

12-20-2020 - Worship Guide - Advent 4 - **Choose Love** (HEP = Holden Evening Prayer)

[CLICK HERE](#) for Holden Evening Prayer music Adapted for the Season of Advent 2020

**Introduction**

*God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."*

**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 Choose Love.**

## Hymn of Praise: #242 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn (v. 1, 3, & 4)

- 1 Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,  
for angels herald its dawning.  
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,  
behold! the Child of our longing.  
Come as a baby weak and poor,  
to bring all hearts together,  
he opens wide the heav'nly door  
and lives now inside us forever.
- 3 In darkest night his coming shall be,  
when all the world is despairing,  
as morning light so quiet and free,  
so warm and gentle and caring.  
Then shall the mute break forth in song,  
the lame shall leap in wonder,  
the weak be raised above the strong,  
and weapons be broken asunder.
- 4 Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night,  
though dark the winter and cheerless,  
the rising sun shall crown you with light,  
be strong and loving and fearless.  
Love be our song and love our prayer  
and love our endless story;  
may God fill ev'ry day we share  
and bring us at last into glory.

### Prayer of the Day\*

God of impossible love, you needed Mary to give consent, to bear the scandal, to carry your word within herself:  
May Mary's courage give hope to women and men who yearn to sing new songs of justice and find the world a dwelling place for God; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. Amen.

### Hebrew Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 (Inclusive Version)

When David finally settled into the palace, and YHWH gave him rest from enemies on every side, he said to the prophet Nathan, "Here I am living in this house of cedar while the Ark of God sits in a tent!"

Nathan replied to David, "Go, do whatever you have in mind, for YHWH is with you."

That night the word of YHWH came to Nathan, and said, "Go and tell my servant David that this is what YHWH wants: 'Are you the one to build me a Temple? I have been without a Temple from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a Tent as my dwelling place. Wherever I traveled with the people of Israel, did I ever say to the governors whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a Temple made out of cedar?"'

“Now then, tell my servant, David, “This is what YHWH Omnipotent says: I took you from the pastures and from following sheep to be the ruler of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you went, and destroyed all your enemies in your path. I will give you fame like the fame of the great ones on the earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel. I will plant them where they will have a home of their own—a place where they will never be disturbed. Never again will the sinners oppress them as they did in the past ever since the time I appointed judges to lead my people Israel. I will give you security from all your enemies.

“ ‘Furthermore, I alone will establish your house. ... Your family and your dynasty will last forever.’ ”

***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: Luke 1:26-38 (Inclusive Version)**

Six months later, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a young woman named Mary; she was engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. Upon arriving, the angel said to Mary, “Rejoice, highly favored one! God is with you! Blessed are you among women!”

Mary was deeply troubled by these words and wondered what the angel's greeting meant. The angel went on to say to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God. You'll conceive and bear a son, and give him the name Jesus—'Deliverance.' His dignity will be great, and he will be called the Only Begotten of God. God will give Jesus the judgment seat of David, his ancestor, to rule over the house of Jacob forever, and his reign will never end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have never been with a man?"

The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you—hence the offspring to be born will be called the Holy One of God. Know too that Elizabeth, your kinswoman, has conceived a child in her old age; she who was thought to be infertile is now in her sixth month. Nothing is impossible with God."

Mary said, "I am the servant of God. Let it be done to me as you say."

With that, the angel left her.

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

#### **Message**

#### **Song of the Day: #292 Love Has Come**

- 1 Love has come—a light in the darkness!  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;  
hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!  
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.
- 2 Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.  
Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother;  
what is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers;  
Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.
- 3 Love has come and never will leave us!  
Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us.  
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas;  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

## **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](http://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, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence. 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)*

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and other ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. We give thanks for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. 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 **LOVE** 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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