

12-13-2020 - Worship Guide - Advent 3 - **Practice Joy** (HEP = Holden Evening Prayer)
[CLICK HERE](#) for Holden Evening Prayer music Adapted for the Season of Advent 2020

Introduction

“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

Welcome *Please have a candle and Communion elements ready for worship.*

Candle Lighting: “Procession” HEP & “Joyous Light” (#561) v. 1

**Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world;
The light no darkness can overcome;
Stay with us now and help us not to fear,
For the day is in your care,
Let your light scatter the darkness,
And shine within your people here.**

**Joyous light of heavenly glory,
loving glow of God’s own face,
You who sing creation’s story,
shine on ev’ry land and race.
Now as morning breaks around us,
we shall raise our songs to you,
God of daybreak, God of shadows,
come and light our hearts anew.**

Confession & Peace*

You bring our fear into the light of love;
We prefer to hide in the shadows.
Savior have mercy
Savior have mercy

You promise healing for the earth;
We turn our back on our common world.
Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy

You come near in the vulnerable word made flesh;
We worship distant idols of celebrity and power.
Savior have mercy
Savior have mercy

Christ’s judgment is not vengeance, *an eye for an eye*;
Christ’s peace is not false, *a veil for injustice*;
Christ comes to break the spear, to silence the guns
and still our warring souls.
May the peace of Christ Jesus rule our world and heal our hearts.
Amen. Let us Practice Joy.

Hymn of Praise: #264 Prepare the Royal Highway (v. 1, 2, & 4)

1 Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:

Refrain

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

2 God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain*

4 His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding: *Refrain*

Prayer of the Day*

Sovereign of light, who sent the Baptist to offer hope and face the world's scorn:
Open our ears to hear the cries from the margins, exposing our fears, inciting our
vision, and calling us to a step of faith; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to
come. Amen.

Hebrew Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (Inclusive Version)

“The Spirit of Exalted YHWH is upon me,
for YHWH has anointed me:
God has sent me to bring good news
to those who are poor;
to heal broken hearts;
to proclaim release to those held captive
and liberation to those in prison;

to announce a year of favor from YHWH,
and the day of God's vindication;
to comfort all who mourn,

to provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to give them a wreath of flowers instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of tears,

a cloak of praise instead of despair.
They will be known as trees of integrity,
planted by YHWH to display God's glory.

They will restore the ancient ruins,
and rebuild sites long devastated;
they will repair the ruined cities,
neglected for generations.

... For I, YHWH, love justice;
I hate robbery and sin.
So I will faithfully compensate you,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.

Your descendants will be renowned
among the nations;
and your offspring among the people;
all who see you will acknowledge
that you are a people blessed by YHWH.'

I will joyfully exult in YHWH,
who is the joy of my soul!
My God clothed me with a robe of deliverance
and wrapped me in a mantle of justice,
the way a bridegroom puts on a turban
and a bride bedecks herself with jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and a garden brings its seeds to blossom,
so Exalted YHWH makes justice sprout,
and praise spring up before all nations.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word... Thanks be to God

Childrens' Time

Hymn: "Magnificat" HEP

**My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here,
and blessed me all my life through.**

**Great and mighty are you, O Holy One,
strong is your kindness evermore.
How you favor the weak and lowly one,
humbling the proud of heart**

**You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,
and uplifted the humble of heart,
You have filled the hungry with wondrous things,
and left the wealthy no part.**

**Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One,
strong is your justice, strong your love,
As you promised to Sarah and Abraham,
kindness forever more.**

**My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here,
and blessed me all my life through.**

Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28 (*Inclusive Version*)

Then came one named John, sent as an envoy from God, who came as a witness to testify about the Light, so that through his testimony everyone might believe. He himself wasn't the Light; he only came to testify about the Light—the true Light that illumines all humankind.

Now the Temple authorities sent emissaries from Jerusalem—priests and Levites—to talk to John. “Who are you?” they asked.

This is John's testimony: he didn't refuse to answer, but freely admitted, “I am not the Messiah.”

“Who are you, then?” they asked. “Elijah?”

“No, I am not,” he answered.

“Are you the Prophet?”

“No,” he replied.

Finally they said to him, “Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you have to say for yourself?”

John said, “I am, as Isaiah prophesied, the voice of someone crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight our God's road!’ ”

The emissaries were members of the Pharisee sect. 25 They questioned him further: “If you're not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, then why are you baptizing people?”

John said, “I baptize with water because among you stands someone whom you don't recognize—27 the One who is to come after me—the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy even to untie.”

This occurred in Bethany, across the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word... Thanks be to God

Message

Song of the Day: #715 Christ, Be Our Light (v. 1, 2, 5)

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice. *Refrain*

5 Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain*

An Advent Creed

**We believe in God the Creator of heaven and earth.
The one who is full of patience,
who is not afraid of silence,
who does not need to fill each moment with activity and noise.
The one who is beyond bluster and flurry,
and who does not jostle for attention.**

**We believe in God the Christ Child, Saviour of creation,
who slipped into Bethlehem one night, mostly unnoticed,
who lived thirty years without headlines or hurry,
who frequently took time alone with his patient Abba,
who waited for the right time to become the suffering servant,
who stood quietly before the noise of his accusers,
whose silence overpowered their words,
who died, then rose again on a quiet Sunday morning.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens, empowers, renews and refreshes,
sometimes arriving with obvious power,
sometimes with the quiet breath of a whisper.**

**We believe in one God
who patiently waits for us,
and who longs for us to do the same.**

Offering

- **Text:** to number 833-893-0362 text GIVE
- **Website:** www.slcmv.org and click on GIVE
- **Mail:** Salem, 2529 N. Laventure Rd, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273
- THANK YOU to those who have been contributing offerings through one of these methods. If you have not yet made the opportunity to give, every and any amount makes a difference; so please consider submitting your offerings so that we (together) continue to honor God and support Salem's ministry & mission.

Prayers of Intercession

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship. Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God.

Mercy becomes You.

God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God.

Mercy becomes You.

God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions. Hear us, O God.

Mercy becomes You.

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

Mercy becomes You.

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. Hear us, O God.

Mercy becomes You.

For what or whom else do the people pray?

(Zoom users: Please unmute or use chat feature to offer your petitions)

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God.

Mercy becomes You.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Holy Communion*

God be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**
We give thanks to God. **Thank You God for Your grace.**

Mystery of winter skies,
we thank you in the darkening hour
for opening our eyes
to see your starlit beauty;
for parting the wide heavens
to send your gentle light;
for offering your word
to take our mortal flesh.

The Messiah was promised by those
who shared your dream of peace;
John the Baptist cleared the Messiah's way
with words of desert fire;
Mary and Joseph accepted his coming
with tenderness and faith;
We know that Jesus draws near again
to show us who we really are
with honesty and love.

Now we take up the song of hope
that we might awaken
to the Messiah's coming among us
and the world be touched
by the footfall of Jesus' glory.

Holy: ELW 191

**Holy, holy, holy are you,
God of power and might;
heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in your name.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

Christ's Prayer (*Inclusive*)

We pray together in the Spirit that Jesus taught:
**Our Creator in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here.
Eat and drink, this is Christ's **JOY** for you.

Lamb of God: ELW 195

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.**

Prayer after Communion*

Eternal God, we thank you that in Christ you give yourself into our hand:
May we who have tasted life proclaim the coming feast when many will come from
east and west, from north and south to greet the Savior of all; we ask this in Jesus'
name. **Amen.**

Announcements

Final Blessing: HEP

**Let us bless our God: praise and thanks to you.
May God, Creator bless us and keep us,
May Christ be ever light for our lives,
May the Spirit of Love be our guide and path,
For all of our days.
A -- men.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Messiah. Thanks be to God.

Coffee Hour follows after Worship.

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