

Morning Prayer 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020

The Second Sunday of Advent

All Age Service with William Teale



Personal preparation before the service begins.  
Please take time to remember where you are,  
and why you are here.  
Give thanks and become still  
in the presence of God

Prelude: Comfort, comfort all my people  
<https://youtu.be/B8DXPAYWr-c>

Refrain

Comfort, comfort all my people  
with the comfort of my Word.  
Speak it tender to My people:  
all your sins are taken away.

1. Though your tears be rivers running,  
though your tears be an ocean full,  
though you cry with the hurt of living:  
comfort, comfort.  
Every valley shall be lifted,  
every mountain shall be low,  
every rough place will be smoother:  
comfort, comfort.

Refrain

Comfort, comfort all my people  
with the comfort of my Word.  
Speak it tender to My people:  
all your sins are taken away.

2. Though your eyes see only darkness,  
though your eyes can see no light,  
though your eyes see pain and sorrow:  
comfort, comfort.  
Every night will have its morning,

every pain will have an end,  
every burden will be lightened:  
comfort, comfort.

#### Refrain

Comfort, comfort all my people  
with the comfort of my Word.  
Speak it tender to My people:  
all your sins are taken away.

CCLI Song # 1271882  
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Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with us.  
This is the day that the Lord has made.  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

The second candle of the advent wreath

People of God: awake!  
The day is coming soon  
when you shall see God face to face.  
Remember the ways and the works of God.  
God calls you out of darkness  
to walk in the light of his coming.  
You are God's children.  
**Lord, make us one as we walk with Christ  
today and for ever.  
Amen.**

The candles take their places on the wreath.

<https://youtu.be/paAISGnlqFE>

1. Light one candle for hope,  
one bright candle for hope.

He brings hope to every heart.  
He comes! He comes!

2. Light one candle for peace,  
one bright candle for peace.  
He brings peace to every heart.  
He comes! He comes!

Words and music: Natalie Sleeth

Let us pray with words from Psalm 90

(A prayer of Moses the man of God.)

- 1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place  
**throughout all generations.**
- 2 Before the mountains were born  
**or you brought forth the whole world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**
- ...
- 4 A thousand years in your sight  
**are like a day that has just gone by,  
or like a watch in the night. ...**
- 10 Our days may come to seventy years,  
**or eighty, if our strength endures;**  
yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow,  
**for they quickly pass, and we fly away. ...**
- 12 Teach us to number our days,  
**that we may gain a heart of wisdom.**
- 13 Relent, Lord! How long will it be?  
**Have compassion on your servants.**
- 14 Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,  
**that we may sing for joy  
and be glad all our days.**
- 15 Make us glad for as many days as you have  
afflicted us,  
**for as many years as we have seen trouble.**
- 16 May your deeds be shown to your servants,  
**your splendor to their children.**
- 17 May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us;

**establish the work of our hands for us—  
yes, establish the work of our hands.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
**As it was in the beginning,  
is now and shall be for ever.**

The Collect for today, the Second Sunday of Advent

Almighty God,  
purify our hearts and minds,  
that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as  
judge and saviour  
we may be ready to receive him,  
who is our Lord and our God.  
**Amen.**

The reading is taken from Isaiah 40:1-11

Let us prepare ourselves for the word of God  
**Our hearts and our minds are open**

Comfort, comfort my people,  
says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and proclaim to her  
that her hard service has been completed,  
that her sin has been paid for,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling:  
"In the wilderness prepare  
the way for the Lord;  
make straight in the desert  
a highway for our God.  
Every valley shall be raised up,  
every mountain and hill made low;  
the rough ground shall become level,  
the rugged places a plain.  
And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,

and all people will see it together.  
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry out.”  
And I said, “What shall I cry?”

“All people are like grass,  
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the  
field.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.  
Surely the people are grass.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
but the word of our God endures forever.”

You who bring good news to Zion,  
go up on a high mountain.

You who bring good news to Jerusalem,  
lift up your voice with a shout,

lift it up, do not be afraid;  
say to the towns of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”

See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,  
and he rules with a mighty arm.

See, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense accompanies him.

He tends his flock like a shepherd:

He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart;  
he gently leads those that have young.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Homily / A thought for Sunday

What do you want to be when you grow up? Or for those of us who are already grown up, as a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? How many of you made it?

I wanted to score the winning goal in the FA cup final.  
For Arsenal. This didn't happen. My childhood hopes

and dreams fell short. But I did play a lot of football, and I did score a lot of goals. This gave me a great deal of enjoyment, enriched my friendships and ... even though I didn't make my dream come true, in a small way I followed it and made one or two steps of the way. And that was ok with me in the end.

This is a small and a silly example, but sometimes our dashed hopes are a lot harder to get over. Illness, death, relationships...

Together, we are a big pot of unfulfilled hopes and dreams. A great mass of falling short. In this respect, we are like Isiah's flowers of the field that wither and die. Our hopes fall short. But that's ok. We are not to be afraid of failure. Because God knows that our hopes are left largely unmet and somehow fills in the gaps. We are to hope in Him, and this hope can never fall short because his love for us is boundless and comes for us, however far is necessary.

So dream big in life. Carry high hopes, but know that it's ok to only get part of the way. Don't be downhearted if you always wanted to be an astronaut but never got the chance to step on the Moon.

Even if disappointment has made you who you are, your faith in God will also make you who you are. On the one hand your hopes may be just like grass dying in the field, but on the other, you are a lamb being held next to a shepherd's heart as it is carried over difficult ground.

So when you put your hope in God, He will take your dreams that fall short and somehow make up the difference. Here there is no „part of the way“. We take a foot on this path and He carries us the rest of the way.

Intercessions (by Iris)

Dear Lord,  
sometimes life feels like that old joke:  
If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.

We feel like grass: unimportant and fading.  
And we are –  
as long as we pursue our goals and strive to inflate our egos.  
Liberate us from those tendencies and help us listen to the shouting voice that brings the good news:  
“Here is your God!”  
Give us trust that you will fulfil your good plans with us.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Dear Lord,  
you say to prepare the way for you in the wilderness.  
That’s what we hope to do here in Freiburg in your ACF.  
When this feels like raising valleys and levelling mountains  
give us trust that we can move mountains if you only want us to.  
Be with us and let us feel your tender mighty arm  
when we meet in the council next Tuesday  
to prepare the interviews for the position of our new minister on the 14th.  
Give us wisdom and let us hear your voice.  
Be with everyone conducting the interviews and strengthen the applicants in this difficult situation.  
If it is your will give us a new minister soon  
who will together with us  
prepare the way for you here in Freiburg.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Dear Lord,  
how often do we suffer from the consequences of our wrongdoings:  
We destroy relationships,  
ruin our health,  
corrupt our communities,  
wreck our environment.  
Help us to claim ownership for our bad deeds, too.  
Let us make wholehearted amendments  
and heal whatever wounds we have caused.

Give us trust that you will lead us back to you.  
comfort us in dark hours and  
carry us close to your heart.

Let's pray together:

**Merciful Father,  
accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

In the language of our hearts, let us pray as our  
Saviour taught us .....

A sign of peace

God is love  
And those who live in love live in God  
And God lives in them.  
We meet in the name of Christ and share his peace.

Song: ACF 43 God has spoken  
<https://youtu.be/f4pdEzutj8>

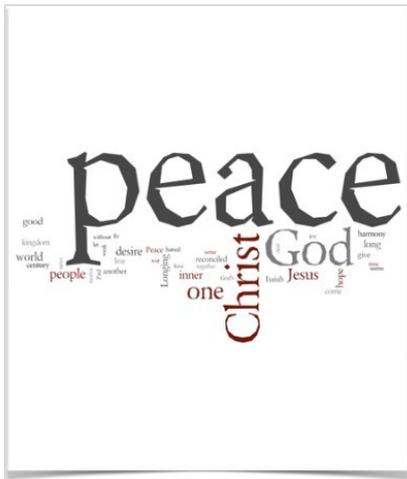
Refrain

God has spoken to His people,  
hallelujah!  
And His words are words of wisdom,  
hallelujah!

1. Open your ears, O Christian people,  
open your ears and hear good news.  
Open your hearts, O royal priesthood,  
God has come to you,  
God has come to you.

Refrain

God has spoken to His people,  
hallelujah!



And His words are words of wisdom,  
hallelujah!

2. They who have ears to hear His message,  
they who have ears, now let them hear;  
they who would learn the way of wisdom,  
let them hear God's Word,  
let them hear God's Word.

Refrain

God has spoken to His people,  
hallelujah!  
And His words are words of wisdom,  
hallelujah!

3. Israel comes to greet the Saviour,  
Judah is glad to see His day;  
from east to west the peoples travel:  
he will show the way,  
he will show the way.

Refrain

God has spoken to His people,  
hallelujah!  
And His words are words of wisdom,  
hallelujah!

CCLI Song # 5202393

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The Blessing

The Lord bless us and watch over us,  
the Lord make his face shine upon us  
and be gracious to us,  
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace;  
and the blessing  
of God Almighty, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be with us now and always.

**Amen.**

## The Conclusion

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life.

**Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

ACF 128 We are waiting to welcome Jesus  
<https://youtu.be/PI18G23u-t4>

### Refrain

We are waiting to welcome Jesus.

We are waiting to welcome Jesus.

We are waiting to welcome Jesus:  
only Jesus can set us free.

2. For in Jesus we have a new hope.  
For in Jesus we have a new hope.  
For in Jesus we have a new hope.  
Come, Lord Jesus, and set your people free.

### Refrain

We are waiting to welcome Jesus.

We are waiting to welcome Jesus.

We are waiting to welcome Jesus:  
only Jesus can set us free.

4. For in Jesus we have a new peace.  
For in Jesus we have a new peace.  
For in Jesus we have a new peace.  
Come, Lord Jesus, and set your people free.

### Refrain

We are waiting to welcome Jesus.

We are waiting to welcome Jesus.

We are waiting to welcome Jesus:  
only Jesus can set us free.