

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 64: 1–9

Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19

1 Corinthians 1:3–9

Mark 13:24–37

SELECTED READING AND THEME:

Mark 13:24–37 – Hope

CALL TO WORSHIP / ADVENT LITANY

You may choose to follow with your Advent wreath, candle lighting, and or Advent song

In the bright heat of summer,
we thirst for new life,
longing for hope with the Earth
as it cries out for water.

Jesus, we wait again for you,
for the birth of your hope in us,
as we look forward to the story
of your birth, your coming to Earth.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Spirit of hope, wait with us,
prepare our hearts to hope,
open our minds to hope,
inspire us with the hope you are.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We have fallen asleep.
We have not watched,
not paid attention – oh,
we waited, but we waited
for *you* to act rather than
acting with you in this time,
this place, in response to the needs
that will not, cannot, wait.
pause

Forgive us, please, each one
and together, for the ways
our inattentiveness has left
people, Creation, in need
that we might have eased.
silence

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Wake up! Listen!
God does forgive.
Wake up! Get up!
Live out that grace
by sharing grace
here, now, each day. Amen.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING

Holy One, we turn to you.
Thank you for hearing us
when we call,
thank you for giving us life.

Holy One, you shine
sacred brightness
and we are in awe!
thank you for giving us light!

DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT

There is a harshness in the Mark passage, which may not meet your community as they need to be met at this time. How can we hear the call to pay attention in a way that honours *both* the context in which Mark's gospel was composed and the context in which our congregations are situated?

We could tell a story. Tell a story of when your community has waited. What was needed of you in that waiting? Patience? Were there frustrations that tested that patience? Endurance? Did you have long to wait? Did all who were waiting stay the course? Was there temptation towards shortcuts? Did some fall asleep? Compassion? What was being left behind? How hard was change for you, individuals, collectively? What reminders did the community need? How did you call each other back to the goal, the shared commitment? What held you together in the waiting?

Perhaps the harsh tones in the passage in Mark linger from storytellers passionately calling their people to stay the course, to keep to the teaching of Jesus, when waiting for his return got harder. Early on, it seems that expectation was of an imminent return of the Jesus people had known themselves, or one generation before them. Our expectation has changed for when, what it might look like, and how we might wait for the arrival of Jesus – who comes to us every day in those hungry, those thirsty, those homeless ...

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Called to meet you in each other, we respond and give what we can.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let our waiting for you be active,
Jesus; let it be attentive, let it be
full of understanding that you come
every day, in people who need hope.
Bless what we give to meet
the needs of our world with your hope. Amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We wait for new life with you, God,
and we trust it unfolds in our midst.

We wait with those who are hungry:
children of war, poverty, drought, famine;
parents feeding their children first;
the Earth, its creatures, for we humans
have taken too much.

We wait for new life with you, God,
and we trust it unfolds in our midst.

We wait with the imprisoned:
those who committed crimes and those
who did not, in imperfect systems
of justice, sentencing, rehabilitation;
those isolated by illness, age, injury,
abuse, in homes more like jails.

We wait for new life with you, God,
and we trust it unfolds in our midst.

We wait with each other,
this community of faith-sharing life
in its sorrows and celebrations,
in our waiting and our enacting
of renewal, healing, welcome,
enacting the story of hope.

We wait for new life with you, God,
and we trust it unfolds in our midst.
Amen.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

Jesus calls us to wait
with attention and staying awake:
Christ will turn up any moment,
so be ready!

As you wait for the story
of Jesus' birth to be told again,
may you know God with you,
Holy One, Holy Hope. Amen.

HYMNS

Advent wreath/candle

Be still and know that I am God (adapted for Advent)

<http://lutheranmission.blogspot.com/2014/10/advent-song-for-candle-lighting-based.html>

Come we pray O God be with us
<https://brunswick.unitingchurch.org.au/worship/the-arts-in-worship/buc-song-project/>
Brunswick Uniting Church

Light one candle for hope
TiS.286

Isaiah 64: 1–9

Forgive us now
Keep Awake, Be Always Ready
Lord of creation to you be all praise
Tune In p. 20
NCH.112
TiS.626 AHB.557

Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19

Longing
O come, O come, Emmanuel
O shepherd of Israel, hear us
We cannot own the sunlit sky
Tune In p. 44 –
TiS.265 AHB.193
TiS.42
NCH.563

1 Corinthians 1:3–9

Come as you are
Come though long expected Jesus
Emmanuel carol
Faith, hope, and love
God has spoken
This, this is the God we adore
TiS.693
TiS.272 AHB.200
ATFG.514
ATOK.376
TiS.158
TiS.220 AHB.153

Mark 13:24–37

All earth is waiting
Angels from the realms of glory
Like a candle
NCH 121
TiS.309
DW. p. 144
ATFG.582