

"Heavens Torn and Transformed" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Inspired by Isaiah 64:1-9
Oil Pastel on cambric fabric, stretched on wood panel with gold leaf

The Table
Lutheran Church

Order of Worship for the First Sunday of Advent

If you would like to keep this bulletin, please feel free to do so. However, they will be reused each Sunday throughout this season so, if you do not wish to keep it, please return the bulletin to the welcome table near the entrance. Thank you.

All are welcome to pull up a seat at The Table. As we learn and grow together, it is our hope to live like Jesus, to love like Jesus, and to humbly seek grace when we fall short of that responsibility. We recognize and celebrate that each person is fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God, and we give thanks for the many and diverse gifts that God has given us. We joyfully extend God's love and welcome to all people, no matter your sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, country of origin, immigration status, age, family status, physical and mental abilities, socioeconomic position, religious background, or any other human condition. We strive to promote racial equity, socioeconomic justice, and the affirmation of all LGBTQIA+ people in our community through our worship, mission, and outreach efforts.

You are welcome. You are loved. Pull up a seat at The Table.

RECONCILING IN CHRIST

BULLETIN ICONS can help you navigate the worship service:

indicates that the congregation will be speaking. The words that will be said together are printed in **bold** on your bulletin or on the worship supplement.

indicates a time of prayer.

indicates a song to sing together.

indicates a time for quiet listening.

indicates a time when you may be asked to move around the worship space. The worship leader will give more instructions when it's time to move.

* an asterisk indicates that you are invited to stand in body or in spirit for this portion of the worship service.

GATHER

*Call to Worship

One: In God's house,

All: we are free to wear our hearts on our sleeves.

One: In God's house,

All: we may come exactly as we are.

One: In God's house,

All: we dare to hope. We dream new dreams.
We cry out. We call upon God.

One: In God's house,

All: All are welcome and all are heard.

One: So come and worship.

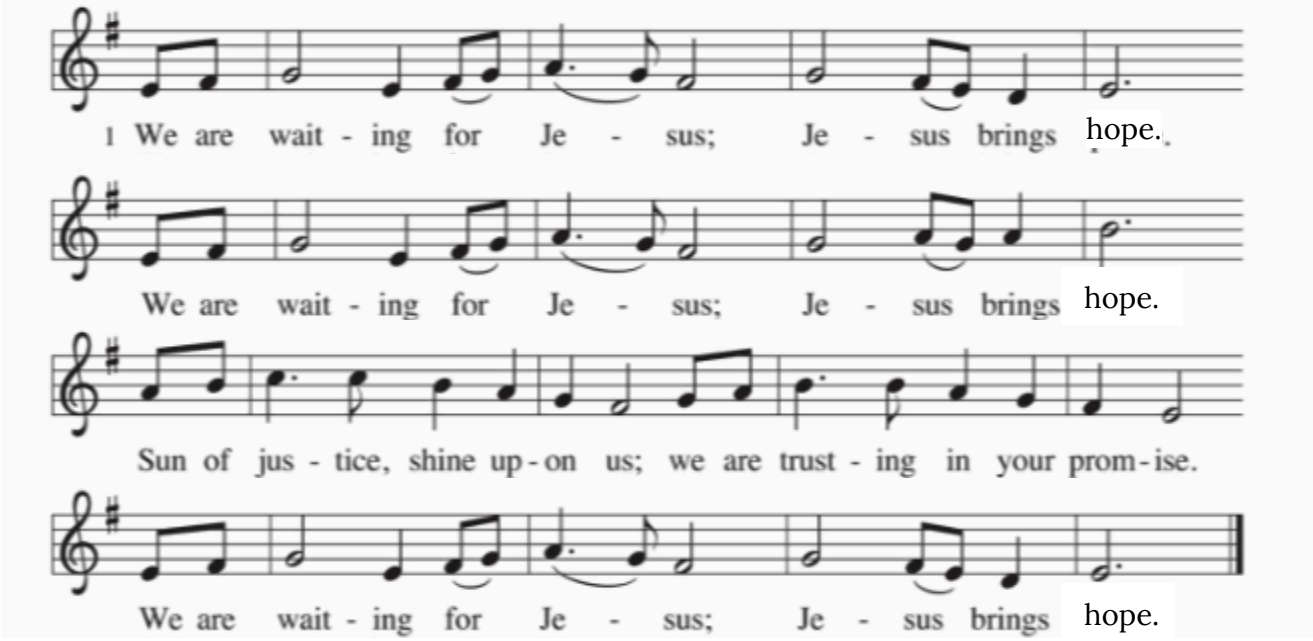
All: God is here. God is listening. Let us worship our with-us God.

*Lighting the Advent Candles

One: Like the stars above, may this light shine bright.
May it guide our path. May it inspire deeper hope.

All: Until God's promised day, may it be so. Amen.

*Sung Response - We are Waiting for Jesus



***Confession and Assurance**

One: …Let us pray together:

All: Holy God, we have been known—
to bite our tongues,
to work through a broken heart,
to don our favorite rose-colored glasses.
We have been known—
to look for the bright side,
to sweep the pain under the rug,
to choose ignorance for the benefit of bliss.
We have been known to keep the hurt in our heart to ourselves.
Forgive us for filtering our honesty.
Forgive us for ignoring the power of lament.
Forgive us for not turning to you first.
Remind us that you are a God who listens
and you are a God who restores.
With open hearts, we pray. Amen.

(Pause for silent, personal confession and reflection)

One: Family of faith, whether we pray like the Psalmists—raw and unfiltered— or we can't remember the last time we were honest with God, God still loves us. God sees us. And God longs to be in relationship. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

All: There is nothing we could do or say that will keep God's love at bay. We are seen, forgiven, and invited—into deeper honesty and deeper relationship. Thanks be to God! Amen.

*Gathering Song - The King Shall Come - ELW 260

Note: Lyrics in the hymnal are different from those presented here.

1 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks,
when beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.

2 O brighter than that glorious morn
shall this fair morning be,
the day when Christ in splendor comes,
and we His face shall see.

3 The King shall come when morning dawns
and earth's dark night is past;
O haste the rising of that morn,
the day that aye shall last.

4 The King shall come when morning dawns,
and light and beauty brings;
"Hail, Christ the Lord!" Thy people pray,
come quickly, King of kings!

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

All: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Greeting

One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, ✠ the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

*Sharing God's Peace

TRANSFORM

Scripture Readings

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.
Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
O Lord God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?
You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.
And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Isaiah 64:1-9

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.

Sermon - "Until the Dawn… Cry Out" - Rev. Meilands

***Sermon Song - Restore Us, God -** *Tune: O Little Town of Bethlehem*

1 Restore us, God; we cry to you—we long to see your face
Stir up your might and set things right; come touch us with your grace
God, tear open the heavens and make your presence known
We need you here to calm our fear; come make the earth your throne

2 In times of struggle here below it feels like endless night
The storm clouds grow, the thunder rolls; we long for dawning light
But 'til we see the daybreak, and love reigns once again
What can we do but cry to you and kindle hope within?

3 We cry out as an act of faith that you hear every prayer
We pray for peace, that hate would cease, for freedom everywhere
O God you are the potter and we the potter's clay
Mold us to be your hands and feet until your dawning day

*Affirmation of Faith -

All: We believe
even on the longest nights—
when our steps are unclear
and fear takes hold—
that the sun is still rising.

We believe in that sunrise
like we believe in God's promised day.
So instead of giving in to the great unknown,
we move, in spirit, toward that light.

We summon our courage.
We carry each other.
We dance under the stars.
We listen for the angels.
And we believe the good news of the gospel,
which says that God loves
God's creation so fiercely
that God took on flesh to
be with us.

This is the truth that sustains our journey.
In this, we believe.

Prayers of the Church

Offering & Offering Prayer

One: Let us pray together:

All: Eternal God, our time, talents, and treasures are gifts from you. Receive what we offer, and all that you entrust to us, until hungry no more, all the world is fed, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Holy Communion

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

All: 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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion & The Communion of God's People

(Please come forward to receive the elements. Take a cup from the tray then proceed to the pastor to receive the bread and the communion assistant to receive the wine. If you would prefer, there are also sealed, pre-packaged wafer and juice combination cups on the tray. If you are not able to come forward but would like communion, please signal to the pastor or the communion assistant and we will be glad to bring it to you at your seat.)

Prayer After Communion

All: Holy One, until the dawn, until your promised day, until the sun rises on a world that finally knows peace and harmony, until all people know their love and worth, until *that* day, until *that* dawn, until *that* holy tomorrow, we will gather at this Table.

We will break bread, and we will remember what it looks like for all to be fed.

Thank you, loving God, for meeting us here once more. Amen.

SEND

Blessing

One: As we leave this place,
may we speak the truth in love,
may we hold fast to courage,
may we be quick to joy,
may we listen for the angels,
and may we build each other up,
until we reach God's promised day—
when the lion will lie down with the lamb
and the sun will rise over all of us.

All: That is what we move toward.
That is what we dream of.

One: So look toward the horizon, and go with hope.

All: Amen!

*Sending Song - Comfort, Comfort Now My People - ELW 256

1 "Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that the war is over!
God will reign in peace forever.

2 For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God away.
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;
hills bow down in humble favor.

3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.

***SENDING**

One: God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to others. We go out to follow Jesus in the world — to show and tell the good news of God to everyone.

All: Thanks be to God!

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

THE TABLE'S GOD GIVEN PURPOSE:

As followers of Jesus, we are guided by the Holy Spirit to affirm God's unconditional love and grace for all people by advocating for, serving and walking with one another and our neighbors.

OUR VISION

is to experience and extend God's transforming love by—

· Being in relationship with God, set free to share God's grace.
· Building authentic relationships within our faith community and with our neighbors through accompaniment and service.
· Aspiring to love like Jesus.
· Growing in faith through spiritual practices including worship, Bible study and prayer.
· Extending genuine hospitality, especially to the marginalized, those who have been hurt by the church and those who do not know God's love.
· Educating ourselves and others, advocating for, and implementing practices grounded in social justice.

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