



“Annunciation II” by Jan Richardson

Grace Episcopal Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020 | 9:30am

Ministers | All of Us

Rector | Wren Blessing

Curate | Stephen Crippen

Music | Martin Cockroft

Annunciation

To the impossible: Yes!
Enter and penetrate
O Spirit. Come and bless
This hour: the star is late.
Only the absurdity of love
Can break the bonds of hate.

~ Madeleine L'Engle, from *Cry Like a Bell*, 1987

Prelude | Within Our Darkest Night *offered by members of the Grace Music Circle*

Words: Taizé Community | Music: Jacques Berthier

Announcements

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

Gathering Song | O Come, O Come Emmanuel

7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the
8 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som

7 hearts of all man - kind; bid thou our sad di - vi - sions
8 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile

7 cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace. Re - joice! Re - joice!
8 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.

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

We reflect on the four candles of our Advent wreath as we light them together.

We remain standing and sing together.

Opening Song | Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Words: Charles Wesley | Music: Roland H. Prichard

1. Come, thou long - ex - pec - ted Je - sus, born to set thy
2. Born thy peo - ple to de - li - ver, born a child and

peo - ple free; from our fears and sins re - lease us,
yet a King, born to reign in us for - e - ver,

let us find our rest in thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -
now thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art; dear de - sire of
spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone; by thine all suf -

ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
fi - cient me - rit, raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

The Collect

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

WE TELL THE STORY

We are seated for the reading.

The First Reading | 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

When the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

After the reading, the reader will say

The Word of the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

We stand and say the Magnificat.

The Song of Mary | Luke 1:46-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

We are seated for the second reading.

The Second Reading | Romans 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

After the reading, the reader will say

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Officiant introduces the Gospel by saying

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

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

The Gospel | Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 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. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 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. 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. For nothing will be impossible with God." 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.

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.

Confession

Officiant Let us confess our brokenness to God.

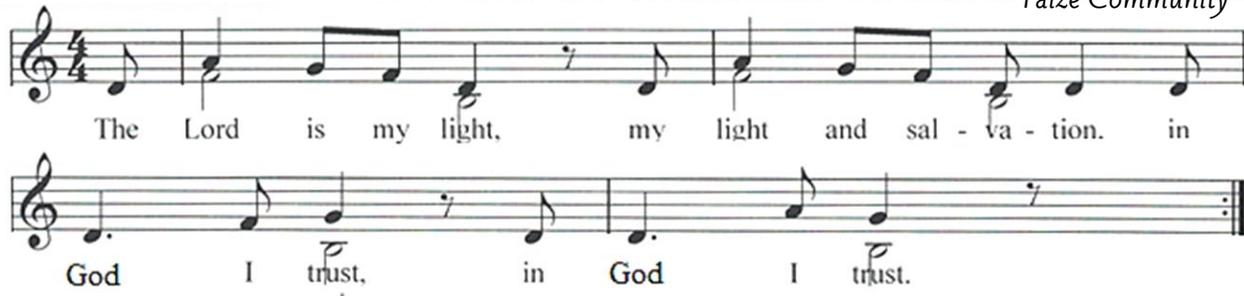
All We place boundaries around your goodness, yet you share your love with all people. We hold back in fear and regret, yet you immerse us in love and life. We let our hearts be restricted in scarcity and fear, yet you invite us into abundant life. Lord, have mercy on us, and forgive us.

The Officiant pronounces God's forgiveness of our sins.

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

The Prayers of the People

Taizé Community



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 ○ 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 ○ 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.**



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 | An Advent Song *offered by Barbara Hume*

by Barbara Hume

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

A child is born, a heart begins
to the pulse of God's own Son.
Hidden in each longing
new life for this hungry one.

Chorus:

Cantante domino (Sing to the Lord)
Canticum novum (Sing a new song)

Pushing, prodding enlarging our lives
giving birth to a sacred soul.
Trusting, hoping to anchor my heart
to the child of God foretold.

Chorus

New each advent morning
embraced with the arms of grace.
Celebrate the desert blooms
A hope mirrored in each face.

Chorus

A child is born, a heart begins
to the pulse of God's own Son.

The Blessing

The Officiant offers a blessing.

May the One who separated light from darkness
shine a bright light on your path.

May the One who is coming again in glory
walk alongside you now.

May the One who breathes wisdom and peace
fill your heart with courage.

And the blessing of the One, Holy, and Undivided Trinity be among you now, and remain with you
always. **Amen.**

Closing Song | Walk in the Light

by Thomas Whitfield

Walk in the light
Beautiful light
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright
Shine all around us by day and by night
Oh Jesus is the light of the world

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.**

I

I know that I have life
only insofar as I have love.

I have no love
except it come from Thee.

Help me, please, to carry
this candle against the wind.

~ Wendell Berry, from *Leavings*.

© Counterpoint Press, 2010

Mary Considers Her Situation

What next, she wonders,
with the angel disappearing, and her room
suddenly gone dark.

The loneliness of her news
possesses her. She ponders
how to tell her mother.

Still, the secret at her heart burns like
a sun rising. How to hold it in—
that which cannot be contained.

She nestles into herself, half-convinced
it was some kind of good dream,
she its visionary.

But then, part dazzled, part prescient—
she hugs her body, a pod with a seed
that will split her.

~ Luci Shaw, <http://www.lucishaw.com>

News from Grace Church, Bainbridge Island

December 20, 2020

..... inclusion service discovery gratitude

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 fill out this form on our website to learn more about Grace gracehere.org/visitors-newcomers or email one of our clergy Stephen Crippen (stephen@gracehere.org) or Wren Blessing (wren@gracehere.org).

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

Christmas Party Palooza | Grades 6 – 12 | 5 – 6:30 pm

Come one, come all for holiday fun. Contact Faith for details: youthgroup@gracehere.org

December 22 | Advent Evenings at Grace | 7-7:45 pm

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

December 23 | Wednesday Healing Prayer & Bible Study | 10:30 am

Please find links to the Zoom login and bulletin here: gracehere.org/join-us-for-online-worship-at-grace/

December 24 | Christmas Eve Liturgy Online | 5 – 6 pm

Join us on Zoom for carols, a retelling of the Christmas story by our children, prayer, and reflection. This liturgy will be available to watch online on our YouTube channel after 7:30 pm. Find a link to our YouTube video recording here: gracehere.org/service-video-recordings/

Candlelit Carols | Outdoors at Grace | 6:30 – 7 pm

Bundle up, wear a mask, bring a headlamp or flashlight, and gather with us outdoors at Grace. Our caroling will end with Silent Night at 7:00 pm. Please sign up to attend: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/christmas-eve-caroling-tickets-132456351513>

December 25 | Christmas Day Lovefeast | 9:30 am

We begin Christmas day by gathering online for carols, fellowship, and prayers. Part of our liturgy includes a lovefeast in the Moravian tradition. See the Grace website for more information and to order your cinnamon rolls, provided by Grace: gracehere.org/christmas-2020

December 27 | Sunday Liturgy | 9:30 am

Our celebration of Christmas continues as we gather online at 9:30 am.