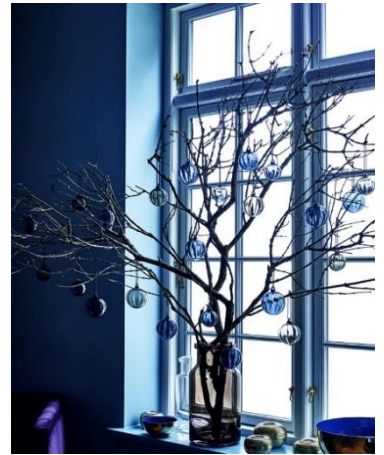




Service of Light and Hope December 13, 2020



Words of Welcome & Announcements ~ Jan Richardson

We need Light & Hope to meet our darkness and despair.

Lighting the Christ Candle & Centering...

"Advent recognizes a profound spiritual truth – that we need not fear the dark. Instead, wait there. Under that blue cape of heaven, alert for the signs of dawn. Watch. For you cannot rush the night. But you can light some candles. Sing some songs. Recite poetry. Say prayers." --Diana Butler Bass

Lighting the Candles of the Advent Wreath (3rd Sunday of Advent)

Light a candle with each section...

This, then, is how Love is born:

like a seed planted in the darkest of soils
that rises to meet the sun's warming rays,
so love emerges from the deepest places.

**Despite our willing it,
and without the force of hand,
may love rise graciously to life.**

This, then, is how Love is born:

as the morning slowly dawns -
first a sliver, then a burning horizon -
causing the night to fade away,
so love transforms our sorrow and fear.

**Into our need,
moving against resistance,**

**may love change things in our lives and in
the world.**

This, then, is how Love is born:

as winter's gentle hibernation
gives way to the bursting of spring
and the delights of summer,
so love is woven through every season.
**Amidst our doubts and disappointments,
when the sands seem to shift under our
feet,
may love be steadfast and present at all
times.**

(from Seasons of the Spirit)

Listening Song ~ **Be Still**, Psalm 46:10 set to music by Paul Rumbolt ©2002

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EDNJK8-a23wkJfV7KeVsuj0YNxLIFQGz>

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"Be still, be still. Be still and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations and the earth. Be still and know that I am God."

Meditative Reading ~ **Silence**, page 24 of *Embers* by Richard Wagamese

Listening Song ~ **Come and Find the Quiet Centre # 374 VU** Words: Shirley Erena

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Harmony: Augsburg Fortress.

An Invitation to a Walking Meditation ~ *Candle Lit*

Labyrinth (video taken at Stettler United Church, with Eileen and Joyce walking the prayer path)

As you enter: "Walk in love" Ephesians 5:2

At the center: "Be still and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10

When you return: "Go in peace" Judges 18:6



Reading ~ Still — Robert Fulgham author of *It was on Fire when I Lay Down On It...* posted on: <https://liturgyoutside.net/seasons/adventchristmas/chreve-2/>

When I was a small child, during the war, we were very poor and we lived in a remote village. One day, on the road, I found the broken pieces of a mirror. A German motorcycle had been wrecked in that place.

I tried to find all the pieces and put them together, but it was not possible, so I kept only the largest piece. This one. And by scratching it on a stone I made it round. I began to play with it as a toy and became fascinated by the fact that I could reflect light in to dark places where the sun would never shine - in deep holes and crevices and dark closets. It became a game for me to get light into the most inaccessible places I could find.

I kept the little mirror, and as I went about my growing up, I would take it out in idle moments and continue the challenge of the game. As I became a man, I grew to understand that this was not just a child's game but a metaphor for what I might do with my life. I came to understand that I am not the light or the source of light. But light - truth, understanding, knowledge - is there, and it will only shine in many dark places if I reflect it.

I am a fragment of a mirror whose whole design and shape I do not know. Nevertheless, with what I have I can reflect light into the dark places of this world - into the black places in the hearts of me - and change some things in some people. Perhaps others may see and do likewise. This is what I am about. This is the meaning of life.

Lighting Candles in Memory & Hope:

Here we speak the names of those people or circumstances we are particularly remembering...

"I light this candle for _____; a light to my life."

Response/Affirmation: In your loss we are with you. In your loss God is with you.



Psalm 139:7-12 & Prayer

God loves us as we are...but never leave us as we once were...

God of all, when we feel alone, you draw nearer; when we lose our footing, you guide us toward a good path. Through the ages, you have promised to be a comfort to your people, and you call us to be a comfort to others. In all our living, may we never lose the memory

of our most cherished relationships, and may we feel the courage and strength you offer to us through those who surround us...(silence is held)

Listening Song ~ *Angels Among Us* Songwriters: Don Goodman / Becky Hobbs
(popularized by Alabama) a musical offering from Malcolm Fischer

Closing Words:

Guide our way, O God, when the darkness surrounds us.

Give us your word of hope in our fear and aloneness.

Guide our way, O God, when life feels dull and joyless.

Give us family and friends with whom to share our feelings of loss.

Guide our way, O God, when we long for someone no longer with us.

Give us memories which will be ours to relive forever.

Guide our way, O God, when we feel our confidence slipping.

Give us fresh awareness of our talents and our ability to use them for good.

Guide our way, O God, when we think of the losses of others.

Give us the courage to stand beside the suffering and listen to their story.

Guide our way, O God, when your Spirit seems gone from us.

Give us the blessing of your presence in time and beyond time. Amen.

Blessing Song, by Paul Rumbolt

Video option: <https://youtu.be/y6yRjYr-X-Q>