATHERING IN GOD'S WORD

Prelude

Sharing Our Lives in Prayer

Prayer Requests

Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Welcome

Letting God In

During this time, we invite you to prepare your heart and your mind for worship. We want you to be able to use this quiet time to settle your thoughts, set aside any distractions that may be troubling you, and focus your whole self on God. Open your heart, your mind, and your spirit, and let God into your life.

Centering Prayer: Meet us in our waiting, Holy One.

As you breathe in, pray, "Meet us in our waiting."

As you breathe out, pray, "Holy One."

* Opening Praise (from Psalm 25):

One: As we come into this sacred space,

Many: We offer our lives to God.

One: We trust in our God.

Many: We trust in our God.

One: As we come into this sacred time,

Many: We seek to learn God's ways,

One: To be led in God's truth,

Many: To put our hope in the Lord our God.

One: We remember God's compassion and faithful love –

ALL: They are forever!

Lighting the First Advent Candle – HOPE

Advent Hymn #92 – While We Are Waiting, Come (verse 1)

(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

While we are waiting, come;

While we are waiting, come.

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,

While we are waiting, come.

* Invitation to Confession

* Joining in Prayer (based on *Spill the Beans* resource, iss. 25, © 2017):

God of noise and fear, God of quiet and storm, as we gather in your house, may we see you enlivening our worship today. Come, Lord Jesus. Come and upset our carefully guarded routines, our carefully ordered structure. Come crashing in and making yourself heard in the cacophony around us and within us. Come tiptoeing in, making us sit up and take notice. Surprise us with all the ways you are present for us. Bring calm and reassurance that your love never falters and your Spirit never leaves us. Come, Lord Jesus. Be known in our imperfect lives today, and by your presence, cleanse and renew us with your unpredictable Spirit today. (Please take a moment for silent reflection and confession.)

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* Song of Peace: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

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**Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God our Creator, we are family.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.**

**Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow.
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.**

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Prayer to Open Minds and Hearts

Scripture reading – Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

¹ The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter from Jerusalem to the few surviving elders among the exiles, to the priests and the prophets, and to all the people Nebuchadnezzar had taken to Babylon from Jerusalem. ... ⁴ The LORD of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims to all the exiles I have carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and settle down; cultivate gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Get married and have children; then help your sons find wives and your daughters find husbands in order that they too may have children. Increase in number there so that you don't dwindle away. ⁷ Promote the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because your future depends on its welfare. ⁸ The LORD of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims: Don't let the prophets and diviners in your midst mislead you. Don't pay attention to your dreams. ⁹ They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I didn't send them, declares the LORD. ¹⁰ The LORD proclaims: When Babylon's seventy years are up, I will come and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹ I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the LORD; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope. ¹² When you call me and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. ¹³ When you search for me, yes, search for me with all your heart, you will find me. ¹⁴ I will be present for you, declares the LORD, and I will end your captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have scattered you, and I will bring you home after your long exile, declares the LORD.

Sermon: "Salvation Comes in the Waiting" – Rev. Lisa Johnson

Hymn #90 – Wait for the Lord (Psalm 27)

(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

REFRAIN:

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

¹ The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear?

the Lord is the strength of my life;
of whom then shall I be afraid?

² **When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh,
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stumbled and fell.**

³ Though an army should encamp against me,
yet my heart shall not be afraid;
**and though war should rise up against me,
yet will I put my trust in the Lord.**

⁴ One thing I have asked of the Lord;
one thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life;
**to behold the fair beauty of the Lord,
to seek God in the temple.**

REFRAIN:

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

⁵ For on the day of trouble the Lord shall shelter me in safety;
the Lord shall hide me in the secrecy of the holy place
and set me high upon a rock.

⁶ **Even now the Lord lifts up my head
above my enemies round about me.**

Therefore I will offer in the holy place an oblation
with sounds of great gladness;
I will sing and make music to the Lord.

REFRAIN:

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

⁷ Hearken to my voice, O Lord, when I call;
have mercy on me and answer me.

⁸ **You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face."
Your face, Lord, will I seek.**

⁹ Hide not your face from me,
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.

**You have been my helper;
cast me not away;
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.**

¹⁰ Though my father and my mother forsake me,
the Lord will sustain me.

REFRAIN:

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

¹¹ Show me your way, O Lord;
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.

¹² **Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen up against me,
and also those who speak malice.**

¹³ What if I had not believed
that I should see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living!

¹⁴ **O tarry and await the Lord's pleasure;
be strong, and the Lord shall comfort your heart;
wait patiently for the Lord.**

REFRAIN:

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Coming Together in Prayer
Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer: **Our Father who art in heaven, 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 sins as we forgive those**

who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn #87 – Comfort, Comfort Now My People
(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

“Comfort, comfort now my people;
Tell of peace!” So says our God.
“Comfort those who sit in darkness
Mourning under sorrow’s load.
To my people now proclaim
That my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover,
And their warfare now is over.”

For the herald’s voice is crying
In the desert far and near,
Calling us to true repentance,
Since the reign of God is here.
O, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Let the valleys rise in meeting
And the hills bow down in greeting.

Straight shall be what long was crooked,
And the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
As befits God’s holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
Now on earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token
That God’s word is never broken.

Prayer of Gratitude and Blessing

Our offering plates are located at the entrance to the sanctuary. This offering allows us to continue our outreach and mission both here in the community of Oronoco and beyond – in the greater Rochester area, in Minnesota, and even around the world. We are grateful for your willingness to join us in this mission and thank you for your generosity.

Announcements

BEING SENT OUT IN GOD’S WORD

* Charge & Blessing

Postlude

** indicates please rise in body or spirit as you feel led*