



Advent Midweek Service

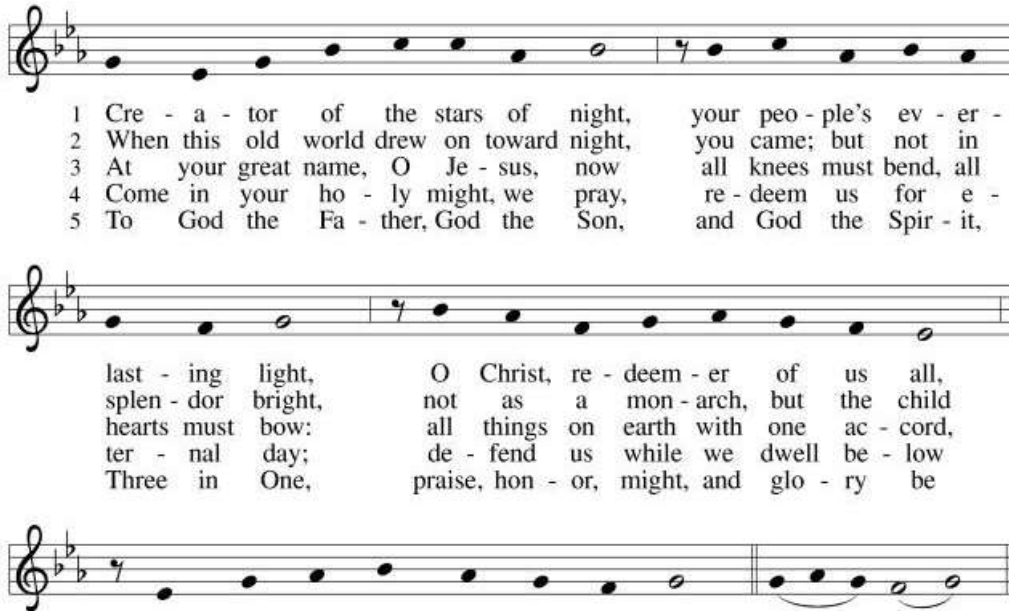
stand

Opening Response

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, **give thanks in all circumstances.**

Opening Hymn

Creator of the Stars of Night



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all
4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -
5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,

last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,
splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child
hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,
ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low
Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be

we pray you hear us when we call.
of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.
like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
from all as - saults of our dread foe.
from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. *Hymnal* 1940, alt.
Music: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM, plainsong mode IV
Text © 1940 Church Pension Fund, admin. Church Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Opening Prayer

Stir up our hearts in wonder, O God. May we wear a mantle of praise as we delight in your gift of salvation, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

sit

Reading

Isaiah 61:1-3; 10-11

1The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; 2to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 3to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. 10I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Reflection Questions

What word, image, or phrase stands out for you in this reading?

Where will you look for God's glory this Advent season?

Where do you engage in wonder at God's creation; in wonder at the love, grace, and forgiveness of Christ; and in wonder at the transforming work of the Holy Spirit?

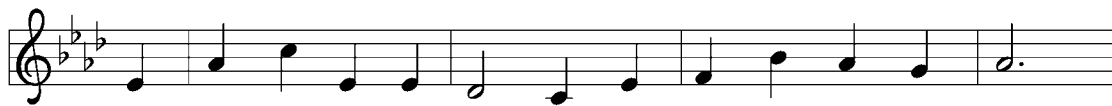
Reflection on the Day

Springtime shoots and sprouting gardens are a long way off for the North American households approaching winter. Yet our text from Isaiah envisions righteousness growing among the faithful like earth's plants springing forth. Even now, under the cover of snow or frozen soil for some of us, seeds await the return of longer days and warm sun. Christians have long looked to the rhythms of the seasons to reflect on what God is doing among the community of believers. As winter darkness intensifies, let us quiet our minds and rest our souls as the earth itself rests. A great ordeal, a new and amazing birth, is about to occur. For now, creation waits. Take a walk in the dark, quiet days to center on the miracle to come. Sit in a dark room filled with the light of candles or Christmas tree. Given time, the tiny shoot will grow into a righteous oak.

stand

Hymn of the Day

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



- 1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
- 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
- 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'rings bore,
- 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Responsive Prayer

Show us your mercy, O Lord, **and grant us your salvation.**

Clothe your ministers with righteousness. **Let your people sing with joy.**

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world; **for only in you can we live in safety.**

Lord, keep this nation under your care, **and guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

Let your way be known upon earth; **your saving health among all nations.**

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten, **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Create in us clean hearts, O God, **and sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

Closing Prayer

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

Even as we wait, watch, and wonder, **God is with us.**

Dismissal

Go in Peace. Christ is Near. **Thanks be to God.**

Worship Contributors

Leader: Eric Leshner

Pianist: Anne Melang-Thoren