



*You are welcome here!*  
**We are disciples of Jesus, growing  
in Faith, Hope, and Love.**

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**Worship Times**

Sunday 10:15 am  
Wednesday 7:00 pm



**Pastor**

Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal



*November 29, 2020*  
*First Sunday of Advent*

# Gathering

## ✠INTRODUCTION

*Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.*

## ✠CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

**C Amen.**

P Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires. Loving and forgiving God,

**C we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

P People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, † comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

## ✠HYMN OF REFLECTION – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

(ELW #257) *Verses 1 and 6*

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 Dayspring, come and cheer;  
O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

*Refrain*

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## ✠PRAYER OF THE DAY

A The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

A Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

## Word

### ✠FIRST LESSON – Isaiah 64:1-9

*This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

<sup>1</sup>O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! <sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. <sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. <sup>6</sup>We have all

become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. <sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. <sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. <sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

L The Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

### ✠ GOSPEL – Mark 13:24-37

*Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

P The Holy Gospel, according to Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

**C Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] <sup>24</sup>“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, <sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. <sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>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.

<sup>28</sup>“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. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>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. <sup>35</sup>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, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

### ✠ SERMON

## ✠HYMN OF THE DAY – My Lord, What a Morning (ELW #438)

### *Refrain*

- My Lord, what a morning;  
my Lord, what a morning;  
oh, my Lord, what a morning,  
when the stars begin to fall.
- 1 You will hear the trumpet sound,  
to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand,  
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*
- 2 You will hear the sinner cry,  
to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand,  
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*
- 3 You will hear the Christian shout,  
to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand,  
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

Text and Music: African American spiritual.

## ✠PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P On this first Sunday of the church year, let us pray that God comes quickly to this weary world.

*A brief silence.*

P Immortal, invisible God only wise, we pray for the church, both our congregation and assemblies around the globe. Give us your life. Show us your presence. Grant us your wisdom. Shepherd for another year of grace our pastors, deacons, musicians, and all who minister in the church. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P God of the sparrow, God of the whale, protect the animals, whether wild or farmed or tame. Restore devastated habitats and polluted waters. Calm the storms that devastate the coasts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Mighty Fortress, protect all people who are poor or oppressed. Grant that the leaders of nations respond with justice and relief to those who suffer. We pray especially for the people of Honduras. Bless all elected officials as they assume new leadership roles. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Beautiful Savior, abide with us during December. Give your beauty to our holiday preparations in this challenging season and your grace to the many who have little to celebrate this year. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Mothering God, visit with your power any who are homeless or unemployed, and all who are hungry. Protect children from all manner of abuse. Comfort those who live with chronic pain, anxieties, and addictions. We pray especially for those we name before you now, silently or aloud . . . . Shape us to become your arms of mercy. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Healer of our every ill, save all peoples from the coronavirus. Sustain medical workers, and provide for hospitals and clinics. Heal the sick, accompany the dying, and comfort the mourners. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Rock of ages, we wait for you, we stand on you. Receive now our private prayers. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Lord of all hopefulness, we give thanks for all the faithful: for Andrew, the first disciple to follow Jesus; for those who died while waiting for justice and peace; for all who have died of COVID-19; and for those we name here before you. . . . At the end, bring us with them into your shining presence. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Eternal Father, strong to save, receive our prayers for the sake of your Son Jesus, who came, who comes, and who will come, to bring us life.

**C Amen.**

## ✠PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C And also with you.**

## ✠LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## ✠ BLESSING

P The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,  
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,  
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, † now and forever.

C **Amen.**

## ✠ ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ✠ SENDING HYMN – Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn (ELW #242)

- 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.
- 2 To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing,  
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;  
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness,  
the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.
- 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.

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## ✠ DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

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