



01B ADVENT 01C - ONLINE LITURGY

Heads up

Abstract

“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. 35 For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

Luke 21:34-36

Jim de Jong
jim@dejongs.id.au

Before reading

“HOPE” IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS - (314)

BY EMILY DICKINSON

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I’ve heard it in the chillest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.†

OLD TESTAMENT

Jeremiah 33:14–16

¹⁴ “ ‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

¹⁵ “ ‘In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land.

¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.’ ⁱⁱ

After Reading

“HOPE” DOES INDEED HAVE FEATHERS

BY Amy Ludwig van de Water

“Hope” does indeed have feathers –
And now she’s flown away –
We try to listen for her tune –
We long for her – today –

And somewhere – in this land – she hides –
We search for her – we cry –
She will perch in our souls again –
Such sweetness cannot Dieⁱⁱⁱ

GOSPEL

Luke 21:25–36

²⁵ “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹ He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. ³¹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

³² “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴ “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.” ^{iv}

respond

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

We Gather

Call to worship

To be alive is sometimes to experience pain and even disaster. Jesus warns us not to overreact to disaster, but to try to see life from a wider perspective, looking for the coming of the kingdom of God. There is always hope: God will not forsake us. Come, let us worship.

Acknowledgements

God created the lands we live on.
The Wadawurrung people were its first inhabitants
since time before remembering.
You may well identify with another indigenous group.

We pay our respects to their elders and communities
That continue to care for this land and its peoples.

We also pay our respects to those Second and Third generations peoples
that have been part of our lives that similarly care.

Especially now we think of your carers and nurses here.

A gathering prayer with an Advent wreath

This is the waiting time.

What are we waiting for?

We wait for the birth of hope.

What are we hoping for?

We hope that Jesus' life and love will be born anew in us.

We light the candle of hope.

Light the first candle this week.

As we light this Advent candle,
may its flame be for us a sign of hope;
may its warmth be a symbol of God's love for us;
and may it inspire us to be hope bearers –
people of compassion and integrity,
as we gather in the name of Jesus
who is the light of the world.

Amen.

Hymn/song

TIS # – "~~Light one candle~~" V1

Or

ATO #313 – "Christ be our light" - Verses 1 and 5"

Welcome

Advent 1 Year C

The Gospel reading is set in Holy Week, a day or two before the arrest of Jesus.

I know they're corny, but I love good news/bad news jokes.

A young man phones up his dad at work for a chat.

Dad says, "I'm sorry, son, but I'm up to my neck in work today"

Son says, "But I've got some good news and some bad news for you, Dad."

Dad says, "OK, but since I've got no time now, just give me the good news."

Son says, "Well, the air bag works . . ."vi

Or a gallery owner says to an artist, "I have some good news and some bad news."

The artist asks, "What's the good news?"

Gallery owner says, "The good news is that a woman came in here today asking if the price of your paintings would go up after you die.

When I told her they would, she bought every one of your paintings."

Artist says, "That's great! What's the bad news?"

Gallery owner says, "The bad news is that woman was your doctor!"vii

In our Bible passage today, Jesus had to deliver some terrible news to his disciples. But he didn't deliver it in the good news/bad news formula we're accustomed to.

Jesus told them the bad news first,

but then he told them the good news

that God had already planned to help them

persevere when events in the future became painful and

chaotic.

A prayer of approach

God of mystery,

we have stepped into Advent and await your revelations.

We have stepped into Advent, hoping that we and others will see and feel and know your message.

You are a patient, persevering God, who offers your all for us;

you offer to us the depth of your being, the essence of life, the gift of love beyond compare.

And we wait to celebrate again the gift of Jesus born for us, given for us.

We look to you, for you will show us true life bursting forth.

Amen.

We say Sorry

God is coming – are we ready?

Not just for parties or planning special meals,

Christmas lights, decorations , buying gifts

but are our hearts ready – our lives ready

to receive the most wonderful gift of all – Jesus Christ.

Watch, pray, be ready for this gift who came in the past,

comes in the present and will come in the future.

Are we ready?

Let us Pray our prayer of confession

We wait, but don't always find it easy to wait,

and for that we are sorry.

We confess our impatience and our lack of attention

to the journey and its signposts.

	<p>Teach us that preparation is part of the journey and that the journey is part of the gift. You offer us a way to follow, a path to tread, a journey that leads to hope, to joy, to trust and to love, and we confess we do not always follow. Now, may we step into this Advent as faithful people, seeking forgiveness and trying to follow your path, and believing you will be walking with us every step of the way. Amen.</p>
	<p>Words of Assurance</p> <p>God promises to all who follow, that he will take away our sins and set us on the path to life eternal. Hear God's word, know God's forgiveness, and feel God's peace. Amen.</p>
	<p>Readings "Hope" is the thing with feathers - (314) Jeremiah 33:14–16 "Hope" does indeed have feathers Luke 21:25–36</p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord Thanks be to God</p>
	<p>Hymn/Song TIS #647 – "Comfort, comfort all my people"</p> <p>Graham Kendrick - We Believe – (Probably not a goer but it'd be great for a day David was about)</p> <p>We believe in God the Father, Maker of the universe, And in Christ His Son our Saviour, Come to us by virgin birth. We believe He died to save us, Bore our sins, was crucified. Then from death He rose victorious, Ascended to the Father's side.</p> <p>Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all, Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all, Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all, Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all. Name above all names, Name above all names. Name above all names.</p>

We believe He sends His Spirit,
 On His church with gifts of power.
 God His word of truth affirming,
 Sends us to the nations now.
 He will come again in glory,
 Judge the living and the dead.
 Every knee shall bow before Him,
 Then must every tongue confess.

Address

Image yourself as a child for a moment
 a child from a reasonably normal, healthy and loving home.

There is a song that is familiar to all of us, a secular song.
 It could be called an advent hymn -
 although it doesn't talk about God,
 or about the coming of Jesus,
 or even about the Christian hope.

Does anyone not know Santa Clause is coming to town?

The song is loved by millions of people throughout the ages - especially by children.
 It is a song that speaks about the coming of an important person,
 a person who knows us and our every action,
 a person who is good and loving and who expects us to be the same.

For a world no longer accustomed to reading the scriptures
 the song summarizes the Advent message in a secular way
 It's just that as Christians we substitute the name of Jesus
 for the name of Santa Claus
 If you listen carefully, in a secular way
 this song tells us about the return of Christ
 and how we should be ready for it.

So, it's the first Sunday, the first week, of Advent.
 It's a time for Christians of waiting, watching and hoping:
 hope like that expressed by Jeremiah during a time of persecution
 hope that justice is coming;
 hope like that in the story told by Luke
 when Jesus uses the new shoots on a fig tree in spring
 to describe the hope and joy of new beginnings;

Jesus starts by talking about the signs to come
 of distress to be seen in the sun, moon and stars,
 the roaring sea and the waves.
 He noted that cosmic signs will precede the coming of the Son of Man
 and will cause people to be terrified.

But he follows this with the signs of hope that could also be found – if one cared to look.
 Jesus told of a fig tree.
 He said that one can tell what is coming by watching the signs.
 By looking at fig leaves sprouting in April,
 they know that summer is near.

Similarly, when the Great Tribulation comes,
people will know that the kingdom of God is near.

Being afraid is horrible.

I remember a time when a child fainted in A&E after breaking their arm,
and how deeply afraid about what the consequences of having done that might be.
I remember how grateful they were that they were forgiven for being sick over us,
and reassured them that all would be well.

For many people, our world is a deeply frightening place.

Historically and shamefully,
some preachers have played on this to frighten people
into some form of coerced discipleship.

Today's Bible passages do not do this.

Rather they offer words of hope, safety and confidence
to those who are deeply anxious.

It gives us a vision of the glory of Jesus' help.

But, I am unfortunately not familiar with fig trees.

Two friends were walking across a barren concrete wasteland.

One commented on a single blade of grass pushing through a tiny crack.
Years later, they returned to the site and found the sea of concrete
now covered in a carpet of grass.

For 21 months we have been in lockdown.

21 months of not knowing whether we would be locked down again or not.

21 months of either not wanting to be or not able to be in the company of others.

Even now, some are still anxious.

But we have lived through the winter of dark cold days.

We now appreciate the days getting longer.

In the Northern Hemisphere, they are approaching the darkest time of the year.

At the same time, today we light the first of our Advent candles
a reminder that a light shines in the darkness
and the darkness has not, and never will, overcome it.

And each Sunday of Advent we will light another candle,

and the light that holds so much promise
will become stronger each week

culminating in the hope that is Christ's birth.

Jesus warned His disciples to be always ready.

Though a believer will be able to anticipate the coming of the kingdom by the signs,
it is possible to get so entangled with the affairs of life

that some will not be ready for the kingdom when it comes

unexpectedly (v. 34)

and universally (v. 35)

and therefore, will not enter the kingdom.

It was against this wrong attitude that Jesus said,

Be careful (v. 34) and be always on the watch

But, as surely as summer follows winter.
 in our dark days,
 we wait and watch and hope
 and our hope will not be in vain.
 Jesus says so.

Amen

	<p>Hymn/song TIS #650 – “Servant song”</p>
	<p>Offering OFFERTORY SENTENCE Jesus said: ‘Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.’ The work we do here, the money that we give here, becomes part of the eternal work of God.</p> <p>OFFERTORY PRAYER God of infinite grace and love, we bring ourselves and our resources seeking not to be afraid but to live as people of your good, abundant and generous kingdom. May what we bring be used for joy and love. In the name of Christ. Amen.</p>
	<p>Notices</p>
	<p>Prayers for all people God, you entered the world as a human baby at a difficult time. We pray for those in difficult circumstances, those for whom the picture is bleak: those waiting in hope for justice, those in the darkness of poverty, those who must walk for clean water. Lord, inspire us, and make us signs of your kingdom.</p> <p>We pray for those who live in fear and foreboding under the tyranny of modern-day Herods; for those who are weighed down with dissipation and the worries of this life. Give us the courage to support them through protest and prayer. Lord, inspire us, and make us signs of your kingdom.</p> <p>We pray for those who show where God is to be found: those who offer friendship at bus stops and in the playgrounds, in the counselling rooms and on telephone help lines, those who work to bring peace and restore hope. Lord, inspire us, and make us signs of your kingdom. Amen.</p>

Communion liturgy	
	<p>The Peace</p> <p>The peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you</p>
Chorus 1, Chorus 1,	<p>Hymn/song ATO# 311 – “Be still and know that I am your God” TIS #526 (AHB #451) - “Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us...”</p>
	<p>The Invitation</p> <p>Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another.</p> <p>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled. (Matt.5: 6)</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> Be present, risen Lord Jesus, as you were with your disciples, and make yourself known to us in the breaking of the bread; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.</p>
	<p>The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise</p>
	<p>It <u>is</u> indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God, for even when the whole earth is thrown into chaos your tenderness and lasting love are our sure hope.</p> <p>You created the heavens and the earth, and though even they will pass away, the words you have spoken to us are an everlasting covenant of promise.</p> <p>The words of your son, Jesus Christ, shook the earth and opened our eyes to your coming reign. He led us in the paths of your truth and taught us your ways of faithful love. He was crucified by the enemies of justice, but you raised him to new life</p>

	<p>and sent his Spirit to restore and strengthen our faith as the day of redemption draws near. Your promise will be fulfilled in coming days when Christ comes on the clouds to establish your reign of justice and righteousness forever.^{viii}</p>
	<p>And so, with all the company of heaven and earth we praise your holy name saying:</p> <p>Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</p>
	<p>Blessing the elements</p> <p>Blessed are you O God, and forever blessed are the people of this world since you chose to make your extravagant love so visible in Jesus and through all he said and did.</p> <p>That love was especially visible on the night when he washed his disciples' feet and sat down at a table to share the meal with them.</p> <p>On that night - the night of his betrayal – he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."</p> <p>In the same way he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for everyone. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."</p> <p>For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.</p> <p>Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, O God, and upon these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be for us the life of Christ and that we may make that life visible through serving as he served, and loving as he loved. This we pray in his name. Amen^{ix}</p>
	<p>THE LORD'S PRAYER</p> <p>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.</p>

	<p>*Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.</p>
	<p>THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD</p> <p><i>lift the bread and breaks it in full view of the people, saying:</i> The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.</p> <p><i>lift the cup in full view of the people, in saying:</i> The cup we take is a sharing in the blood of Christ.</p> <p><i>hold out the bread and the cup to the people and says:</i> The gifts of God for the people of God.</p>
	<p>LAMB OF GOD Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.</p> <p>Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.</p> <p>Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.</p>
	<p>THE COMMUNION</p> <p><i>If the people are to serve one another, say to all:</i> Receive this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.</p> <p><i>Words such as the following are said before or during the distribution.</i> The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.</p> <p>The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.</p> <p><i>Optional Lines</i> "Remember that you are God's beloved child." "Remember that for you Jesus came, for you Jesus died, for you Jesus rose and Jesus is in heaven praying for you." "May the Holy Spirit give you everything you need to follow Jesus." "Remember that you are God's beloved child and when God looks on you, God smiles." "May you always know how much Jesus loves you." "Jesus loves you too." "Jesus knows your name."</p>

	<p>Hymn/song PW 449 Make way TIS #268 (AHB #224) – “Joy to the world! the Lord is come</p>
	<p>We are sent out</p> <p>Loving God, as we end our time together and leave this place, let us go in hope, live by hope, and be signs of hope for all to see. In Jesus’ name. Amen.</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	<p>Benediction TIS #746 – “The heavens shall declare” Bullock May the peace- Getty</p>
	<p>Thank you</p>

ⁱ Emily Dickinson on <http://www.poemfarm.amylv.com/2016/11/birds-hope-and-way-to-give.html>

ⁱⁱ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

ⁱⁱⁱ Amy Ludwig van de Water on <http://www.poemfarm.amylv.com/2016/11/birds-hope-and-way-to-give.html>

^{iv} [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

^v [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

^{vi} <http://www.ba-bamail.com/content.aspx?emailid=7982>.

^{vii} <http://www.hereinreality.com/funnystuff/otherstuff/goodnews.html#XEtrE1xKjIU>.

^{viii} ©2000 Nathan Nettleton LaughingBird.net

^{ix} Moira Laidlaw (Adapted)