

ADVENT ONE
 Sunday, November 29, 2020
 Mantua Center Christian Church
 MCCC Worship at the Windows

Order of Worship

GATHERING **“The Light That Shines In The Darkness”** **Jan Green**
 Written by Gerald Peterson

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS - Chad

Welcome to the Mantua Center Christian Church this first Sunday in Advent. We come together in this season of waiting and expectation to proclaim our hope in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We want to welcome any visitors today and everyone that is on our YouTube Live video feed. We are reaching out in all sorts of different ways and grateful for your presence with us.

INFO

- Bulletin and Music Lyrics
- ADVENT CALENDAR and ADVENT KITS
 - The worship team has given Advent Kits to folks this morning for you to take home. We invite you to share the joy and deliver a bag to another MCCC church family if you would like. As you drive out, just see Pam and let her know who you'd like to deliver to and she will provide you with another gift bag.
- Communion is “bring your own.” Please participate as you feel led.
- If you have an offering to give you can stop at the basket on your way out!

As we begin worship...let's pause to settle our hearts, minds, and spirits and give this time over to God. Let us pray...

God of Hope,

It gets dark earlier and the nights are long. As this Advent season begins we lay bare the hopes and desires of our hearts. We watch and wait with mounting expectation for the coming of your son into the world. We place our trust in you, trusting that you meet us wherever we are and now here in this time of worship. Open us to hear what you are saying to us today. In the name of the one whom we await...Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE**“All Earth is Waiting”**

*1. All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows, the sowing of our God.*

*All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.*

2. Thus says the prophet to those of Israel:

*'A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel,
one whose name is 'God with us' our Saviour shall be;
through him hope will blossom once more within our hearts.*

*3. Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain;
open new highways, new highways for our God,
who is now coming closer, so come all and see,
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.*

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING written by Rev. Dr. Terri Hord Owens**Week 1 – Hope 1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

SARAH: Today we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, and we light the candle of Hope. In a world too often filled with uncertainty and anxiety and weariness, we rejoice in the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. In 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, we hear the gratitude and hope that Paul has in God, and in the gift of Jesus.

CHAD:³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by God you were called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

SARAH: Advent is a time of anticipation, when we remember how the expectant hope of the world was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, and how we lay claim to the hope that we have in Christ every day. Through Christ, God promises to strengthen us as we live into the call to be Jesus' disciples.

CHAD: We find our hope even as we wait. We remember as we read in 1 Corinthians 3:9 – “God is faithful.” May our hearts lay hold to this hope today and every day and may the light of this candle remind us of God’s enduring faithfulness. (The Hope candle is lit.)

Prayer: Our hope is in you, Lord. Fill us with the hope you give, the hope that sustains us and gives us strength for the days ahead; the hope that does not disappoint. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

RESPONSE **“When God is a Child” vs. 1** **Sung by Beth Schabel**

CHILDREN’S MOMENT - Ally Hurd

PASTORAL PRAYER - Sarah Smith

LITANY of PREPARATION (*based on Psalm 130*) - **Sarah**

Leader: Wait for the Lord, like those who hope in God’s mercy.

ALL: **God’s steadfast love endures forever.**

Leader: Watch for God, like those who eagerly await the morning.

ALL: **We watch for God, whose power redeems us.**

SCRIPTURE READING **Isaiah 64:1-4**

SERMON **Weary of Waiting**

Chad Delaney

Isaiah 64:1-4

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
 so that the mountains would quake at your presence—² 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!³ When you did
 awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked
 at your presence.⁴ 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.

Whether thousands of years ago or today, there are times when the people of God
 become tired of being tired. Weary of Waiting This is where we begin this season of
 Advent.

Waiting is EXHAUSTING isn't it? Not the "looking-forward-to-vacation" waiting...but the waiting amongst uncertainty. Waiting for test results. Waiting for an appointment. Waiting for the phone to ring. Waiting to see family. Waiting for this vaccine. Waiting for "I'm not sure what." Anyone else tired of waiting? What do we do while we wait? What is God doing while we wait?

The Psalmist wasn't shy about expressing their feelings to God about this issue. In Psalm 44, "²³ Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord? Awake, do not cast us off for ever! ²⁴ Why do you hide your face? Why do you forget our affliction and oppression? ²⁵ For we sink down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground. ²⁶ Rise up, come to our help. Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love."

We hear it, too, in the voice of Isaiah on behalf of the people in an ancient and horrific time. The people of Israel were nearing the end of their Babylonian Exile, but the trauma had set in upon them. Their homeland and sacred city ravaged by the chariots and swords of their enemies. Left in ruins they wondered if a time of newness of life would ever return? Would a time of living in God's good favor and standing ever be with them again? Have they learned from their mistakes and persevered through? They knew they stood afoot of something new...but had no idea what was to come. There they were all wrapped up in fear, hope, anger, grief, and exhaustion...as they waited. I'm sure they were active doing the things they knew that COULD do...yet there was much beyond their grasp...**When** would this time of terror and exile be over?

In Isaiah 63 there is a modest request made to God...."¹⁵Look down from heaven and see, from your holy and glorious habitation. Where are your zeal and your might? The yearning of your heart and your compassion? They are withheld from me. ¹⁶ For you are our father...our Redeemer from of old is your name."

For Earth's sake, Look down God! YOU are our Divine Parent, at least SEE what we are going through.

But right over in Ch. 64...they aren't shy about making the big ask...because just being seen is really not enough. "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence...When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence." --Don't just see us....come by here! And by the way....Don't just come in slightly abstract ways in which we could possibly, maybe interpret your presence. This is a Parting the Red Sea situation and we are tired of waiting! Anyone else like to echo that sentiment. Dear God....we need you now. Milky Way Galaxy, Orion arm, Solar System, Planet 3. Cleanup on aisle 2020. "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down"

Rev. Dr. Christopher Davis told this story about his young son.

"Christopher being my first child, my fatherly instincts caused me to panic. Yet, because I could see the doors to the store, I knew that he had not exited the building. I paced up one corridor and down another... around a corridor... around another aisle... peeping... looking to find him amidst a crowd of people in the Christmas rush – but I could not find my son. I found a security guard and asked him, "Do you have surveillance in the store?" He said, "Yes." I then asked, "Do you have a monitor?" "Yes." "Can I look at the monitor?" "Yes." "Can you scan the floor?" "Yes."

The guard began to scan up and down the aisles, and there I saw my son, surrounded by toys, yet crying. He was clearly in a state of panic. My son was all by himself among people he did not know. My son was feeling lost and alone, and I did not know what to do. I asked the guard, "Do you have an intercom?" He said, "Yes."

I said, "Keep the camera on him." Then I got on the intercom and said, "Christopher." My son looked around because he recognized my voice. I continued, "Stay where you are." He started looking around. "It's Daddy," I said. "Don't move. I see you although you can't see me. Stay where you are. I'm coming."

It's not enough to hear God's voice and to be seen....we need God WITH US. Ushered in close so that all will be made well. This, is our fervent Advent Hope. This is what we are waiting for!

Church, we are weary and exhausted....Yes, we are striving and serving and doing all we can in the name of the Lord Jesus...on this we will not relent. Yet still, we long for God to come in a big way. As we begin this Advent season--with all that we have faced this year--let's give ourselves permission to begin in lament. Let's join the chorus of many faithful people who came before us who--as an act of faith--cried out for God's Presence---Unafraid to share our grief, our anger, our pain, our hopes, our dreams, our desires. With a weary world shouting "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down" and be God with us. Together to watch and wait...with hope....Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC **"I've been Waiting for You"** **Beth & Ellie Schabel**
Song by Amanda Seyfried, Christine Baranski, and Julie Walters

HOLY COMMUNION

Communion Song **Bread of the World, In Mercy Broken**

*1 Bread of the world in mercy broken, wine of the soul in mercy shed,
 by whom the words of life were spoken, and in whose death our sins are dead:*

*2 Look on the heart by sorrow broken, look on the tears by sinners shed;
 and be thy feast to us the token that by thy grace our souls are fed.*

Meditation -

Communion Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

*As we gather around Christ's Table we remember that on the night that Jesus was betrayed, he took the bread and broke it, gave thanks and said to his Disciples, "This is my body which is give for you, eat of it all of you in remembrance of me." **Let's Partake together the Bread of Life***

*In like manner he took the cup and blessed it saying, "This is the cup of the new covenant in me, as often as you drink of it do so in remembrance of me." **Let's Partake together the Cup of Salvation.***

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's life, death, and resurrection until he comes again. Remember, all...ALL are welcome at the Lord's Table.

(Share in the Bread and Cup together)

BENEDICTION - Chad

Church Family, it is truly a gift to be with you all in worship today. We have been blessed today by the music of Jan, Beth, and Ellie. We have heard powerful words from the Psalmist and the Prophet Isaiah. We pray that you have been blessed for having been with us this morning.

For our Benediction, hear this Advent Prayer written by Rev. Deborah Vaughn and we'll close by singing O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Advent Prayer ~ written by Rev. Deborah Vaughn

silently and gently
falling and failing
changing and resting
seeking you, Lord...

we watch
we wait
we dream
we pray...

for the earth to renew
for our hearts to soften
for your grace to cover us
for your justice to pour out
for time and space to listen
for courage to act

on the edge of Advent,
we sit with you...
we pause...
we hurt...

we repent...

we rage...

When will it be?

Will it ever be?

Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

CLOSING SONG 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 thee, O Israel.

*2 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.*

*3 O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.*

**DEPARTING SONG Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence by Lani Smith
(Tune: Picardy)**