

Church in Waiting

Year B ~ Advent Week 4

Waiting and Worshipping

Luke 1:26-38

Focus Statement

L: In our lives and through the church, we are called to give glory to God through Jesus Christ.

Lighting the Advent Wreath: Advent 4

L: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.

In your Son, Emmanuel,

you have shown us your light

and saved us from the power of sin.

Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.

Four Advent Candles are lighted.

Hymn: Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

4 Light four candles to watch for Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

He is coming, tell the glad tidings.

Let your lights be shining!

L: Increase our longing for your presence,

that at the celebration of your Son's birth

his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst,

for he is our light and our salvation.

C: Blessed be God forever. Amen.

St. Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Advent Song

Sister Mary Francis, P.C.C.

Lady, what songs are bending
The tall grasses of your mind,
What secret music whispers down your veins,
What wax-leaf ponderings, O Virgin Mary,
Waken our little shouts of expectation?

Our thoughts have lumbered down a treeless highway,
Have sputtered their heavy loftiness, have wept
Their protest. Now we hear the distant birdcall
Oh, dimly! but the woods have heard it well.

The stars are singing in their stupefaction,
The giddy little hills are clapping hands.

But Lady, what songs sway
The supple grasses of your thoughts,
What secret music whispers down your veins?
Glorious things are said about this city
Where the small citizen Christ moves in the lanes
Of so-brief arteried comfort; but what songs
Drift through this templed alabaster town?

We see the windows lighted, Virgin Mary,
City of God, by every hymn we raise
With chipped and broken voices, and our feeble
Vision guesses sacred silhouettes.

But when the little Seed fell in the furrow,
The warm and spotless furrow of your heart,
Tell us what pure songs stirred your delicate wonder,
What secret music whispered down your veins.



L: The church in waiting glorifies God through Jesus Christ.

Clinging to the words spoken to Mary so long ago, "Do not be afraid... for you have found favor with God." We claim those words for ourselves just as Mary took them into her heart. These words, the promise that God's favor rests upon the people of this world, that God intends good for all of us; these words help us to continue on day to day relishing the love, and generosity of our Lord. Let Mary's words be your advent response, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." We are waiting! Come, Lord Jesus! Come, Holy Spirit! Come Holy Father! Come, blessed Trinity! Come!

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who sent Gabriel to Mary and the Word through Paul, who shapes the whole creation, who comes with might and mercy, who fills the hungry with good things.

C: Amen.

L: Let us approach the throne of grace with repentant hearts.

Silence for reflection

L: Faithful God,

C: We confess that we have been unfaithful to you. Like dry leaves and withered grass, our lives are blown about by our sins and the powers of evil around us. Restore us, O God; let the light of your face shine on us, and we shall be saved. Amen.

L: God is patient, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, I bring you this good news: You are free from all that imprisons you; your sins are forgiven; God heals your broken hearts. Live in peace and harmony as you wait for the day of God.

C: Amen.

Sending Prayer

L: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

L: You have heard the word of Paul and the faithfulness of Mary.
How do you respond?

C: Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word. Amen.

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1 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.

- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
refresh the hearts that long for you;
restore the broken, make us new.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.