

Advent 2013 Waiting and Waking

GATHERING

ENTRANCE

REFLECTION

I wonder if the invitation of Advent is not also that God desires to inhabit us, to make a home within our home. . . . Could Advent be a season in which we clear out space for God to move in and linger around the house? Could Advent be a season in which we take turns with God opening up slowly and yet deliberately as we reacquaint ourselves with one another?

Enuma Okoro, "Making Room for God: Reflections on Advent"
(www.patheos.com, Nov. 30, 2011)

CANDLE LIGHTING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Wake up! It's time to get ready!
It's time to prepare the way for the Holy One,
to invite God to make a home within our home.

People: We rub the sleep from our eyes,
waiting for the promised One,
waiting for the promises of God to come true.

Leader: Wake up! Open your hearts!
Make room for God's Spirit to enter and come in.

All: Waiting and waking,
we watch for the signs of God's presence.
We watch for the coming of Christ
into a world that yearns for peace and joy.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

SILENCE

PRAYERS

COMMON CONFESSION

Leader: God of Advent waiting, we come before you

barely conscious of your presence all around.

People: We refuse to wake up
to our limited desire to be welcoming and inclusive,
to work for peace and justice here and now.

Leader: You call us to watch for you,
to welcome you to make your home within us.

People: Yet our lives are much too crowded and chaotic
for us to see where you linger lovingly within us.

Leader: As long as we believe we're all alone
we cannot welcome you.

All: Forgive us when we turn our backs on you
and want to go to sleep.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE

Leader: The advent of Christ gives us fresh opportunities
to open up to one another,
to welcome God's forgiveness and compassion.

All: Amen.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

All: O Holy One, we come today
to claim our relationship with you.

We pray for the commitment to grow together,
sharing the gifts you give us with others
here and in the wider world.

Forgive us for the hurt we have inflicted,
and help us forgive those who have hurt us.

Give us strength and discipline
to nurture our relationship with you;
to care for every part of your creation;
to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need;
to work to end all war, and violence, and discord;
and to respond joyfully when you call,
freely giving our selves as you have shown the way.

We open our hearts to you and your creation
in the name of Jesus, who is the Christ. Amen.

HYMN

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE

SERMON

SILENT REFLECTION

OFFERING

COMMUNION

PREPARATION

Leader 1: This is the table of the Heavenly Feast,
the joyful celebration of the people of God.

Leader 2: We gather now as one body, joined around the table.
Here we celebrate God's presence among us
united in Christ's spirit, broken and whole all at once;

All: Nourished and hungry, loved and loving,
sinner and forgiven; we make one circle of knowing,
believing, rejoicing, being,
as God lights and rests among us.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader 1: Holy and Eternal One,
we thank you for creating us
with hearts that long for you.

People: We thank you for Jesus, the Christ,
God-with-us, at home among us,
for whom we wait in joyful hope.

Leader 2: We are grateful for your Holy Spirit,
your eternal presence among us,
your silent voice within our hearts.

All: We give you thanks for your church,
your living body throughout the earth,
sisters and brothers, waiting and waking
together.

BLESSING THE ELEMENTS

Leader 1: Christ invites everyone to eat the bread of life,
to drink the cup of the new covenant.

Leader 2: Jesus said, I am the bread of life.
You who come to me shall never hunger,
You who believe in me shall never thirst.

Leader 1: On the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to God, broke it and said,
This is my body,
broken for the healing of the world.
Whenever you eat it, do so remembering me.

Leader 2: After supper, Jesus took the cup and said,
This is the cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for all.
Whenever you drink it, do so remembering me.

All: O Holy One, send down your Spirit
that these gifts of bread and cup
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.
Unite us with Christ forever
and bring us with the whole creation
to your eternal realm.

SHARE THE ELEMENTS

If you do not wish to receive the elements today you are welcome to join the circle
and allow them to pass, or remain in your seat. We serve grape juice in our cups.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

All: God of abundance and mercy,
we give joyful thanks
for your eternal love and healing presence
in our celebration of bread and cup.
Bless this body of Christ
that we may attend faithfully
to our call to be your servants,
with each other and throughout the world. Amen.

SHARED REFLECTIONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

BENEDICTION

Leader: Hearing God's invitation to be at home with us,
we begin clearing space for the Holy One,
allowing the Holy one to linger with us,
opening the doors of our hearts

to all who are lost and alone.

All: Amen.