

Liturgy of the Islands and Inlets, without the Eucharist

Opening Hymn CP89 O Come O Come Emmanuel Allison [words on page 7]

Opening *Wally*

Leader: In this time and place, we gather on the ancestral territories of Coast Salish peoples.

All: From many places and peoples we come to this house in prayer.

Leader: In this time and place, We are not alone,
For we meet in the presence of the living God.

All: For we meet in the presence of the living God.

Leader: In this time and place, We are not alone,
For the Risen Jesus stands in our midst.

All: The Risen Jesus stands in our midst.

Leader: In this time and place, We are not alone,
For the wind of the Spirit moves in and through us.

All: The wind of the Spirit moves in and through us.

Leader: In this time and place, we are not alone for we gather with the whole company of heaven. In this time and in this space, heaven and earth are one.

All: In this time and place heaven and earth are one.

Leader: In this time and place, Together, one people in Jesus Christ.

All: In the name of God, Creator, Saviour and Holy Spirit. Amen.

First Sunday in Advent *Wally*

Leader: Today we begin the season of Advent, when the days grow short and darkness closes in. We are preparing to celebrate at Christmas the birth of Jesus, who is the light of the world. Let us pause for a moment as we ask God's blessing upon this Advent Wreath...

Share the image of the Advent Wreath.

All: Lord God, bless this wreath and bless us as well. May this wreath remind us of the hope and joy that Jesus brings into the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

McArthur Family

Family: Let us pray.

Voice 1: As winter days dim and bow to early darkness, you, God of light, set watch in the night sky and beckon the wise to follow.

Voice 2: When hope hangs low in the human heart, you, loving creator, kindle compassion, breathing life into the early embers of change and empathy.
Light the first Advent candle.

Voice 1: We light a candle for hope, sending prayers high into the inky heavens and dreams deep into the human soul.

Voice 2: As Advent dawns, God of all hope, shine your light on the story of the saints who journeyed before us. May the seeds they planted in the world - peace, joy, and love - take hold in our hearts and stretch towards the light.

All: We light a candle for hope. May it light the way.

Children and Congregation

Advent Hymn

Rachel

Gloria

Wally

Leader: Glory to God in the highest,

**All: and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of God,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of God: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen**

Centring Stillness

Wally

Leader: Let us hold this moment open to the Spirit of God. **(silence)**

Collect of the Day

Wally

Leader: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility,
that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

THE WORD**Psalm 100***Rachel*

We are God's people,
 the sheep of his pasture.
 Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;
 serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.
 Know this: The Lord himself is God; he himself has made us, and we are his;
 we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
 Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise;
 give thanks to him and call upon his name.
 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;
 and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

New Testament Reading *Russ*

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:3-9
 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 with the Spirit is saying to the church

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel*Wally*

Leader: The Lord be with you

All: **and also with you.**

Leader: The Good News of Jesus Christ, according to Mark 13:24-37

All: **Glory be to you, Lord Jesus 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."

Leader: The Gospel of Christ.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD *Focused Reflection*

Today, 2,000 years later, what does it mean to "Keep awake"?

The Background for the Gospel Reading on page 6 may help you prepare your thoughts. The Rev. Dolly Beaumont will offer her thoughts for about 1 minute, then we ask a few others to share their thoughts for about 1 minute each.

Shema

Wally

Hear O Israel,
The Lord our God, the Lord is one
Love the Lord your God
With all your heart,
With all your soul
With all your mind
And with all your strength
This is the first and greatest commandment.
The second is like it
Love your neighbour as yourself.
There is no commandment greater than these.

Prayers of the People

Ruth

Confession

Wally

All: Jesus, forgive my sins.

**Forgive the sins I can remember, and also the sins I have forgotten.
Forgive the wrong actions I have committed, and the right actions I have omitted.**

Forgive the times I have been weak in the face of temptation, and those when I have been stubborn in the face of correction.

Forgive the times I have been proud of my own achievements, and those when I have failed to boast of your works.

**Forgive the harsh judgements I have made of others, and the leniency I have shown to myself.
 Forgive the lies I have told to others, and the truths I have avoided.
 Forgive me the pain I have caused others, and the indulgence I have shown to myself.
 Jesus have pity on me, and make me whole.**

**All: May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself,
 and cleanse us from all our sins,
 that we may behold the glory of his Son,
 the word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Lord's Prayer *Wally*

Leader: Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray as our Saviour taught us

**All: 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.**

Announcements *Wardens, Wally and members of the congregation*

Blessing *Wally*

Go forth from this place in the power of Christ.
 Encourage the faint-hearted; Help the weak; Be patient with those in need.
 See that none of us repays evil for evil; But always do good to one another and to all.
 Rejoice always; Pray without ceasing;
 Give thanks in all circumstances
 and the God of peace will be with us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn CP114 Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending Shirley [words on page 7]

Dismissal *Wally*

In these or similar words: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Background for the Gospel Reading

Our thanks to the Rev. Philip Wadham for preparing this background on today's Gospel reading, Mark 13:24-37. Our question for community reflection after the reading is:

Today, 2,000 years later, what does it mean to “Keep awake”?

In the year 66CE (Common Era) a movement of resistance to the dominant power of Rome grew among the Jewish people. The centre of this resistance was in Jerusalem, the holy city of the Jews. For the next four years those who sought to free themselves from the yoke of Rome had some success. Eventually, however, the might of the Roman army overcame those freedom fighters and in regaining their dominant power the invading army meted out a savage vengeance. An early historian writes of the blood of the defenders and their families flowing freely in the streets of Jerusalem. Not content with wanton bloodshed the forces of occupation set about to completely destroy the focus of Jewish worship, the Temple in Jerusalem. The destruction of this holy place was so complete that even up to our present day the only remains of the Temple is one wall, known as the wailing wall. Its name aptly describes the mood of the people as they experienced the cruelty inflicted on them in those days.

Mark's account of the life of Jesus appears at this time, around 70 CE. The people in Jerusalem had indeed suffered. This is clear from the opening of the reading from this morning's gospel where the writer states. “*after that suffering*”. So, after that suffering, what? As a response to the ordeal that so many had experienced they looked towards a day, soon coming, when God's powerful intervention would set them free and a reign of peace would be inaugurated. It was an apocalyptic hope, the hope that out of this time of turmoil God would intervene and justice and freedom would mark the people's future.

It is clear that Jesus himself looked towards a day when God's reign would come in power. He saw himself as one who would be involved in this apocalyptic time. The title he uses for himself, taken from the book of Daniel in the Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament) is, according to the gospels, “Son of Man”. This is a title for the one who would bring in a time when the Jewish people would be a part of “*a new heaven and a new earth*”, and freedom and peace would be dominant. Following his death this belief was a core belief of the earliest church. Integral to this was the rapid return of Jesus (sometimes described as Jesus second coming) to initiate God's reign.

The thought that dominates this chapter 13 in Mark is that with Jerusalem and the holy Temple destroyed, surely God would intervene directly to save his people and inaugurate God's reign of peace and justice. It didn't happen. Over the centuries, up until the present time, there have been and are groups within both Judaism and Christianity who have looked towards a day, “It's coming soon” say some, when God will intervene. What are we, as Christians living in the 2nd decade of the 21st century to make of this? Do we believe that such a time will come? Or do we need to re-think and re-interpret these words, words put into the mouth of Jesus by the writer of Mark's gospel in a way that is more real for us?

CP 89 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O 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

O come, O wisdom from on high, who orders all things mightily; to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go. *Refrain*

O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times once gave he law, in cloud and majesty and awe. *Refrain*

O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem, from every foe deliver them that trust your might power to save, and give them victory o'er the grave. *Refrain*

O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

O come, O Dayspring from on high and cheer us by your drawing night; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of humankind; O bid our bitter conflict cease, and be for us our Prince of Peace. *Refrain*

CP114 Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Lo, he comes with clouds descending, once for favoured sinners slain; thousand thousand saints attending swell the triumph of his train: hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah! God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him, robed in dreadful majesty; all who set at nought and sold him, pierced, and nailed him to the tree, deeply grieving, deeply grieving, deeply grieving, shall the true Messiah see.

Now redemption, long expected, see in solemn pomp appear; all his saints, on earth rejected, thrill the trumpet sound to hear: hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah! See the day of God appear!

Yea, amen, let all adore thee, high on thine eternal throne; Saviour, take the power and glory; claim the kingdom for thine own: O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly! Hallelujah! Come, Lord, come!