



The 1st Sunday After Christmas – “The Time Has Come”
December 27, 2020

Prelude

Hallelujah Chorus, Martha Main, YouTube

WE GATHER

The Good News that we have proclaimed for this Advent/Christmas season ends with a second chapter of Luke that starts, “When the time came...” Indeed, the time has come for us to move from the narrative of birthing to the narrative of redemption. The story of Jesus’ ritual cleansing as a child contains stories of people who had been waiting for this moment. But the time of waiting is over—for us too. Like Isaiah who says, “for Zion’s sake I won’t stay silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I won’t sit still,” we will not stop our songs of resistance until justice shines out like a light for all.

A Prayer of Light- Holy One, we thank you for the glimpses we have caught throughout this season of Advent and Christmas of your gifts of hope, love, joy, and peace. Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle—even when we have not been sure of tomorrow, you have ignited the Light within us, and we have glowed with its brilliance from the inside out. Help us continue to proclaim far and wide that the time has come for light to be among all people. Amen.





What will you do with your @ Home Advent Wreath? Take a picture and email it or text it to Pastor Sarah so she can show folks how we have all been on this journey together even though we've been physically apart. You might display your wreath somewhere you'll see it daily to remind you of the work of Christmas there is still to do. You could use it as a bookmark in your Bible, too.

A TIME OF PRAYER

You are welcome to send prayer requests to Pastor Sarah. Spend a few moments connecting with God and lifting up your prayers.

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Isaiah Reading—61:10—62:3 (CEB)

I surely rejoice in the Lord;
my heart is joyful because of my
God,
because he has clothed me with
clothes of victory,
wrapped me in a robe of
righteousness
like a bridegroom in a priestly crown,
and like a bride adorned in jewelry.

As the earth puts out its growth,
and as a garden grows its seeds,
so the Lord God will grow
righteousness and praise before all the
nations.

For Zion's sake I won't keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I won't sit
still until her righteousness shines out
like a light,
and her salvation blazes like a torch.

Nations will see your righteousness,
all kings your glory.
You will be called by a new name,
which the Lord's own mouth will
determine.
You will be a splendid garland in the
Lord's hand,
a royal turban in the palm of God's
hand.

Gospel Reading—*Luke 2:22-40 (CEB)*

When the time came for their ritual cleansing, in accordance with the Law from Moses, they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (It's written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord.") They offered a sacrifice in keeping with what's stated in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He was righteous and devout. He eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he wouldn't die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Led by the Spirit, he went into the temple area. Meanwhile, Jesus' parents brought the child to the temple so that they could do what was customary under the Law. Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. He said,

"Now, master, let your servant go in peace according to your word,
because my eyes have seen your salvation.
You prepared this salvation in the presence of all peoples.
It's a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and a glory for your people Israel."

His father and mother were amazed by what was said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "This boy is assigned to be the cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that generates opposition so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your innermost being too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who belonged to the tribe of Asher. She was very old. After she married, she lived with her husband for seven years. She was now an 84-year-old widow. She never left the temple area but worshipped God with fasting and prayer night and day. She approached at that very moment and began to praise God and to speak about Jesus to everyone who was looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Mary and Joseph had completed everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown, Nazareth in Galilee. The child grew up and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him.

MEDITATION

The Time Has Come

A Christmas Poem: “The Work of Christmas”

“When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flock,
the work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among others,
to make music in the heart.”

-Howard Thurman

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD WITH OUR GIVING

As the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so will God cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. With thankful hearts, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.=

You’re invited to take out your checkbook in these moments. As you write out your offering, be prayerful with each letter and number. In times such as these, when money becomes tight and our economy is under strain, God invites us to be generous and give what we can. These are gifts we freely give, as we are able and as we are called.

We ask that you please mail in your offerings to our office.

8916 E. Troy Ave.

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You can also submit your offerings on our website through a secure PayPal donation button by using your credit or debit card or a PayPal account. Please know that PayPal receives a 2.2% processing fee and a \$0.30 transaction charge. You are able to set up reoccurring, monthly payments. Check it out on our website at www.zionuccindy.net/donate.

Music for Reflection

Little Drummer Boy, YouTube, Martha Main

We Give Thanks – Loving God, we give you thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received adoption as your children. With Jesus our brother, we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world, that we may live as heirs of your promises to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.=

Carol of Christmas Work

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Martha Main & Michael Main

This carol was written in 1962 by Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Inspired by seeing babies pushed in strollers in New York City while the dire threat of nuclear war loomed, Noel wrote, “said the night wind to the little lamb,” and “pray for peace, people everywhere.” The “star dancing in the night with a tail as big as a kite” can be interpreted as the star of Bethlehem but also what a nuclear missile looks like in flight. The composers said in an interview later that it was difficult to actually sing the song that year without crying. Indeed, our prayers for peace continue and the need to protect the children of the world and secure a future for them are as dire as ever. As the last song in our series, let us sing this Carol of Christmas Work, “a song high above the trees” with our voices “big as the sea.”

WE ARE SENT FORTH WITH A BLESSING

We wait for justice
but we do not wait to work for change;
We wait for restored health
but we do not wait to work to heal;
We wait for wholeness
but we do not wait to work at binding brokenness;
We wait for peace
but we do not wait to work to eliminate hatred.

And so, my friends, like bells ringing out the news
that we believe that good will prevail,
fill the night left by sadness with light.

Go into your lives humming the tunes that keep that goodness alive in you
and that spur you on in your work of justice and reconciliation.

Raise your voices and repeat after me...

“do not be afraid!”
“do not be afraid!”
Amen!

Postlude with Ringing of the Bell

Mary Had a Baby, Martha Main

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