



WINTER GRACE

A COMMUNION SERVICE OF COMFORT AND HOPE

NOVEMBER 26, 2017

WINTER GRACE

THE SILENT MEDITATION UPON ENTERING THE SANCTUARY

*Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*

MATTHEW 11:28-30

Prelude

All Is Well
Christmas Reminiscence

arr. Mark Hayes
Phillip Keveren

Opening Scripture Philippians 4:6-7; John 14:26; Romans 8:26

Mr. Pendley

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

† Call to Worship

Psalm 121

Minister: I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

People: My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Minister: He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.

People: Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Minister: The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.

People: The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

Minister: The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life.

People: The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Minister: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

† The Invocation

God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves, and for our families and friends who live with the struggles of illness, setbacks, confusion, suffering, and the pain of loss. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of Christ, who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

Interlude *Children are dismissed to attend their classes.*

Prayers of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

The Call to Confession (minister only)

Our Heavenly Father, we come to You this day to confess our weaknesses regarding our relationship with You; places where our faith is under sharp attack: You know that we come to You with heavy hearts that we find hard to unburden. It is particularly in this time of year when the darkness of long nights collides with the brilliance of Christmas lights, that we find it hard to express our losses, our fears, our doubts and our struggles. We may be confused, sad, lonely, and feeling our losses without remembering that You are always there to support us. Father, forgive any bitterness or blame-shifting. Sometimes we feel cut off from You because we allow our many hurts to engulf us. We lack trust in You. Open us to the understanding that You are the source of all love, and we need not feel so alone in our grief. Grant us wisdom to know that You—most of all—can be trusted, and that You are with us, especially when we are at our absolute worst.

The Corporate Prayer of Confession

Minister: Lord Jesus, You heal the sick; have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Minister: Lord Jesus, You forgive sinners; have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Minister: Lord Jesus, You give Yourself to heal us and bring us strength;

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Assurance of God's Pardon Isaiah 61:1-3 (minister only)

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion — to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified

The Affirmation of Our Faith Romans 8:38-39 (in unison)

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Hymn No. 528

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

OLIVET

The Scripture Reading

Psalm 56

Page 604 in the Pew Bible

The Meditation

“Blessed Are Those Who Mourn”

Mr. Curles

The Individual's Silent Prayer for Healing

The Corporate Prayer for Healing (in unison)

Father, mend us and make us better than we could be without You. Take those things that are broken in our lives and visit us with Your healing. And help us to use the strength we receive in Your service, to Your glory!

The Litany of Healing

Minister: God the Father, Your will for Your people is life and salvation;

Response: We praise You and thank You, O Lord.

Minister: God the Son, You came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly;

Response: We praise You and thank You, O Lord.

Minister: God the Holy Spirit, You make our bodies the temple of Your presence;

Response: We praise You and thank You, O Lord.

Minister: Holy Trinity, one God, in You we live and move and have our being;

Response: We praise You and thank You, O Lord.

Minister: Lord, grant Your healing grace to all who are sick, injured, or disabled, that they may be made whole;

Response: Hear us, O Lord of life.

Minister: Grant to all who seek Your guidance, and to all who are lonely, anxious, or despondent, knowledge of Your will and an awareness of Your presence;

Response: Hear us, O Lord of life.

Minister: Mend broken relationships, and restore those in emotional distress to soundness of mind and serenity of spirit;

Response: Hear us, O Lord of life.

Minister: Bless physicians, nurses, and all others who minister to the suffering, granting them wisdom and skill, sympathy and patience;

Response: Hear us, O Lord of life.

Minister: Grant to the dying, peace and a holy death, and uphold by the grace and consolation of Your Holy Spirit those who are bereaved;

Response: Hear us, O Lord of life.

Minister: Restore to wholeness whatever is broken by human sin, in our lives, in our nation, and in the world;

Response: Hear us, O Lord of life.

Minister: You are the Lord who does wonders; with You all things are possible:

Response: You have declared Your power among the peoples.

Minister: With You, O Lord, is the well of life:

Response: And in Your light we see light.

Minister: Hear us, O Lord of life:

Response: Heal us, and make us whole.

The Lord's Supper

The Invitation to and Fencing of the Table

The Hymn of Preparation No. 498 *Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners!* HYFRYDOL
(stanzas 1, 3, and 5)

The Prayer of Humble Access

The Words of Institution

The Serving of the Meal

The Solo *Safe Within Your Arms* Mark Hayes
Angie Martin, *soprano*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

The Closing Prayer and Lord's Prayer (Inside front cover of the *Trinity Hymnal*)

Lord, we pray for all who have been in attendance this night, that they all may have the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit. And for all those who have prayed - those who have shown mercy — those who have lifted their hands to You in thanksgiving and in supplication — for all present here, O God, we give thanks and ask that You continue with them day by day. Indeed, O Lord, keep us all from all evil, preserve us in all goodness. Bless us so that we may indeed bless others in Your most Holy Name — we ask in the name of Christ Jesus — Who taught us to pray together as one family, saying...

✠ Jesus, Let Us Come to Know You

Jesus, Let us come to know You; Let us see You face to face.
Touch us, hold us, use us, mold us; Only let us live in You..

Jesus, draw us ever nearer; Hold us in Your loving arms.
Wrap us in Your gentle presence; When the end comes, bring us home.

† The Benediction of God's Grace and the Congregation's AMEN

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory forever and ever. **AMEN.**

The Ministry of Prayer
Immediately Following the Worship Service

An Invitation

It would be the distinct honor and privilege of our ministers and session to pray over you individually in a more private venue. If you so desire, you may come to one of the rooms listed below, and you will be greeted by one of our ordained staff as well as a few of our elder-shepherds. Special prayer and intercession will be made on your behalf.

James 5:13-16

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Locations

(1) The John M. Ward Session Room; (2) The Parlor; (3) The John Knox Room; and (4) The Westminster Room. Any of these rooms may be easily found and accessed as you exit the sanctuary through the door by the lectern. Other staff will be available to direct you as well.

Advent Prayer of Lament

Lord, we look with hope for the day
when there is no more grief,
no more sorrow, no more sin, no more death.
When you return, there will be no sickness,
no more weakness, no more anxiety,
no more failing strength,
but we will be made complete.
We will see You, and our souls will overflow
with joy, worship, and blessings.

Here, we see things darkly,
our hopes are obscured by the suffering that surrounds us
and by the sinful longings of our own hearts.

We prefer comfort to holiness
and our hopes are set on temporary material things,
rather than eternal promises.

Give us a hunger for heaven
by opening our eyes to how far we are from home.
Show us how unsatisfying this world is,
so we can find satisfaction in the Gospel
and cling to Christ alone. Amen.

MIKE COSPER



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