



St Benedict's Episcopal Church

~ Tending Mind and Soul ~

Los Osos, California

The First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023 10:30 am

You are warmly welcome at St. Benedict's for who you are
and where you are on your faith journey!

~ Prelude ~

"O Come O Come Emmanuel"

Arr. by Rudolf Moser

© Concordia Publishing 1953

Celebrant: Blessed are you, holy and living One.

People: *You come to your people and set them free.*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

See the last page with Advent Prayers

Celebrant: Let us pray.

All: *All-compassionate and most merciful God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

♪ Hymn

Wait for the Lord

Gather 332

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Isaiah 40, Philippians 4, Matthew 6-7; Taizé Community, 1984
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
© 1984, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent

Collect of the Day

Celebrant: Christ be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Let us pray together.

All: *God of unveiled truth, faithful flame in times of darkened sun and waning moon: lift up our unknowing hearts, and waken our sleeping love to announce the coming dawn of unexpected peace; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. Amen.*

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,

Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.

Music: Ver. *Hymnal 1982*, after Alexander Archangelsky (1846-1924). Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

Isaiah 64:1-9

Reader: A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
 so that the mountains would quake at your presence--
 as when fire kindles brushwood
 and the fire causes water to boil--
 to make your name known to your adversaries,
 so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
 you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
 From ages past no one has heard,
 no ear has perceived,
 no eye has seen any God besides you,
 who works for those who wait for him.
 You meet those who gladly do right,
 those who remember you in your ways.
 But you were angry, and we sinned;
 because you hid yourself we transgressed.
 We have all become like one who is unclean,
 and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
 We all fade like a leaf,
 and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
 There is no one who calls on your name,
 or attempts to take hold of you;
 for you have hidden your face from us,
 and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Reader: A Reading from Paul's letter to the church in Corinth

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

People: Thanks be to God.

♪ Hymn

My Lord What a Morning

LEVAS 13

Harmony

My Lord, what a morn - ing, My Lord, what a morn - ing, — O

my Lord, what a morn - ing, When the stars be - gin to fall. **Fine**

Unison

1. You'll hear the trum - pet sound, —
 2. You'll hear the sin - ner mourn, — To wake the
 3. You'll hear the Chris - tian shout, —

na - tions un - der - ground, — Look - ing to my God's right

hand, When the stars be - gin to fall. **D.C.**

Words: Traditional. Music: Negro Spiritual.

Mark 13:24-37

Gospeller: The Holy Gospel of Our Savior Jesus Christ According to Mark

People: Glory to You, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the

Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Gospeller: The Gospel of Christ

People: Praise to You, Lord Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Jen Crompton

[We pause for a few moments' reflection before affirming our faith.]

Affirmation of Faith

Let us join in the affirmation of our faith.

All: ***We believe in God the Creator,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.***

***We believe in God the Redeemer,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with God's love.***

***We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.***

We believe in One God: Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Source: Common Worship, Church of England

Prayers of the People

Lord, you are ever among us. Open our eyes to your presence, that your church may be true to its mission, that each congregation may proclaim your goodness, that all of us may show forth your glory. Lord, come down, ***come in, come among us.***

To the nations that are looking for freedom, to the peoples that are longing for liberty, to the individuals striving for justice, to all who are seeking to improve the world, to all who are seeking to improve themselves, Lord, come down, ***come in, come among us.***

To our homes as we prepare for your coming, to our loved ones as they reveal to us your love, to our work, that it may show forth your presence, into our leisure and into our pleasures, Lord, come down, ***come in, come among us.***

To all who long for release, to all who cry in pain, to the sick in body, in mind, and in spirit, to those who can no longer cope, to all who are oppressed and in darkness, to all who watch and wait and weep for you, to those for whom our prayers have been asked and those who are in our hearts...

[prayers from the bidding book read here....Please share silently or in the chat]

Lord, come down, ***come in, come among us.***

That we may know that life is eternal, that loved ones departed are in your keeping, that we may rejoice in hope, that we may come to your glory, Lord, come down, ***come in, come among us.***

Celebrant: *Lord, we watch, we wait, we look, we long for you. Dispel the clouds and darkness and awaken us to your glory, that we may walk in your light, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

From "Clouds and Glory" by David Adam — © Morehouse Publishing 2001

Confession and Absolution

Let us confess our sins to God.

All: ***God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.***

Celebrant *All Compassionate God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.*

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: ***And also with you.***

Please greet others in the chat.

Birthday & Anniversary Prayers

Those wanting a special prayer for a birthday, anniversary, or special concern, please share in the chat.

51. For a Birthday p 830

Watch over thy child, O Lord, as *his/her/their* days increase; bless and guide *him/her/their* wherever *he/she/they* may be. Strengthen *him/her/them* when *he/she/they* stand(s); comfort *him/her/their* when discouraged or sorrowful; raise *him/her/their* up if *he/she/they* fall; and in *his/her/their* heart may thy peace which passeth understanding abide all the days of *him/her/their* life/lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

52. For an Anniversary p 431

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

53. For Travelers p 831

O God, our heavenly Father, whose glory fills the whole creation, and whose presence we find wherever we go: Preserve those who travel [in particular _____]; surround them with your loving care; protect them from every danger; and bring them into safety to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Transition Prayer

*O Lord,
You are the light that illumines our path.
You are the map that gives us direction.
You are the peace that makes us strong.
You are the guide whom we faithfully follow.
May your light illuminate our entire lives.
And your guidance bring direction to our work.
May we find inspiration in your Word,
And peace in our hearts as we follow you. Amen.*

The Offertory

You can contribute at our website www.stbenslososos.org at any time.

Holy Communion

Transition Prayer

*O Lord,
You are the light that illumines our path.
You are the map that gives us direction.
You are the peace that makes us strong.
You are the guide whom we faithfully follow.
May your light illuminate our entire lives.
And your guidance bring direction to our work.
May we find inspiration in your Word,
And peace in our hearts as we follow you. Amen.*

The Offertory

*You are invited to make a thank offering, but if you do not contribute financially today please give thanks for God's blessing as the plate is passed.
You can contribute at our website www.stbenslososos.org at any time.*

1 O Je - sus, joy of lov - ing hearts, the fount of
 2 We taste in you our liv - ing bread, and long to
 3 For you our rest - less spi - rits yearn wher - e'er our
 4 O Je - sus, ev - er with us stay; make all our

life and our true light, we seek the peace your love im -
 feast up - on you still; we drink of you, the foun - tain -
 chang - ing lot is cast; glad, when your pres - ence we dis -
 mo - ments calm and bright; oh, chase the night of sin a -

parts, and stand re - joic - ing in your sight.
 head, our thirst - ing souls to quench and fill.
 cern, blest, when our faith can hold you fast.
 way, shed o'er the world your ho - ly light.

Words: Att. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153), tr. and para. Ray Palmer (1808-1887), alt. Adapted text from ICEL Resource Collection of Hymns and Service Music for the Liturgy. Copyright © 1981, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved. Music: *Dickinson College*, Lee Hastings Bristol, Jr. (1923-1979) 1962, Theodore Presser Co. Used by permission of the Publisher. Copyright © 1962 Theodore Presser Co. Used by permission of the publisher.

♪ Doxology:

[Hymn tune #400]

[sung] *Praise God from Whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below, Alleluia, Alleluia
Praise God the Source of all our gifts
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*

Holy Eucharist

EOW1

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People *It is right to give our thanks and praise.*

Celebrant It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy. You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life. Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:

♪ Sanctus

Gather 297

Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san-na, ho - san-na on high. Bless-ed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -
san-na in the high-est, ho - san-na, ho - san-na on high.

The Celebrant continues

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All: *Christ has died.
 Christ is risen.
 Christ will come again.***

Celebrant: Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with blessed Mary and blessed Benedict all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

**All: *Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. AMEN***

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

***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 for ever. Amen***

The Breaking of the Bread

The celebrant breaks the Bread

♪ Fraction Anthem

Gather 298

When we eat this bread of life, when we drink of this
ho - ly cup, we pro - claim your death, O Lord,
till you come a - gain till you come a - gain.

The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics. The second staff contains the melody for the second line. The third staff contains two endings: the first ending leads back to the beginning of the phrase, and the second ending concludes the piece.

Holy Communion

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*If God is calling you, you are welcome and invited to receive communion.
Please contact the church office to arrange to receive communion in your home.*

♪ Communion Music

“Prelude and Fugue in b Flat Minor from Well Tempered Clavier Book 1 ”

J.S. Bach

© Kalmus Publishing, N.D.

♪ Hymn #306

Come, Risen Lord

Blue Hymnal



1 Come, ris - en Lord, and deign to be our guest;
 2 We meet, as in that up - per room they met;
 3 One bo - dy we, one Bo - dy who par - take,
 4 One with each o - ther, Lord, for one in thee,



may, let us be thy guests; the feast is thine;
 thou at the ta - ble, bless - ing, yet dost stand:
 one Church u - ni - ted in com - mun - ion blest;
 who art one Sa - vior and one liv - ing Head;



thy - self at thine own board make man - i - fest
 "This is my Bo - dy"; so thou giv - est yet:
 one Name we bear, one Bread of life we break,
 then o - pen thou our eyes, that we may see;



in thine own Sac - ra - ment of Bread and Wine.
 faith still re - ceives the cup as from thy hand.
 with all thy saints on earth and saints at rest.
 be known to us in break - ing of the Bread.

Words: George Wallace Briggs (1875-1959), alt. By permission of Oxford University Press. Music: *Sursum Corda*, Alfred Morton Smith (1879-1971). Copyright © 1941, Mrs. Alfred M. Smith.

Silence

Prayer

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen

Blessing

Celebrant: May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path and the blessing of God Almighty. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. *Amen*

Announcements

♪ Hymn 57

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Blue Hymnal



1 Lo! he comes, with clouds de - scend - ing, once for
 2 Ev - ery eye shall now be - hold him, robed in
 3 Those dear tok - ens of his pas - sion still his
 4 Yea, a - men! let all a - dore thee, high on



our sal - va - tion slain; thou - sand thou - sand
 dread - ful ma - jes - ty; those who set at
 daz - zling bo - dy bears, cause of end - less
 thine e - ter - nal throne; Sa - vior, take the



saints at - tend - ing swell the tri - umph of his
 nought and sold him, pierced, and nailed him to the
 ex - ul - ta - tion to his ran - somed wor - ship -
 power and glo - ry; claim the king - dom for thine



train: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 tree, deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing,
 ers; with what rap - ture, with what rap - ture,
 own: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
 deep - ly wail - ing, shall the true Mes - si - ah see.
 with what rap - ture gaze we on those glo - rious scars!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Music: *Helmsley*, melody Thomas Augustine Arne (1710-1778); harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), alt.

Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

♪ Postlude

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Arr. Philip Keveren

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Ministers of the Service

Celebrant:	Rev. Jen Crompton
Preacher:	Rev. Jen Crompton
Eucharistic Minister:	Brian Spolarich
Eucharistic Assistant:	Alan Kiste
Acolyte:	Ari Welch
Lector:	Bob Pelfrey
Music:	Ann Lucas
Flowers:	Elaine Beckham
Ushers:	Alan Kiste & Connie Weldon
Intercessor:	Lisa Gonzalez
Altar Guild:	Pat Stoneman
Online Host:	Elaine Beckham
Tellers:	Diana Hammerlund & Alice Welchert
Technical:	Hannah-Jaye Matthews
Coffee Hour Host:	Potluck

This Week at St Ben's

Monday	Dec 4
3:30p	Liturgy Committee Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday	Dec 5
9:45a	Prayers of the Morning (Zoom)
10:30a	Spiritual Conversation (Zoom)
5:30p	Vespers in-person
Sunday	Dec 10
8:00a	Contemplative Service
10:30a	Eucharist Service

Announcements

Diocesan Retreat December 9th at St. James in Paso Robles

You are invited to a diocese-wide Advent Retreat us! There will be three retreats, with the hope that one is happening near you. We will gather at 10 am for worship, Bible study, and reflection. The retreat will end by 3 pm.

You are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and bring a journal or computer if you are someone who enjoys writing while reflecting. Lunch will be provided, and there is a suggested \$10 donation to help with the cost of lunch, but this is not a required contribution.

The theme of the day is "The Mysteries of the Season of Advent," and the retreat will be led by the diocesan Advent Retreat committee.

Questions? Please email Canon Martha at canonmartha@realepiscopal.org.

The link is also available on the diocesan home page

<https://www.realepiscopal.org/>

PRAYER PLACE POP UP at the Abundance Shop Join your Trailblazer Discovery Team, Sandy Fisher, Cathy Gildea, Barbara Hirahara, and Rev Jen, at our Prayer Place Pop-up at the St. Ben's Abundance Shop Saturday December 16 from 11-4. Stop by for a blessing-to-go or a cup of coffee to stay. We will offer prayer, a question of the day based on the season of Advent, or just an opportunity to share anything that might be on your heart. Please stop by and invite others you know to do the same.

Personal Prayer: If you'd like prayer support during the week, contact Lisa Gonzalez (805-441-3386). If no answer, please leave a message and your call will be returned. Prayer requests may also be emailed at any time to prayers@stbenslososos.org and requests for pastoral care may be sent to pastoralcare@stbenslososos.org.

Tuesday Morning Prayers & Spiritual Conversation: The Tuesday Spiritual Discussion group will be using an Advent program sponsored by a group called Living Compass. The four-week program includes Sunday and weekday meditations for the Advent season. The program booklets are available as pdf electronic copies for free or a print copy available for \$1.00 plus postage. A limited number of print copies are available in the back of the church. Order your booklets at <https://www.livingcompass.org/advent-lent>. You do not have to read the book to participate. Tuesdays at 10:30 on [Zoom](#).

Offering the Common Cup at Communion

In an effort to address the ongoing needs of our parish, including the continued assessment of the return to pre-COVID liturgical practices, we will resume offering you wine from the Common Cup (chalice) at the Eucharist. At the Eucharist, you will be offered wine from either the chalice or from an individual cup. If you choose to drink from the chalice, reach for it from the Eucharistic Minister. If you choose to drink from the individual cups, simply acknowledge the chalice with a nod of your head and take one of the small cups from the tray offered by the Eucharistic Assistant. As usual, cross your arms over your chest if you do not wish to receive any wine.

Bidding Book Prayers – If you'd like to request prayers for someone to have their names read out during the worship services on Sunday, please write them in the bidding book on the stand by the usher's station as you come into church.

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge with gratitude the yak tityu tityu yak tihini (ytt) / the Northern Chumash People, and the Salinan Tribe / the T'epot'aha'l, "People of the Oaks," on whose ancestral homelands we gather, and whose vibrant culture continues today. May we always remember that the Earth does not belong to us, that we belong to the Earth, and that we are all relatives in life. Help us to be instruments of justice and peace for all people in today's world.

Our Mission Statement

St. Benedict's is an inclusive Christian community that celebrates the divine in all beings, and inspires spiritual growth through joyful sacramental worship, loving service, creative expression, thoughtful inquiry, and commitment to social justice.

Our Inclusivity Statement

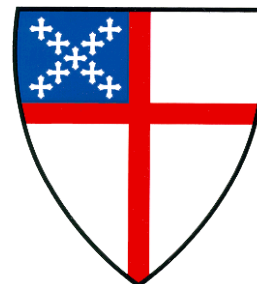
The people of St Benedict's are called to share God's love as we minister with and to all persons in Los Osos and beyond, providing worship, nurture, fellowship, and service.

Our welcome knows no boundaries of age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, economic condition, or physical or mental ability.

We embrace and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation. We cooperate in ministry with other local churches and groups of God's people as we participate in the worldwide mission of Christ.



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First Sunday of Advent - HOPE

The Gospel of John speaks of Christ as the true light coming into the world.

In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ. It is significant that the church has always used that language—the coming of Christ—because it speaks to a deep truth. Christ is coming. Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart. And so we light the first candle, the candle of hope, and dare to express our longing for peace, for healing, and the well-being of all creation.

[One Candle is lit]

All:

*Loving God, as we enter this
Advent season,
We open all the dark places in our
lives and memories
to the healing light of Christ.
Show us the creative power of hope.
Prepare our hearts to be
transformed by you,
that we may walk in the light of Christ.
Amen.*

