



## Call to Worship

O Lord our God, we stumble as those lost in the night.

**Will not day come soon?**

We live burdened by the sorrows and cares of this world.

**Will you help us soon?**

We hear the promise of your Word made flesh:

**Christ is coming soon!**

We long for the light of your salvation.

**Come and save us soon!**

## Prayer

O Lord our God, you see and know and feel the pain of the world. Look upon us when we feel alone, and enfold us with your love, that in the midst of pain we may know your presence; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

## Reading

John 1:1-5

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

## Hymn

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* #254

Let us pray.

**Lord God, our light and our salvation, grant that your servants who seek your face in times of trouble may see your goodness in that land of the living, and that we may be set safely on the rock of our faith, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

## Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. <sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." <sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. <sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. <sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

## Hymn

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

#294

Let us pray. O Lord our God,

**you speak to us of comfort and peace. When the things of this world wither and fade, grant that we may stand steadfast in your Word. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.**

## Reading

Matthew 11:28-30

<sup>28</sup>Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

## Hymn

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent* #490

Let us pray. O Lord our God,

**we long for your coming. Grant us patience in our waiting. Shower us with your peace. Lead us to live as your holy people. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN**

## Reading

Luke 1:26-38

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Let us pray. O Lord our God,

**we shout for joy at the nearness of your birth. Renew us with your love, and send us out into the world to share the good news of Christ's advent. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.**

## Meditation

Pastor Dan Ofstehage

## Hymn

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* #257

(vs. 1, 2, 6, 7)

## Prayers

God of hope, you shed your light in the darkness of this world. Grant that we may always live in the promise of your Word made flesh. O God for whom we long, **come and save us soon!**

God of mercy, you comfort all in need of your tender care. Watch over those who are sick, those who mourn, and those who struggle in the midst of holiday joy. O God for whom we long,

**come and save us soon!**

God of peace, establish your justice in the nations of this world, that all may strive for the good of your creation. O God for whom we long,

**come and save us soon!**

God of joy, fill our world with the light of your presence, that we may share the good news of Christ's coming. O God for whom we long,

**come and save us soon! AMEN.**

## The Lord's Prayer

### Healing Service

Our Lord Jesus healed many as a sign of the reign of God come near and sent the disciples to continue this work of healing—with prayer, the laying on of hands, anointing. In the name of Christ, the great healer and reconciler of the world, we now entrust to God all who are in need of healing.

Sisters and brothers, I invite you to come and receive a sign of healing and wholeness in the name of the triune God.

*(At this time, you are invited to come forward for a prayer of healing and hope, to prayerfully light candles, to remain seated in prayer and meditation, or some combination of the three.)*

### Benediction

Brothers and sisters, we are lost in the night no more, but live in the promise of Christ. May God, who sends light to overcome all darkness, grant you grace, mercy, and peace. **AMEN**

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Serving this 21<sup>st</sup> day of December 2018

Pianist: Mary Wika; Sound & Projection: Robbyn Givens;

Head Usher: ; Greeters: ; Ushers: Bob Hoover, Michael Hoover

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