

# **Holy Darkness: Evening Service of Word and Prayer for Advent**

*Power in the Spirit 2021*

*Tuesday Evening, July 13<sup>th</sup>*

## **Greeting:**

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, the love of Christ that guards our hearts and minds, and the joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## **Song:**

***O Come, O Come Emmanuel*** (Stz. 1&4)

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.*

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***

*O come, O branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of. Hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.*

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***

## **Opening Prayer:**

Stir up our hearts, O God, to prepare a pathway for your Christ. By His coming speak peace to your people and turn our hearts toward you, that your saving grace and splendid glory, may dwell in all the earth; through Jesus Christ, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

## **Lighting of the Advent Wreath:**

*Silence for reflection*

We praise you, God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

*The first, second and third Advent Candles are lit as we sing together:*

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord; be strong, take heart!*

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## **Scripture & Reflection:**

## ***Darkness Holds Promise***

God comes to us in dreams and visions. The long expanse of night, absent the distractions of worries of the day, creates space for us to hear and listen. Three times Samuel hears God's voice as he sleeps; three times he mistakes it for Eli's, unable to comprehend that God might be seeking after him instead. Eli, however, perceives that God is doing a new thing and encourages Samuel to again lie down and be open to God calling to him in the night.

A reading from 1 Samuel 3.

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

<sup>2</sup>At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; <sup>3</sup>the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup>Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" <sup>5</sup>and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. <sup>6</sup>The LORD called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." <sup>7</sup>Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup>The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup>Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." <sup>11</sup>Then the LORD said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. <sup>12</sup>On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup>For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup>Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever."

<sup>15</sup>Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup>But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." He said, "Here I am." <sup>17</sup>Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." <sup>18</sup>So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, "It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him." <sup>19</sup>As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup>And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD. <sup>21</sup>The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

*(Silence for Reflection)*

## Song of Reflection

*O God, You Search Me* (ACS 1082)



1 O God, you search me and you know me.  
 2 You know my rest - ing and my ris - ing.  
 3 Be - fore a word is on my tongue, Lord,  
 4 Al - though your Spir - it is up - on me,  
 5 For you cre - at - ed me and shaped me,



All my thoughts lie o - pen to your gaze.  
 You dis - cern my pur - pose from a - far,  
 you have known its mean - ing through and through.  
 still I search for shel - ter from your light.  
 gave me life with - in my moth - er's womb.



When I walk or lie down you are be - fore me:  
 and with love ev - er - last - ing you be - siege me:  
 You are with me be - yond my un - der - stand - ing:  
 There is no - where on earth I can es - cape you:  
 For the won - der of who I am, I praise you:



ev - er the mak - er and keep - er of my days.  
 in ev - 'ry mo - ment of life or death, you are.  
 God of my pres - ent, my past, and fu - ture, too.  
 e - ven the dark - ness is ra - diant in your sight.  
 safe in your hands, all cre - a - tion is made new.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

Music: O GOD, YOU SEARCH ME, Bernadette Farrell

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## Prayer

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

Holy One, as we pause in silence, we listen for your voice. (*Silence for reflection*) Each of us has a vocation. Help us to understand that all we do is a calling from God and a way to give glory to you by helping our neighbor. We lift each other up now and ask that you would bless us as we continue the work of Jesus this day, and always.

We continue to remember before God all who are frightened... those who have received unexpected news...all who dream of a better day...all whose relationships are strained or broken...all who must make difficult decisions...all who must leave their homeland...all for whom the world has no room...all the joys or concerns we offer now in the silence of our heart...

Into your wide embrace, O God, we place all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting that you will receive them into your heart of mercy, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. **Amen.**

When we pray to God, it's just like a child talking to parents she knows shower her with love and care. Let us pray together now to our Creator as Jesus taught us to pray:

**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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

### Blessing:

God all mighty, God most merciful bless us, keep us, and give us peace. **Amen.**

### Song:

*Deep Peace (ACS 1018)*

The musical score for 'Deep Peace' is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. The first system has two staves (treble and bass clef) with the lyrics 'Deep peace of the run - ning waves, deep peace of the'. The second system also has two staves with the lyrics 'flow - ing air, deep peace of the shin - ing stars to'. The third system has two staves with the lyrics 'you, deep peace of the qui - et earth.' and 'earth.'. Above the third system, there are two boxes: 'To repeat' and 'Last time'. The 'To repeat' box covers the first part of the third system, and the 'Last time' box covers the second part. The music is in a simple, folk-like style with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature.

Text: Celtic traditional; adapt. Ray Makeever, b. 1943  
Music: DEEP PEACE, Ray Makeever  
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