St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Concord NH
A Sacred Meal for a Dispersed Community
Advent 1
29 November 2020

Acknowledging that we are not in the same physical space in the same way that Jesus gathered in the
Upper Room with his disciples on the night before he suffered, we come together nonetheless via online
technology. We do so out of the spiritual yearning for closeness expressed by our Savior who said, “I
have eagerly desired to share this Passover with you before I suffer.” (Luke 22:15)

Participants are invited to have ceremonial food – bread and wine, grape juice, or water – prepared and laid out
on a table.

The Prelude  The Father’s Rose by M. Hayes  Catharine Dornin

The Advent Candle Lighting  Phoebe Morris

This first week of Advent we remember the gift of hope we have in Christ. The prophets of Israel all spoke
of the coming of Christ, of how a savior would be born, a king in the line of David. They spoke of how he
would rule the world wisely and bless all nations.

We light the candle of hope.

Loving God, we thank you for the hope you give us.
Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord’s coming
by being open to seeing to the light of Christ in others.
We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord.
Amen.
The Opening Hymn

“Sleepers wake!” A voice astounds us

1 “Sleepers, wake!” A voice astounds us;
the shout of rampart guards surrounds us:
“Awake, Jerusalem, arise!”
Midnight’s peace their cry has broken,
their urgent summons clearly spoken:
“The time has come, O maidens wise!
Rise up, and give us light;
the Bridegroom is in sight.
Alleluia!
Your lamps prepare and hasten there,
that you the wedding feast may share.”

3 Lamb of God, the heavens adore you;
let saints and angels sing before you,
as harps and cymbals swell the sound.
Twelve great pearls, the city’s portals:
through them we stream to join the immortals
as we with joy your throne surround.
No eye has known the sight,
no ear heard such delight:
Alleluia!
Therefore we sing to greet our King;
for ever let our praises ring.

The Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins to God.

We confess our sin, and the sins of our society,
in the misuse of God’s creation.
Gracious God, we are sorry
for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly, and acted ungratefully.
We enjoy the fruits of the harvest,
but sometimes forget that you have given them to us.
We belong to a people who are full and satisfied,
but ignore the cry of the hungry.
We are thoughtless, and do not care enough for the world you have made.
We store up goods for ourselves alone, as if there were no God and no heaven.
Gracious God, in your mercy, forgive us and help us.

The Absolution

May the God of love and power forgive you and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by the Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.
A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah (64:1-9)  

Bob Cotton

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

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.  
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.  
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.  
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.

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18  

Kristin Dunklee

1  Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *  
   shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
2  In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *  
   stir up your strength and come to help us.
3  Restore us, O God of hosts; *  
   show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
4  O LORD God of hosts, *  
   how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
5  You have fed them with the bread of tears; *  
   you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
6  You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *  
   and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *  
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

17 And so will we never turn away from you; *  
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

A Reading from Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians (1:3-9)  
Michael Atkinson

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

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.  
Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn  
Watchman, tell us of the night  
Hymn 640

Watchman, tell us of the night,  
what its signs of promise are.  
Traveler, o’er yon mountains height:  
see that glory-beaming star.  
Watchman, does its beauteous ray  
news of joy or hope foretell?  
Traveler, yes; it brings the day,  
promised day of Israel.

Watchman, tell us of the night;  
higher yet that star ascends.  
Traveler, blessedness and light,  
peace and truth its course portends.  
Watchman, will its beams alone  
gild the spot that gave them birth?  
Traveler, ages are its own;  
see, it bursts o’er all the earth.

The Gospel  
Brother Charles Edward OLW

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark (13:24-37)  
Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, “In those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. 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. “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. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

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

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Visual Homily

Rev. Paul Oman

The Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

Solo

The Lord’s Prayer by A.H. Malotte

Heather Maconcaghy

Advent Prayers of the People

God of the watching, God of the waiting: Be present with us.

God of the watching, thank you for the symbol of the Advent wreath, whose circle reminds us that your mercy is endless, with no beginning or end. Help us to set our minds on things eternal.

Hear our prayer.

God of the waiting, we pray for all in authority.
We look forward to the day when the nations of the world walk in the light and your peace is experienced by all.

Hear our prayer.

God of the watching, we pray for this city that we may be a community of hope and light in this world.

Hear our prayer.

God of the waiting, we pray for all the people of your church that you may strengthen them for the ministry that you have set before them.

Hear our prayer.
God of the watching, we pray for the sick, the friendless, and the needy, that they may experience your healing presence.
We pray especially today for ...
Please add the names of anyone you are carrying on your heart today...
God of the watching, God of the waiting.

**Hear our prayer.**

God of the watching, we pray for all who have died, especially today ...
Please add the names of anyone whose loss you are grieving today...
God of the watching, God of the waiting.

**Hear our prayer.**

God of the waiting, we are challenged in our worship to set our hearts and minds on the here and now, and to remember and be thankful for what matters.
We give thanks today for the holy season of Advent and all the promise it holds.
Please add your own prayers of thanksgiving...
God of the watching, God of the waiting,

**Hear our prayer.**

God of the waiting, we pray for all those who are watching and waiting for a dream to be born that you may give them patience of heart and mind and the wisdom to see your presence.

**Hear our prayer.**

Hasten, O God, the coming of your kingdom, and grant that we, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his advent in glorious majesty.

*Amen.*

**The Announcements**

**The Agape Meal**

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; you have fed us with the bread of life in the Body of your Son. Feed us now with your presence among us and your presence in your Word. As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever.

*Amen.*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of Jesus Christ, crucified yet risen. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever.

*Amen.*
The Closing Prayer

Generous God,
we have shared together this sacred meal.
Kindle us with the fire of your Spirit
that when Christ comes again, we may shine like lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Blessing

The Closing Hymn

Rejoice! Rejoice, believers
Rejoice! rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear!
The evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising, and soon he will draw nigh;
up, watch with expectation! at the midnight comes the cry.
See that your lamps are burning, replenish them with oil;
look now for your salvation, the end of sin and toil.
The marriage-feast is waiting, the gates wide open stand;
Rise up, ye heirs of glory, the Bridegroom is at hand!
Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, thou Sun so longed for, above this darkened sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth’s redemption, and ever be with thee!

The Dismissal

The Organ Postlude

Wacht auf by J.S. Bach

Heather Maconaghy
We are all (including you!) called to be ministers to one another and to those around us by participating in God’s work in the world.

Ministers participating in this service

**Clergy**
- The Rev. Kate Atkinson
- Brother Charles Edward OLW

**Visual Homilist**
- Rev. Paul Oman

**Director of Music Ministries**
- Heather Maconaghy

**Musicians**
- Catharine Dornin and Larry Maconaghy

**Lectors**
- Bob Cotton, Kristin Dunklee, and Michael Atkinson

**Prayers**
- Phoebe Morris and Nicki Bourne

The flowers were given today to the glory of God.

Would you like to make a gift to St. Paul’s via your credit card? St. Paul’s has partnered with Tithe.ly, a reputable mobile platform designed to help churches meet their fundraising goals. Donating via Tithe.ly is as simple as sending a text from your smartphone:

1) Text the word “give” to (603)786-7126
2) You will receive a text back from Tithe.ly immediately with a link.
3) Click on the link and make your donation via the credit card of your choice.

Note: You don’t even need to enter your 16 digit credit card number – your phone’s camera can scan the card and read the numbers for you.

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church 21 Centre Street, Concord, NH 03301 (603) 224-2523, office@stpaulsconcord.org, www.stpaulsconcord.org

* A place to belong ~ Whoever you are ~ Just as you are