

Worship Plan for Sunday, November 28, 2021
First Sunday of Advent

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES - *Sanchez Family*

Words by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

A: We hope for a world where all are fed.

B: We hope for a world with more bridges than walls.

A: We hope for a world with wide open doors.

B: We hope for a world with contagious laughter.

A: We hope for a world where trees grow tall and creeks run clean.

B: We hope for a world where all people feel at home—in their bodies, in the church, in their physical homes.

A: We hope for that world.

B: We long for that world.

A: We are homesick for that world.

B: So today we light the candle of hope, because hope keeps our hearts alive as we wait.

A: May this light be a reminder that the wait is always worth it.

B: We are close to home. May we carry hope with us. Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Words by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

When you're a kid and you get homesick at a sleepover or a summer camp, you call home and your parents come and get you. Sometimes, that's what love looks like. Love bails us out.

In the same way, when we call upon God to confess that we've messed up, or forgotten something, or overlooked the truth, God answers with grace. God answers with love. So let us confess today, knowing that nothing could keep God from loving us.

Gracious God, We find ourselves with two options every day— to stay homesick for the world you had in mind, or to allow cynicism to win. Do we hope against hope, or do we throw in the towel? Do we insist on a better world, or do we assume it's impossible? Forgive us for the days when cynicism wins. Forgive us for numbing our homesick hurt

instead of using it to fuel a better world. Kindle in us a hope that won't let go. Gratefully we pray, amen.

Family of faith, even when we throw in the towel, even when we give up on hope, God does not give up on us. We are loved. We are claimed. We are invited closer to God's home. So hear and trust this good news: There is room for us in God's house, and nothing can separate us from that love. We are claimed. We are forgiven. We are welcomed home. Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG – *AWAKE, AWAKE, AND GREET THE NEW MORN (WOV #633)*

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

God of the stars and God of our hearts— our days will pass but your words will last. The earth might fade but your words will last. Our memories might blur but your words will last. The grass will wither but your words will last. The sky could go dark and your words would last. So as we listen today, help us to hold onto what will last. Help us hold onto you. Gratefully we pray, **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16

A reading from Jeremiah.

¹⁴The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10

¹To you, O Lord,
I lift up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your ways, O Lord,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶**Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.

⁸**You are gracious and upright, O Lord;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

¹⁰**All your paths, O Lord, are steadfast love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

⁹How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON - Homesick

HYMN OF THE DAY - “See Fig Tree Leaves Now Sprouting” to the tune of “Lo, How a Rose Ere Blooming”

“See Fig Tree Leave Now Sprouting” Words by Anna Strickland.

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CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence. As each petition ends with "Lord, in your mercy," we respond with, **hear our prayer.**

God of the weary and waiting, Scripture tells us that where two or more are gathered, you are there. So we trust that you are here—listening to these words, drawing us close, stirring hope awake in us. And for that we are grateful.

Today, Holy God, we feel close to home, close to you when . . .

the choir sings,

when the candles are lit,

when we enter this space and someone knows our name. We feel close to home when our children are curious, when we find moments of true connection,

when we are brave enough to be who you call us to be.

However, God, even with gratitude for our close-to-home moments, we also recognize that buried deep within us we have homesick hearts.

Holy God, we are homesick for..

We are homesick for a world we have not seen.

*We are homesick for a world where oceans are clean, trees are green,
and animals are not endangered.*

We are homesick for a life where days feel expansive and Sabbath feels possible. We are homesick for days where mental health is not stigmatized, time is not a commodity, and self-worth is not a scarcity.

God who never leaves us alone, we are carrying both hope and homesickness all at the same time. Hold these two sides of the same coin tenderly, and fan the flame of both. For we realize, hope is a gift and homesickness is a reminder. For each conviction, we give you thanks.

God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of equity and compassion, bring righteousness and goodness to all peoples of the earth. Give a heart of discernment and integrity to leaders in our communities (local, state, and national government officials may be named). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind (especially). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of promises kept and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters (especially), for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of companionship and community, we give you thanks for the saints who journeyed with us and now abide in you. Even in distress and uncertainty, make us confident that your promises endure forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING – O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (LBW #34)

Thank you for your generous giving in support of the ministries of Our Savior's. Offerings may be placed in the offering plate as it is passed, or made online at anytime at www.oursaviorsdevilslake.org.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Holy God, we are homesick. We long for the day that you spoke of when swords will be beaten into plowshares, the lion will lie down with the lamb, and justice will roll like waters. Until that holy day comes, take these gifts and use them to build that world here. We are hopeful. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready, and YOU are welcome at the Lord's table.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

COMMUNION SONGS

FOR THE BREAD WHICH YOU HAVE BROKEN (LBW #200)

MY LORD, WHAT A MORNING (WOV #627)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG – JOY TO THE WORLD (LBW #39)

DISMISSAL

Adapted from words by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

As you leave *this* service, *your* service begins:

Comfort the homesick.

Open your doors to others.

Seek sanctuary.

Be brave enough to go home by another way.

And remember that here in God's house, all are welcomed—so come back soon.
In the name of our Foundation—God, Spirit, and Son—
go in peace, serve the Lord,
Thanks be to God!

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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