



“Another Name for Patience” by Jan Richardson

Grace Episcopal Church

Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2020 | 9:30am
Ministers | All of Us
Rector | Wren Blessing
Curate | Stephen Crippen
Music | Martin Cockroft

Silence

There is the sudden silence of the crowd
above a player not moving on the field,
and the silence of the orchid.

The silence of the falling vase
before it strikes the floor,
the silence of the belt when it is not striking the
child.

The stillness of the cup and the water in it,
the silence of the moon
and the quiet of the day far from the roar of the sun.

~ Billy Collins from *Poetry* (April 2005)

The silence when I hold you to my chest,
the silence of the window above us,
and the silence when you rise and turn away.

And there is the silence of this morning
which I have broken with my pen,
a silence that had piled up all night

like snow falling in the darkness of the house—
the silence before I wrote a word
and the poorer silence now.

Prelude | Sleepers Wake *offered by Jim Quitslund*

by J.S. Bach

Announcements

A bell rings. We listen to the longing in our hearts.

Gathering Song | O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
O come, thou Branch of Jesse's tree, free them from
tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times didst give the
Sa-tan's ty-ran-ny that trust thy might-y power to
law, in cloud, and ma-jes-ty, and awe. Re-joice! Re-joice!
save, and give them vic-tory o'er the grave.
Em-man-u-el shall come to thee, O Is-ra-el!

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Call to Worship

Officiant Wisdom of God, come to your world,

People for all creation waits.

Officiant Dawning light, come to your world,

People for all creation waits.

Officiant Living hope, God with us,

People Guide us into the way of peace.

Advent Wreath Lighting

Wren invites children of Grace into reflection on Advent as a Grace household lights the first and second candles of an Advent Wreath.

We remain standing and sing together.

Opening Song | Restore Us Offered by Diane McGrew

Words from Psalm 80:3 | Music: Diane McGrew

Restore us, restore O God our world.

Show us a light to heal us.

Restore us, restore O God our soul.

Show us a light to find our way.

Show us a light, show us a light,

Show us a light to find our way.

The Collect

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Officiant Let us pray.

Jesus, you are the way through the wilderness: show us your truth in which we journey, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit be in us the life that draws us to God. **Amen.**

WE TELL THE STORY

We are seated for the reading.

The First Reading | Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

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.

(Reading continues on the following page.)

A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
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.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

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.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.
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!”
See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
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.

After the reading, the reader will say

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

We stand and say the Psalm.

Psalm | 85:1-2,8-13

You have been gracious to your land, O Lord,
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying,
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.

**Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

Mercy and truth have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

**Truth shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

The Lord will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**Righteousness shall go before him,
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.**

We are seated for the second reading.

The Second Reading | 2 Peter 3:8-15a

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

After the reading, the reader will say

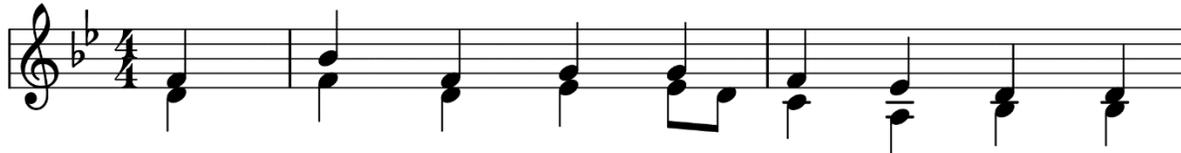
The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

We stand together and sing

Gospel Song | On Jordan's Banks *Offered by members of the Grace Music Circle*

Words: Charles Coffin trans. John Chandler | Music: MUSIKALISCHES HANDBUCH; harm. William Henry Monk



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -
2 Then cleansed be ev - ery life from sin; make
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our



nounc - es that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark-en,
straight the way for God with-in, and let us all our
ref - uge and our great re-ward; with - out your grace we



for he brings glad ti - dings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.

The Officiant introduces the Gospel by saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

The Gospel | Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going

(Reading continues on the following page.)

out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

After the Gospel the Officiant will say

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

OUR RESPONSE TO THE STORY

The Homily

Affirmation of Faith

We stand and say

**We believe in God above us,
maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon,
of water and earth,
of all humanity.**

**We believe in God beside us,
Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,
born of a woman's womb, servant of the poor,
he was tortured and nailed to a tree.
Knowing full passion and deep sorrow, he died forsaken.
He descended into the earth to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present,
and his Kingdom will one day be known.**

**We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church.
She is the Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of resurrection and of life everlasting. Amen.**

We gather silently in prayer.

The Prayers of the People

Words: attrib. St. Patrick, tr. Cecil F. Alexander | Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams | Led by Carol Corbus

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gath - ered to - day.

Silence

Leader Key of David, open the hearts and minds of all the baptized, and all who seek your truth.
Turn us toward the future, show us your way, and send us on your mission.

We pause for silent prayer.

Leader come, Emmanuel,
People and dwell with us.

Leader Desire of Nations, restore peace and unity to your people everywhere. Guide the leaders
of nations; shelter the refugees; nourish the hungry; and open our eyes and ears to all who
cry for justice.

We pause for silent prayer.

Leader come, Emmanuel,
People and dwell with us.

Leader Dayspring, rise in glory above this good, green earth. Enlighten our minds and hearts, that
we might share the warmth of your embrace with all living things.

We pause for silent prayer.

Leader come, Emmanuel,
People and dwell with us.

Leader O Wisdom, strengthen us to reach out to friends and strangers on this island, and beyond. Give courage and skill to essential workers, and to all who look for work. We pray especially for our ministry partners, Helpline House, BARN Bites, and Fishline.

We pause for silent prayer.

Leader O come, Emmanuel,
People **and dwell with us.**

Leader O Root of Jesse, bring healing to all who suffer. Give comfort and strength to caregivers and all who minister to the sick. Fill us with the power of your hope. We pray especially for those on our parish prayer list.

We pause for silent prayer.

Leader O come, Emmanuel,
People **and dwell with us.**

Leader O Lord of Might, gather those we love who have died, and draw close to those who mourn. Join us as one communion of saints, and prepare our hearts for your reign of love that has no end.

We pause for silent prayer.

Leader O come, Emmanuel,
People **and dwell with us.**

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gath - ered to - day.

Officiant Let us pray.

**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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Offertory Song | Closer to the Light *Offered by Garth Edwards*

by Bruce Cockburn

While we cannot gather in person, we make our weekly offerings online here: <https://www.gracehere.org/give/>.

There you go
Swimming deeper into mystery
Here I remain
Only seeing where you used to be
Stared at the ceiling
'Til my ears filled up with tears
Never got to know you
And suddenly you're out of here

Gone from mystery into mystery
Gone from daylight into light
Another step deeper
Into darkness
Closer to the light

Walked outside
Summer moon was nearly down
Mist on the fields
Holy stillness all around
Death's no stranger
No stranger than the life I've seen
Still I cried
Still I begged to get you back again

Gone from mystery into mystery
Gone from daylight into light
Another step deeper
Into darkness
Closer to the light

The Blessing

The Officiant offers a blessing.

The Wisdom of God

the Love of God

and the Grace of God

strengthen you to be Christ's hands and heart in this world, in the name of the Holy Trinity. **Amen.**

Closing Song | May You Find a Light

by David Gungor and John Arndt

Lost and weary traveler
Searching for the way to go
Stranger, heavy-hearted
Longing for someone you know

May you find a light
May you find a light
May you find a light
To guide you home

There are weary travelers
Searching everywhere you go
Strangers who are searching
Longing deeply to be known

A light shone down on us
A star of hope shines bright
A light shines bright
A light shines bright

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Using the Zoom chat window, please share a milestone that we can recognize together.

We will sing, "God Grant Them Many Years."

The Peace

We conclude with the sharing of God's peace.

Officiant Now the peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you.

Comfort Animal

from the sequence "Shekhinah Speaks"

Comfort, comfort my people ...

—Isaiah 40:1

A voice says, "Your punishment has ended."
You never listen to that voice. You really suck
at being comforted.

Another voice says, "Cry."
That voice always gets your attention,
keeps you thinking

about withered flowers and withering grass
and all the ways you're like them.
Hard to argue with that.

Death tramples you, an un-housebroken pet
trailing prints and broken stems,
pooping anxiety, PTSD, depression.

It's better to be animal than vegetable
but best of all is to be spirit
flying first or maybe business class

with your emotional support animal, your body,
curled in your lap, soaring with you
above the sense of loss you've mistaken

for the closest to God you can get.
You want to cry? Cry about that.
Who do you think created

the animals to whom you turn for comfort,
dogs, miniature horses, monkeys, ferrets,
hungers you know how to feed,

fears you know how to quiet?
I form them, fur them,
it's my warmth radiating from their bodies,

my love that answers
the love you lavish upon them.
Your deserts and desolations

are highways I travel,
smoothing your broken places,
arranging stars and constellations

to light your wilderness.
Sometimes I play the shepherd;
sometimes I play the lamb;

sometimes I appear as death,
which makes it hard to remember
that I am the one who assembled your atoms,

who crowned your dust with consciousness.
I take you everywhere,
which is why, wherever you go, I'm there,

keeping you hydrated, stroking your hair,
laughing when you chase your tail,
gathering you to my invisible breasts

more tenderly than any mother.
You're right—you never asked for this. I'm the
reason

your valleys are being lifted up,

the source of your life laid bare.
Mine is the voice that decrees—
that begs—your anguish to end.

When you suffer, I suffer.
Comfort me
by being comforted.

~ Joy Ladin from *Poetry* (January 2019)

News from Grace Church, Bainbridge Island

December 6, 2020

..... inclusion service discovery gratitude

La Iglesia de la Resurrección Holiday Gift Card Drive | December 10 through 17

Grace is once again collecting gift cards during the holiday season for La Iglesia de la Resurrección. They would love to receive gift cards for Walmart, Target, Fred Meyer, and Safeway. The amounts could be anything from \$25 to \$50. Please bring cards to church on Thursdays, December 10 and December 17, between 2 and 4 pm, or on Sunday, December 13, any time before 11 am. Please email Faith at youthgroup@gracehere.org if you have any questions. Thank you!

Story and Song | Sunday's from 9 – 9:30 am on Zoom

Click on the link to Grace's online worship (gracehere.org/join-us-for-online-worship-at-grace/) for the Zoom link. If you have questions please email Kim (kim@gracehere.org).

Newcomers

Are you new or visiting? Please email one of our clergy, Stephen Crippen (stephen@gracehere.org) or Wren Blessing (wren@gracehere.org), to get more connected.

Upcoming Events & Programs

Today | Poetry as Prayer Practice | Directly after the 9:30 service

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday the group will gather in a Zoom meeting after the 9:30 service.

Contact Jon Quitslund: jonquitslund@att.net.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/96243490290?pwd=eGJua2YyNm1vT1k2QlpZeVFUUnFmQT09>

December 7 | Men's Group Christmas Gathering | 7:30 pm

We'll gather for a social evening of catching up, sharing, and merry making. Please contact Eric Matthews for the Zoom link: eric@gracehere.org

December 8, 15 & 22 | Advent Evenings at Grace | 7-7:45 pm

Join us every Tuesday night in Advent for a service of quiet reflection, with music, poetry, and prayer. See the Grace website for details: gracehere.org/advent-and-christmas-2020.

December 9 | Wednesday Healing Prayer & Bible Study | 10:30 am

Please find links to the Zoom login and worship bulletin on our website:

gracehere.org/join-us-for-online-worship-at-grace/

December 10 | Biblical Feast for Grades 6-8 | 5 – 6 pm

We'll prepare foods from Biblical times and discuss their cultural significance. For more information, please contact Faith: youthgroup@gracehere.org

December 11 | Compassionate Caring on Zoom | 9:30 – 11 am

The Compassionate Caring support group meets online every second and fourth Friday at 9:30 am. Newcomers are welcome. Please contact Diane McGrew at dilmcgrew@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

December 13 | Seek Peace, Do Justice – Grades 9-12 | 5 – 6:15 pm

We'll gather to discuss the life and work of civil rights attorney Bryan Stevenson, who wrote the biography *Just Mercy*, which in 2019 was made into a film featuring Michael B. Jordan. For more information, please contact Faith: youthgroup@gracehere.org

December 14 | Parents' Party | 8 pm on Zoom

Parents, join us for a lighthearted time of community, games, and prizes. Please see the Grace website for details: gracehere.org/advent-and-christmas-2020

December 20 | Christmas Party Palooza, Grades 6-12 | 5 – 6:30 pm

Come one, come all for the most holiday fun that can possibly be had online. Contact Faith for details: youthgroup@gracehere.org