**December 3, 2023 First Sunday of Advent – Email/At Home Missal**

**The ZOOM link for today’s service, which opens at 9.30 am on December 3, 2023, can be found here:**

**Sunday Worship December 3, 2023 09:30 am ZOOM room opens; service begins at 10:00 am.**

**Join Zoom Meeting click here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83858523329?pwd=UUpVdCtkTDB0MWhTVkhjSmxvWjFnUT09>**

**Meeting ID: 838 5852 3329 Passcode: 629887**

**You don’t have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of our church Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply): (All Canadian numbers). You can also access the ZOOM from your telephone by using the “One tap mobile” option:**

**+12042727920,,83858523329#,,,,\*629887# Canada**

**+14388097799,,83858523329#,,,,\*629887# Canada**

**Dial by your location:**

**+1 778 907 2071 Canada**

**+1 780 666 0144 Canada**

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+1 647 558 0588 Canada**

**Meeting ID: 838 5852 3329 Passcode: 629887**

**Find your local number:** [**https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kz0pHIt5i**](https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kz0pHIt5i)

**……………………………………….**

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 3RD –DE3CEMBER 10TH, 2023:**

**Here is the YouTube link for the service from last Sunday, November 26th, 2023:** <https://youtu.be/77DI7Ck1h-g>

**……………………………………….**

1. **Coming Events** *(save these dates)* ***bold print - events being held here at St. Peter’s***
2. **Dec. 6** **Bible Study at 10:30 am**
3. **Dec. 8 Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol at 7:30 pm**
4. Dec. 10 Menno Singers, Mennonite Mass Choir Handel’s Messiah *(Centre in the Square)*
5. Dec. 13 Hymn Sing Cafe *(with Katherine Rochester at the organ, David Durward Bell Ringers* *Central Presbyterian, Cambridge* *2:00 – 4:00 pm)*
6. **Dec. 14 Holden Evening Prayer Service for the (Almost) Longest Night 7:00 pm**
7. **Dec. 17 Pulled Pork Lunch & Silent Auction following Worship**
8. **……………………………………….**
9. **The Life of St. Peter’s for the week of December 3 – December 10, 2023**
10. Monday 6:00 pm TOPS - R.F.F. *(Art Room)*
11. Tuesday 7:00 pm Scouts - R.F.F. *(Scout Room, Art Room, Fellowship Hall)*
12. Wednesday **10:30 am Bible Study** *(Art Room)*
13. Thursday
14. Friday
15. Saturday **1:30 pm Choir Practice** *(Sanctuary)*

 Sunday **10:00 pm Worship Service followed by TFC Workshop** – A passage **from Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13.**

*(Return from exile and rebuilding the temple.)*

1. **……………………………………….**

**Pastoral Visit:** Pastor Laura is available for visits by appointment by calling the church office, 519-653-4721. Whether you have a particular pastoral concern or would just like some one-to-one time to get to know Pastor Laura, she would love to meet with you.

1. **……………………………………….**

**Prayer List:** Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Helen, Sharon, Donald, Shirley, Clara, Carol, Jeff, Aaron, MacKenzie, Rhett, Jan Ken, Lee, Maria, Deborah, Fred, Anne, and all those we name out loud or in the silence of our hearts.

1. **……………………………………….**

**We need you to help feed our neighbourhood!** The freedom Centre has joined with Cambridge Community Table to offer a meal to our community twice a month on Tuesday night. We need volunteers: Food Preparation, set up, take down, meet and Greet. Every hour you can give once or twice a month. Call for information 519-591-6518 or email rosemary@freedomcentre.ca.

1. **……………………………………….**

**Gaza Humanitarian Emergency** – CLWR and the Humanitarian Coalition are responding to the humanitarian emergency unfolding in Gaza. Please join us in prayer and consider making a gift to provide critical life-saving aid to those affected. To find out more or to donate, please visit [clwr.org/gaza](file:///D%3A%5CDocuments%5CServices%2C%20Sermons%20%26%20Website%20Material%5Cclwr.org%5Cgaza) or call 1-800-661-2597 (Mon - Fri 8:30am -4:00pm CST).

1. **……………………………………….**

**Weekly Bible Study**: Wednesdays at 10:30 am in the Art Room. Everyone is welcome!

1. **……………………………………….**

Mike Farwell - Talk Show Host, CityNews 570 **- live interview with Bradley Moggach on Tuesday, Dec. 5th at 12:30pm to promote Charles Dicken’s *A Christmas Carol*** - the interview can be heard at that time. Afterwards, it will be posted to their online archive: <https://kitchener.citynews.ca/audio/the-mike-farwell-show/>

1. **……………………………………….**

**Friday, December 8 at 7:30 pm - Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*.** $15.00 per Ticket. Please bring a donation for the Cambridge Food Bank. Readers include: Regional Chair, Hon. Karen Redman, WRPS Chief of Police, Mark Crowell, SPLC Member, Eugenia Schatz, ELCIC Eastern Synod Bishop, Michael Pryse, CSO Chair, Dr. Michael Lawrie. Music: Bradley Moggach and Greg Stroh.

1. **……………………………………….**

**Season of Giving:** This holiday season the Cambridge Food Bank expects more than 2,000 households will

contact them for holiday food and family support.  Their hope is that with community support, families in need can share One of their donation options is to purchase grocery store gifts cards in increments of $25.  We hope that our St. Peter's family will help by purchasing gift cards and placing them on the offering plate until December 17th. Let's help make sure no one goes hungry this holiday season! The Ministry of Vision and Mission.

1. **……………………………………….**

**December 13, 2023 - Hymn Sing Café** with Katherine Rochester at the organ, with the David Durward Bell Ringers – Central Presbyterian Church 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

1. **……………………………………….**

**Thursday, December 14 at 7:00 pm - Holden Evening Prayer Service for the (Almost) Longest Night.** It’s a time that brings to mind persons, events, and relationships that have been a part of our lives in the past but have now changed or gone. It’s a time that can feel extra lonely because our feelings of loss or grief don’t match up with the joy and festivities of the season. On this (almost) longest night we invite you to join us for a time of meditative worship that gives space for remembering, sharing our hurts and longings with God, and preparing our hearts to welcome Christ. There will be a time of fellowship to follow.

1. **……………………………………….**

**Sunday December 17, 2023 - Pulled Pork Lunch & Silent Auction** following Worship – see attached information sheet!

1. **……………………………………….**

Give **Gifts from the Heart** this Christmas! Canadian Lutheran World Relief's new Gifts from the Heart catalogue has something to inspire and delight anyone on your list this year. It’s full of meaningful, tangible gifts that will touch your loved ones and share God’s love with the world! Copies are available through the church, by emailing clwr@clwr.org or you can shop online at [clwr.org/GFTH](file:///D%3A%5CDocuments%5CServices%2C%20Sermons%20%26%20Website%20Material%5Cclwr.org%5CGFTH)

1. **……………………………………….**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Laura Sauder**

**Organist & Director of Music: Bradley Moggach**

**Assisting Minister: Helga Morrison**

**Reader: Bonnie Berg**

**Land Acknowledgement:**

A: With good and grateful hearts we acknowledge that the land upon which we live, work, play, and worship, is the same land upon which the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and the Attawandaron (or Neutral) peoples first lived, worked, played, and prayed to Creator. Calling the earth upon which they stood, Mother Earth, they cared for the earth as they would care for their mother. Let us take an example from our Indigenous forbears and neighbours, and show gratitude to our Mother Earth. May we be ever mindful of what she has provided for us, even to the next seven generations.

**Welcome remarks**

**Gathering Rite for Advent:**

P: Each week as we approach the Advent

of our Saviour Jesus Christ,

we acknowledge what God’s people

have always known:

***C: Even when God is active in this world,***

***hope is a work in progress.***

P: There are so many people and places and times

still awaiting God’s goodness.

And yet we trust, O God, that through your love,

***C: a familiar light can banish the fear of the other;***

P: Through your love,

***C: the warmth of good cheer***

***can extinguish cold-hearted injustice.***

P: Through your love,

***C: the song of faith***

***can rekindle hope for the hopeless.***

***Candle is lit***

**ELW # 723‘Canticle of the Turning’ *(Chorus)***

***Chorus***

 ***My heart shall sing of the day you bring.***

 ***Let the fires of your justice burn.***

 ***Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,***

 ***and the world is about to turn.***

*(Title: Canticle of the Turning; Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat; Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Music: Irish Traditional; arr. © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

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P: May these flames be a sign

that God’s goodness still burns brightly

even when it seems fragile, temporary,

easily extinguished.

When we yet wonder:

How long must this world wait

to see God’s glory?

Know this truth:

You are God’s people,

Called to serve this world

and to let your light shine.

Let the fire of justice burn in your heart,

for the dead still cry

for the flicker of new life we carry.

*(Source: Adapted from “My Heart Shall Sing” Advent Candle-lighting by Barn Geese Worship, licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0. )*

**Gathering Hymn: ELW # 257 ‘O Come, O Come, Emmanuel’ *(verses 1, 3-5)***

1O come, O come, Emmanuel,

 and ransom captive Israel,

 that mourns in lonely exile here

 until the Son of God appear.

***Refrain***

 ***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel***

 ***shall come to you, O Israel.***

3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,

 as to your tribes on Sinai's height

 in ancient times you gave the law

 in cloud, and majesty, and awe. ***Refrain***

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free

 your own from Satan's tyranny;

 from depths of hell your people save,

 and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. ***Refrain***

5 O come, O Key of David, come,

 and open wide our heav'nly home;

 make safe the way that leads on high,

 and close the path to misery. ***Refrain***

*(Title: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel; Text:* *Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite; Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.**All rights reserved. Used by permission. Music: French processional, 15th cent. ; arr. Setting © 2006 Augsburg Fortress (accompaniment edition only) ©1997 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Greeting**:

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

***C: And also with you.***

**Theme Time**

**Prayer of the Day:**

Holy Lord, a voice has been heard in the wilderness preparing the way for your son to arrive in this world. Prepare our hearts to receive your son and help us to prepare for his coming. Amen.

**Acclamation: ‘Listen’**

Listen, Listen

Be open, O my heart.

*(Title: Listen; Text & Music: Bret Hesla, Tune © 2004 Bret Helsa, admin. Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

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***Reader:***

***A passage from* Isaiah 40:1-11. *May we be equipped by these words to walk in love for God, ourselves, our neighbours, all people, and all God’s creation. (Brief pause)***

Comfort, comfort my people!
    says your God.
Speak compassionately to Jerusalem,
        and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended,
    that her penalty has been paid,
    that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins!

A voice is crying out:
“Clear the Lord’s way in the desert!
    Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God!
Every valley will be raised up,
    and every mountain and hill will be flattened.
    Uneven ground will become level,
    and rough terrain a valley plain.
The Lord’s glory will appear,
    and all humanity will see it together;
    the Lord’s mouth has commanded it.”

A voice was saying:
    “Call out!”
And another said,
    “What should I call out?”
All flesh is grass;
    all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field.
The grass dries up
    and the flower withers
    when the Lord’s breath blows on it.
    Surely the people are grass.
The grass dries up;
    the flower withers,
    but our God’s word will exist forever.

Go up on a high mountain,
    messenger Zion!
Raise your voice and shout,
    messenger Jerusalem!
Raise it; don’t be afraid;
    say to the cities of Judah,
    “Here is your God!”
Here is the Lord God,
    coming with strength,
    with a triumphant arm,
    bringing his reward with him
    and his payment before him.
Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock;
    he will gather lambs in his arms
    and lift them onto his lap.
    He will gently guide the nursing ewes. *(CEB)*

The Living God is with us. ***C: And with all creation! Thanks be to God.***

**Engaging with the Story**

 **Isaiah 40:1-11**

“Comfort, comfort, my people.” Not surprisingly, Isaiah’s opening line had me thinking about comfort this week. They say our brains are hardwired to seek comfort. Evolutionarily speaking, that this is an instinct that helped us stay alive – this drive to avoid threats and ensure our wellbeing and safety. Today, we no longer have to worry about being eaten by that sabre toothed tiger, but we still have that inherited drive to seek comfort. And we live in a culture that has both encouraged and capitalized on this drive.

We benefit today from so many advances in technology that have made our lives easier and more comfortable. And marketers are quick to try and sell us any product promised to ease any discomfort we might have. If we aren’t already feeling insecure about something, there is a marketing strategy somewhere out there trying to do just that. But at the end of the day, we know that this pursuit of comfort has in fact left us feeling more ill at ease.

We feel lonelier and more disconnected from one another than in generations past. Despite having lives that are much more comfortable than the lives our ancestors led, many of us still have a sense of feeling incomplete or lacking what we really need. And not always knowing what it is we’re missing.

We also feel ill at ease because we know comfort isn’t something shared equally in the world. We see so many around us lacking the basic comforts that we take for granted. Those who don’t have homes or jobs, those who are living in war zones or have had to flee their homeland. Folks like the community to whom Isaiah speaks these words of promise and hope.

When the Babylonians conquered the kingdom of Judah and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, along with the temple, life as they knew it was over for Isaiah’s community. The best and the brightest were taken away into exile in Babylon, while the peasants were left to till the land and ‘share’ their harvest with the occupying regime.1

Isaiah was part of that group taken into exile, and part of his job was to help the people make sense of all that had happened. To help them wrestle with the hardest question: where is God is all of this? Because up until this point, their theological understanding was that God resided in the temple, with the ark of the covenant. Now that the temple had been destroyed, does this mean that God had been defeated? Did it mean that God had abandoned them?

Our theological understanding is very different. As modern-day Christians we don’t believe God resides in any one place, and yet we can relate to that difficult wondering. When something bad or painful happens to us, we also wonder, where is God in all of this?

To his community of traumatized and hurting people, Isaiah speaks a beautiful word of hope.

Isaiah tells his community that in this place of wilderness, all of creation is at work building a highway for God. Valleys are rising up, mountains and hills are bowing low, and God is on the way, coming to you. Isaiah promises his people that God isn’t bound by the temple, or anything that is made by humans. No matter where life takes you, no matter where the sheep have wandered or been driven, God, the Good Shepherd, will come to you and carry you to safety.2

Isaiah doesn’t promise the people that everything will be ok – that they won’t have any more pain or struggle or suffering. What he does promise is that in their struggles and suffering, they are not alone. The path ahead will yet be challenging and uncertain, but they can trust that God, their Shepherd, is leading their way.

For us, Isaiah’s words are a promise that when we come to the end of our comfort, we come to God. Or rather, God comes to us. In those space of discomfort – whether modern-day stresses and angst, experiences of deep loss and pain, or the material hardships and dangers that far too many in our world yet face – God is right there with us.

The story of scripture, which is the story Isaiah tells, and the story of Advent, is that God is a God who rescues us. Who comes to us in the wilderness, who comes to us in exile, who comes to us in human flesh to bring comfort and salvation for all. And the comfort God brings is the kind of comfort that won’t leave us still feeling ill at ease. The comfort we can know in God is a comfort that is sure and certain because it promises us that we are not alone, that we are loved, and that we are worthy of love.

And it’s this sure and certain comfort that enables us – and asks us – to work for peace and justice in our community and our world. So that all people might also know this deep and lasting comfort.

As we continue our Advent journey of preparing the way of the Lord, I wonder, how might we offer that same promise of comfort that we know in Christ to others? Knowing that our true comfort and security comes from God, where are we being called to step into a bit of discomfort for the sake of others?

What are you being called to learn or unlearn?

What are you being invited to give or receive?

Is there someone who might need to hear an affirmation or word of kindness and care?

This Advent season, when opportunities arise to step outside of our comfort zone, may we be encouraged to follow them. All the while knowing the promise that at the end of our comfort, Christ our Good Shepherd meets us. AMEN

1 Brian McLaren. We Make the Road by Walking, page 53.

2 <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/narrative-lectionary/preaching-series-on-isaiah-3-of-4/commentary-on-isaiah-401-11-8>

**Hymn of the Day: ELW # 266 ‘All Earth Is Hopeful’**

1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!

 Furrows lie open for God's creative task:

 this, the labor of people who struggle to see

 how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.

2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:

 "A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";

 she conceived him, "God with us,"

 our brother, whose birth

 restores hope and courage to children of this earth.

3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;

 new highways opened, new protocols declared.

 Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!

 All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.

 This same Lord Jesus today has come to live

 in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see

 our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

*(Title: All Earth Is Hopeful (Toda la tierra ) Text & Music: Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946; Spanish text © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Liturgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Prayers of Intercession:**

A:With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God’s day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Where your church is comfortable, bring challenge. Where your church is afflicted, bring comfort. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. We pray for all those gathered in Dubai for COP 28. May substantive progress be made and real action emerge from these meetings. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. We pray for peace in Israel and Palestine, Ukraine, Sudan, Ethiopia, Haiti, Myanmar, and every placed touched by conflict or war. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief (especially we pray for Linda, those on our prayer list and those we name before you now aloud or in the silence of our hearts…). Deliver all in any need. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

Console the grieving (especially we pray for The Family of Allan), and surround them with loving support in the coming days, and weeks. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

We pray for our siblings in Christ: for the people of Immanuel City Church and their pastor Roberto Ascencio; for the people of St Paul’s Lutheran Church, Cambridge, and their pastor Stephen Weber. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

We pray for Donna and Dave in their service to the Ministry of Human Resources. Guide them and us in affirming and strengthening the ministry of our congregation. Merciful God, **C:** **receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.**Amen.\***

**Share the peace of Christ:**

Angels said it to startled shepherds,

Jesus said it to frightened followers,

And now these words which come from heaven

are shared to make us whole and make us one.

Peace be with you.

**C: And also with you.** \*\*\*\*

*(A Wee Worship Book – Liturgy for Holy Communion A #30810; Type: Words; First Line: Call to worship – Gather us in; Language: English (pages 80-92); Contributors: Iona community; Text: © 1999, WGRG, Iona community, GIA Publications, Inc; exclusive North American agent. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Offering**

**Offering Hymn: ELW # 870 ‘We Praise You, O God’**

1 We praise you, O God, our redeemer, creator;

 in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.

 We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;

 we bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.

2 We worship you, God of our fathers and mothers;

 through trial and tempest our guide you have been.

 When perils o'ertake us, you will not forsake us,

 and with your help, O Lord, our struggles we win.

3 With voices united our praises we offer

 and gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.

 With you, Lord, beside us, your strong arm will guide us.

 To you, our great redeemer, forever be praise!

*(Title: We Praise You, O God; Text: Julia C. Cory, 1882-1963; Public Domain; Music: A. Valerius, Nederlandtsch Gedenckclanck, 1626; Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Offering Prayer:**

A: God of all goodness,

generations have turned to you,

gathered around your table,

and shared your abundant blessings.

Number us among them

that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance,

and give thanks for your rich blessings,

we may feast upon your very self

and care for all that you have made,

through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. **Amen.\***

You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.

**Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:**

[**https://youtu.be/ViXmTzRsfU4**](https://youtu.be/ViXmTzRsfU4)

**Great Thanksgiving: ACS Setting 12: ‘Dialogue…’ (page 36) (spoken)**

The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C: It is right to give our thanks and praise**

**ELW Setting 12: ‘Preface…’ *(Advent)***

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,

through whom you will also make all things new

in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**ELW Setting 12: ‘Holy, Holy, Holy…’ *(page 36 )***

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of pow’r and God of might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**\*

**Thanksgiving at the Table:**

On the night before he showed us the full extent of his love,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

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 forever. Amen.

**Invitation to Communion:**

This is Christ’s table. All are welcome here to receive God’s abundant gifts of love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

I invite those at home, and those in the building communing by fellowship cup, to take your bread or cracker as we say together, “The body of Christ, given for us.”

And, as we take our cup we say, “The blood of Christ, shed for us.”

**Communion Music: ACS # 1056 ‘God Bless to Us Our Bread’ &**

 **Choir Anthem: ‘Into the Future’ *(Oldham/Moggach)***

God bless to us our bread,

and give bread to all those who are hungry,

and hunger for justice to those who are fed.

God bless to us our bread.

*(Title: God Bless to Us Our Bread; Text: Argentine traditional, collected by Federico Pagura, 1923–2016; tr. John L. Bell, b. 1949; Spanish text © 2002 World Council of Churches. All rights reserved. English text © WGRG, Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved. Music: Argentine melody, collected by Frederico Paguara; arr. John L. Bell; arr. © WGRG, Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Choir Anthem: ‘Into the Future’ *(Oldham/Moggach)***

P: May the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen you, and keep you, in his grace.

***C: Amen.***

**Prayer after Communion:**

A: Lord Jesus,

in this simple meal you have set a banquet.

Sustain us on the journey,

strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children,

and give us glad and generous hearts

as we meet you on the way.

Amen.\*

**Blessing:**

As we watch and wait for God’s truth and justice to break into our world,

our hearts shall sing of God’s goodness,

and of the promise of hope and peace to come.

The God of peace bless you,

the love of Christ sustain you in hope,

and the anointing of the Spirit ☩ remain upon you,

in every ending and every new beginning.

Amen.

**Sending Hymn: ELW # 256 ‘Comfort, Comfort Now My People’**

1 "Comfort, comfort now my people;

 tell of peace!" So says our God.

 Comfort those who sit in darkness

 mourning under sorrow's load.

 To God's people now proclaim

 that God's pardon waits for them!

 Tell them that their war is over;

 God will reign in peace forever.

2 For the herald's voice is crying

 in the desert far and near,

 calling us to true repentance,

since the reign of God is here.

 Oh, that warning cry obey!

 Now prepare for God a way.

 Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;

 hills, bow down in humble favor*.*

3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,

 and the rougher places plain.

 Let your hearts be true and humble,

 as befits God's holy reign.

 For the glory of the Lord

 now on earth is shed abroad,

 and all flesh shall see the token

 that God's word is never broken.

*(Title: Comfort, Comfort Now My People; Text: Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635-1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.; Public Domain*

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**Dismissal:**

A: Beloved of God,

go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

***C: Thanks be to God.***\*

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