

A FUTURE WITH HOPE

St. John's, Powell, WY
Advent

Advent

It is possible to think of Advent as a time of exile and alienation as we wait for the nativity. Exile is what happens when powerful authorities or dire circumstances force us to live in a strange place, far from those we love.

There are many examples of exile in scripture: Joseph being sold into slavery in Egypt; Jesus's family fleeing to Egypt; Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden; and more.

Probably the most famous cycle of exile and return in our tradition is the story of the Israelites' Babylonian captivity, in which the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed and many Jews were deported to Babylon and other places, returning only after several generations. The pain of this banishment from their ancestral home is captured in Psalm 137. "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat and wept....How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

Exile is not just a historical fact. It is also a social, religious and spiritual point of reference for Jews and Christians. The season of Advent both affirms our sense of exile and offers comfort to the exiled.

But it need not be only a time of sober reflection and penance. It can also be a time to look for light, and to be lighthearted. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas, we might practice an understanding of our own exile from God and alienation from one another, as well as practicing reunion and solidarity.

We can wonder, in the midst of the longing for return, what are the blessings of being away? What is the role of memory, or nostalgia? And of course, where and how was God present and active in our time away?

Advent can challenge us to glean insights that will help us make the world a more just, loving, life-giving place. And at the same time, through it all, God promises deliverance:

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says God,
plans for your welfare and not for harm,
to give you a future with hope.*

Jeremiah 29:11

Ministers of the Liturgy

Altar Guild	Laura Greathouse
Sound	Steve Nickles
Hospitality Greeter	Susan McEvoy
Liturgy Greeter	Cynthia Garhart
Musicians	Tom Walker
	Kathy Walker
	Martine Grant
Worship Leader	Tim Glatzer
Reader	Mark Smith
Reader	Jen Litterer-Trevino
Preacher	Megan Nickles
Intercessor	Jessica Smith
Coffee Hour	Cynthia & Martin Garhart

Prayers

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of Pakistan (United)
 Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Diocesan Standing Committee; Diocesan Staff ;
 St. Hubert's, Bondurant

<p>Nelson & Nancy; Carolyn & Family; Laurel & Rusty; Hugh B. & Marge; Hunter, Charlotte & Mike; Lee & Kelly; Richmond & Rich; Shirley & Deb; Richard & Jennifer; Tim & Lynnae; Margie & Josey; Bobbi & Bentley; Tim & Alex; Bob & Charlotte; Brandon & Diedre; Diana, Carra, Deb S., Rob R., Kathy E., Martha, Tammy, Rob K., Bobby B., Larry, Irene, Nancy, Alan, Katy, Marlynn, Sue, Kahli, Ron and Jane</p>	<p>Justin, Jacob, Patrick, Reece, Coleman, and Bryce who are serving in the military.</p> <p>Ann, Josephine and Don who reside in care centers.</p>
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Celebrations

Birthday: Marlynn Riker—11th, Jane Woods—12th, Galina Hasanova—13th,
 Barb Roberts—13th

Prelude "Exile," Enya.

Opening Hymn *Verses 1, 2*



1. Com - fort, com - fort, O my peo - ple, Speak of peace, now
2. Hark, the voice of one who's cry - ing In the des - ert
3. O make straight what long was crook - ed, Make the rough - er



1. says our God; Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness,
2. far and near, Bid - ding all to full re - pent - ance
3. plac - es plain; Let your hearts be true and hum - ble,



1. Mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak un - to Je -
2. Since the king - dom now is here. O that warn - ing
3. As be - fits his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry



1. ru - sa - lem Of the peace that waits for them;
2. cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
3. of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed a - broad;



1. Tell of all the sins I cov - er,
2. Let the val - leys rise to meet him
3. And all flesh shall see the to - ken



1. And that war - fare now is o - ver.
2. And the hills bow down to greet him.
3. That his word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: 87 87 77 88; based on Isaiah 40:1-8; Johann G. Olearius, 1611-1684; tr. by Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.
Music: GENEVA 42, alt., *Genevan Psalter*, 1551; Claude Goudimel, 1514-1572; arr. Gerard Chiusano.
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Call to Worship

Let us worship our loving God.

As we gather, we can be joyful.

We can be grateful.

We can be hopeful.

As we gather, we can be weary.

We can be anxious.

We can be grieving.

In our exile and in our return

We can be inspired or tired,

delighted or doubtful,

connected or curious.

God goes with every exile,

God rejoices with every return.

We gather for worship.

We hope.

We hope. Let us worship our loving God.

Praise: Psalm 118 Let Us Rejoice

The leader sings the refrain, then we sing together.

The leader then sings verses; we sing the refrain.

Refrain

This is the day the Lord has made, let us re -
joice and be glad; this is the day the Lord has
made, let us re - rejoice and be glad!

Verses

1. Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's mercy endures for ever;
Let the house of Israel say: "God's mercy endures for ever."
2. The hand of the Lord has struck with power, God's right hand is exalted,
I shall not die, but live anew, declaring the works of the Lord.
3. The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,
the Lord of love and mercy has brought wonder to our eyes!

Text: Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Marty Haugen, © 1983, GIA Publications, Inc.; refrain trans. © 1999, ICIL.
Music: Marty Haugen, © 1983, GIA Publications, Inc.

Scripture

God of the universe, make our hearts porous.
Allow your words to sink deeply into the marrow of our bones,
That we become your Word in body and soul.
A reading from ____.

After the reading

Word of God, Word of return.

Thanks be to God.

Music

“A Voice Cries Out,” Michael Joncas.

Gospel

A reading from ____.

After the reading

Word of God, Word of return.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Affirmation

We stand.

We believe that hope can change the world.

We believe that ordinary people can do extraordinary good.

We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound,
that suffering quells joy and makes it harder to hope.

We choose hope anyway.

In the face of hardship, we hope together.

We hope with God.

We commit ourselves to moving through this world

with eyes wide open,

with porous hearts,

and grateful spirits.

We commit ourselves to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude,
trusting that these things will forever draw us deeper into the household
of God the Creator, God the son, and God the Spirit.

Amen.

Offertory

The people gather and disperse. It is the way of life with God.

As with the people, so with our money: gather and disperse, gather and disperse.

**We offer now what is to be gathered and sent,
for the sake of a future with hope for all.**

Music

“Prepare The Road,” Tom Walker.

Lord's Prayer



Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal-low-ed be your
name, your king-dom come, your will be done on
earth as in heav-en. Give us to-day our
dai-ly bread. For-give us our sins as
we for-give those who sin a-gainst us.
Save us from the time of trial and de-
liv-er us from e-vil, for the king-dom, the pow'r and the
glo-ry are yours, now and for ev-er.

Music: David Haas, © 1986, GIA Publications, Inc.

The Prayers

God of today and tomorrow,
we take a deep breath in and fill our lungs with you.
For we know that you are here, present with us as we pray.
Once again we bow our heads.
Once again we close our eyes.
Once again we draw ourselves closer to you in prayer.

The intercessor continues. We respond to the prayers, singing as the cantor leads us.

Cantor *All*

Come quick - ly, Lord, in mer - cy come. Come

quick - ly, Lord, in mer - cy come.

Cantor *All*

Lift up, O Church, this world to God: Come

quick - ly, Lord, in mer - cy come.

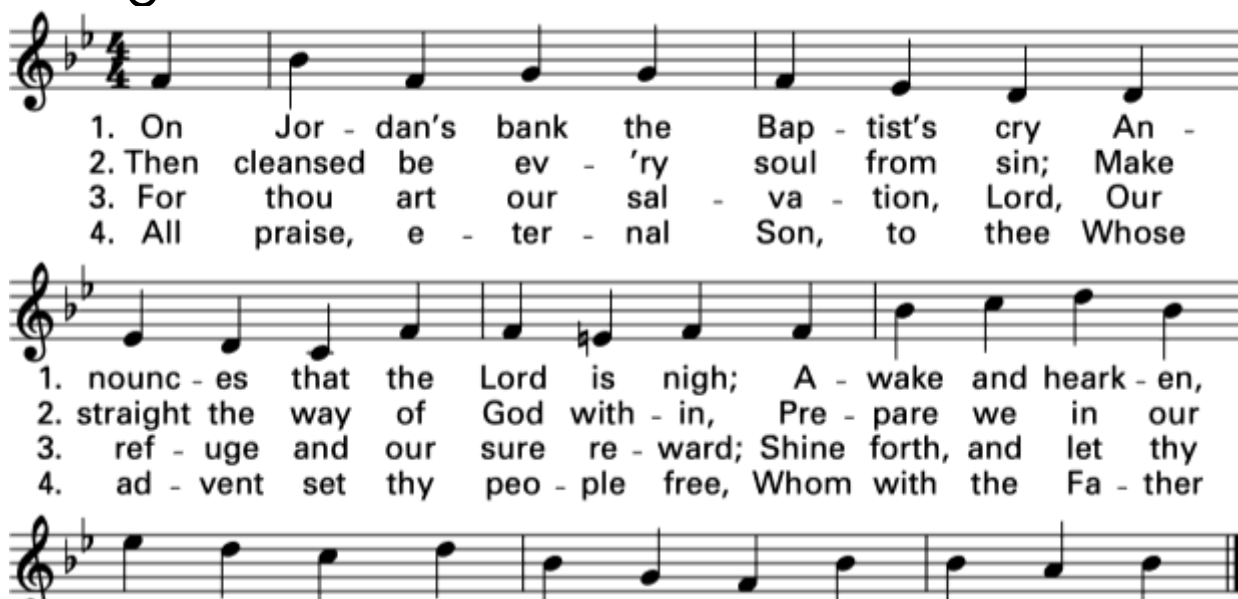
Text: Gabe Huck, © 2004
Music: Based on CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM; adapt. and arr. by Tony Alonso, © 2004, GIA Publications, Inc.

Closing prayer

God of waiting, God of anticipation, help us rejoice in a weary world
let us open the door to a future with hope.
Come to us in our songs and our stories of what could be.
As we listen for God's word,
as we resist giving up or giving in,
we hope.
Let hope change us to strengthen us. Amen.

We sing Amen to the tune above.

Closing Hymn



1. On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An -
2. Then cleansed be ev - 'ry soul from sin; Make
3. For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, Our
4. All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee Whose

1. nounc - es that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - en,
2. straight the way of God with - in, Pre - pare we in our
3. ref - uge and our sure re - ward; Shine forth, and let thy
4. ad - vent set thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther

1. for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
2. hearts a home, Where such a might - y guest may come.
3. light re - store Our souls to heav'n - ly grace once more.
4. we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

Text: LM; Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. by John Chandler, 1806–1876, alt.
Music: *Musicalishes Handbuch*, Hamburg, 1690; adapt. by William H. Havergal, 1793–1870.

Sending

The time for sending is here—for separation, for dispersal, for exile.
It will not last forever; to return is our destiny.
May the God who is the home of the exile,
Jesus, who was and is an exile himself,
and the Spirit, who goes with us as we love and serve,
be with us until we meet again.

Amen.

Peace

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

We greet each other in the name of the Lord. Please stay for coffee and treats downstairs.

Postlude

“Prepare the Way,” Jean Watson.