Messiah Episcopal Church

AN ADVENT SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE, HOPE, AND HEALING

December 18, 2018  7:00 PM

PRELUDE  Quiet music for quieting your spirit
Ps. 62 For God Alone (J. Kidder)
Within Our Darkest Night (Taize Songbook #37)
The Kingdom of God (Taize)
Confitemini/Come and Fill Our Hearts (Taize)

OPENING HYMN
GATHERING

Leader  In the name of God: Creator, Healer, and Comforter.
All  Blessed be God now and forever.

Leader  Come, all who labor and are heavy-laden;
       Come, all who are broken in body or spirit;
       Come, all who care for others in any kind of need or sickness.
The Holy One offers comfort, strength, and healing.

       Let us pray.

All  God of all,
       draw near to us, who are weary and burdened,
sick and suffering.
Open our eyes to see that you are present with us in our pain,
leading us toward health and wholeness.
Fill us with your love,
and open us to your healing grace.
Amen.

Lord Of All Hopefulness (Hymn #482)

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindliness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Words: Jan Struther (pseudonym of Joyce Anstruther Graham Plaszek, 1901-1953), 1931;
© Oxford University Press. Music: Slane (Irish traditional melody)

THE FIRST CANDLE: THE CANDLE OF HOPE

Leader: We light the first candle to remember the hope that God gives in the face of
disappointment and gloom. God knows us, hears our prayers, listens to our cries for help
and gives us hope.

Reading   Jeremiah 29:11-13

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to
harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to
me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Psalm 130
Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD;
   LORD, hear my voice; *
   let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

If you, LORD, were to note what is done amiss, *
   O LORD, who could stand?

For there is forgiveness with you; *
   therefore you shall be feared.

4 I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; *
   in his word is my hope.

5 My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning, *
   more than watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, wait for the Lord, *
   for with the Lord there is mercy;

With him there is plenteous redemption, *
   and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.
Prayer

Leader: Eternal God, our heavenly Father, you love us with an everlasting love, and turn the shadow of death into the morning: We bow before you with reverent and submissive hearts; speak to us afresh your gracious promises, that filled with the hope that comes from you we may be lifted above our darkness and distress into the light of your presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Silence for reflective meditation on the hope we have through Christ.

THE SECOND CANDLE: THE CANDLE OF PEACE

Leader: We light the second candle to remember the peace that God gives in the face of turmoil and confusion. May the transforming power of the Prince of Peace live within us through His Spirit of Peace.

Reading John 14:26-27

Jesus said, "The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

Psalm 46

1 God is our refuge and strength,* a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,* and though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea;

3 Though its waters rage and foam,* and though the mountains tremble at its tumult.

4 The Lord of hosts is with us;* the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

5 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,* the holy habitation of the Most High.

6 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be overthrown;* God shall help her at the break of day.

7 The nations make much ado, and the kingdoms are shaken;* God has spoken, and the earth shall melt away.

8 The Lord of hosts is with us;*
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

9 Come now and look upon the works of the Lord,*
what awesome things he has done on earth.

10 It is he who makes war to cease in all the world;*
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

11 "Be still, then, and know that I am God,*
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth."

12 The Lord of hosts is with us;*
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Prayer
Leader: Lord, you alone are God, gracious and merciful, and you invite all who love your name to cast away all fear and anxiety and to lay their burdens on you. Protect us under the shadow of your wings, and give us now and evermore that everlasting peace which you have promised to those who obey your word; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Silence for reflective meditation letting God’s peace fill your heart and mind.

THE THIRD CANDLE: THE CANDLE OF JOY
Leader: We light the third candle to remember the joy that God gives in the face of bereavement and sorrow.

Reading Philippians 4:4-7
Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near; not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 30
1 I will exalt you, O Lord, because you have lifted me up
and have not let my enemies triumph over me.

2 O Lord my God, I cried out to you,
and you restored me to health.

3 You brought me up, O Lord, from the dead;
you restored my life as I was going down to the grave.

4 Sing to the Lord, you servants of his;
give thanks for the remembrance of his holiness.

5 For his wrath endures but the twinkling of an eye,
his favor for a lifetime.

6 Weeping may spend the night,
but joy comes in the morning.
7 While I felt secure, I said, "I shall never be disturbed. 
   You, Lord, with your favor, made me as strong as the mountains."

8 Then you hid your face, 
   and I was filled with fear

9 I cried to you, O Lord; 
   I pleaded with the Lord, saying,

10 "What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the Pit? 
   will the dust praise you or declare your faithfulness?

11 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me; 
   O Lord, be my helper."

12 You have turned my wailing into dancing; 
   you have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.

13 Therefore my heart sings to you without ceasing; 
   O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you for ever.

Prayer

Leader: Father of mercies and God of all comfort, look in your tender love and pity on those whose lives are filled with sorrow. Be to them their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; and as you have delivered us from eternal death, so make us partakers of everlasting joys; through Jesus Christ our Lord. All: Amen. Silence for reflective meditation on the gift of the Joy of the Lord.

THE FOURTH CANDLE: THE CANDLE OF LOVE

Leader: We light the fourth candle to remember the love that God has for us especially during times of sadness, isolation and loneliness. Let us reaffirm our trust in the unconditional loving presence of Jesus, God-with-us. Let us welcome his presence and healing love.

Reading Lamentations 3:22-26

   The steadfast love of theLORDnever ceases, 
   his mercies never come to an end; 
   they are new every morning; 
   great is your faithfulness. 
   "TheLORDmy portion," says my soul, 
   "therefore I will hope in him." 
   TheLORDgood to those who wait for him, 
   to the soul that seeks him. 
   It is good that one should wait quietly 
   for the salvation of theLORD.
Psalm 86:3-7. 10-13, 15

3 Be merciful to me, O Lord, for you are my God;
   I call upon you all the day long.

4 Gladden the soul of your servant,
   for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
   and great is your love toward all who call upon you.

6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer,
   and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 In the time of trouble I will call upon you,
   for you will answer me.

10 For you are great; you do wondrous things;
   and you alone are God.

11 Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth;
   knit my heart to you that I may fear your name.

12 I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
   and glorify your name for evermore.

13 For great is your love toward me;
   you have delivered me from the nethermost pit.

15 You, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion,
   slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

Prayer

Leader: Gracious God and Lover of all you have made, we thank you for your great love toward us. You have redeemed us in Christ, and we welcome your infinite Love living in us. Through the light and power of God’s Spirit in us, let us know the strength of your love so that together in Christ we may rejoice in you now and forever.

All: Amen.

Silence for reflective meditation on God’s infinite love.

The Christ candle remains unlit as a sign of waiting for Emmanuel, God-with-us.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

The people pray the portions in bold.

Lord of Life and love, we lift up our hearts to you in hope and trust as we come together to remember our hurts, our losses, our struggles, and our pain. We have experienced loneliness and inner emptiness, yet we know you remember us.
You give our lives meaning and hope, for your promises cannot fail and your love is unchanging

We lift our souls to you, our God, asking you to comfort our lonely hearts, give us strength to face our struggles with courage and hope.

Revive our fainting spirits that we may look forward and upward in great faith to our Heavenly home. May our joys as well as our sorrows be touched by your light and love.

Jesus, Lord of Life, our refuge and strength in every time of need; may we feel your loving, healing presence surrounding us this Advent.

Increase our faith, dispel our fears, and lift us from the darkness of sadness into the light of your presence.

Grant, O Lord that we may walk in your presence, with your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds, and your strength in our wills.

May our Advent and Christmas be filled with reasons to be thankful. Having loved and having been loved is perhaps the most wondrous gift of all.

Lord, in your mercy Christmas comes again, and in faith we set out on the road to Bethlehem to see this thing that has happened. Lead us on our journey, and kindle in our hearts a spirit of expectancy.

May we not rest until we bow in wonder and adoration before the Child of Mary, the everlasting Son of the Father, singing, "Glory to God in the highest!"

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer. Amen

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND ANOINTING WITH OIL

Blessed are you, sovereign God, gentle and merciful, creator of heaven and earth. Your Word brought light out of darkness, and daily your Spirit renews the face of the earth. Your anointed Son brought healing to those in weakness and distress. He broke the power of evil and set us free from sin and death that we might live in hope and praise your name for ever. By the power of your Spirit may your blessing rest on those who are anointed with this oil in your name; may they be made whole in body, mind and spirit, restored in your image, renewed in your love, and serve you as sons and daughters in your kingdom. Through your anointed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit we lift our voices of thanks and praise:

All: Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation, now and for ever. Amen.
Those who wish to receive the ministry of anointing of oil and prayer are invited to come kneel at the altar.

**BENEDICTION**

Almighty God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imagination, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours. And then use us as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people. May our God of Hope and Love, grant you strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and fill you with Peace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Amen.

**PRAYER AND MEDITATION, PRAYERS FOR HEALING**

All are invited to pray and meditate at your seat or come for prayer with members of the Healing Team. Stay as long as you wish and leave as the spirit leads. You may join in singing if you wish.

Before you go: commit yourself to God and leave in his care.

Because the Holy Spirit is continually at work in each of us, pushing us toward wholeness, the process of healing is like removing sticks and leaves from a stream until the water runs clear. If we simply get out of the way of the Lord's work in us, we can trust that we are being led to the particular kind of wholeness God wills for us.

(continued on next page)

Wait for the Lord Taize Songbook #12

In God Alone (Taize Songbook #19)

Lord of Life We Come to You (C. Walker; Scottish trad.)

Prepare The Way of the Lord

In the Lord is my Joy and Salvation (M. Rizza)

Creator of the stars of Night Hymnal 1982 # 60

Holy is Your Name (para. Magnificat; trad. Irish)