**Solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer for Advent 2020**

**Nov. 29, 2020 – First Sunday**

*“When your star rises deep within,
Trust yourself to its leading.
You will have the light for first steps.”*

(Sister Raphael Considine in her poem “[Trasna](https://jpbennett.tumblr.com/post/62495573715/trasna-by-raphael-considine-pbvm)”)

**CHECK-IN ()**

I’m WHO and I welcome you here on behalf of Solidarity with Sisters.

* We’ve appreciated the more contemplative experience of the past two Sundays as we have stepped back from using Chat during our prayer, from Settling In through the Closing Song. Thank you. We’re always delighted to chat in every form before and after our prayer time.
* **I will now mute everybody.** Unmute to speak.
* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?

**WELCOME ()**

Welcome, everyone!

* Thanks to Lynn Bufka and Norbert Bufka for preparing today’s communal prayer. As we wrote in the email for today, it may last a little longer than usual. And a quick reminder – we’re making plans and we’d be delighted to celebrate with you and your guests on Christmas Eve at 4 PM - and on the following Sunday, a simple service of music and reading and sharing.
* Thanks to Charlotte Cook for lighting her Advent candles today.
* Thanks to (I can’t remember who) for sharing their Advent tradition today.
* Thanks to Stu Sklamm, Linda Donaldson, Reggie Ott, and Pat and Greg Campbell for our music.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today: .

**SETTLING IN ()**

Notice your breath as we enter this contemplative space. We breathe with the intention of openness to the gift of Incarnation. Let’s start with a deep cleansing breath. Let your breath slow and ease. As you inhale, let the Spirit flow in. With each breath, let the Spirit settle in deeper as you exhale tensions from your body and distractions from your mind. (Pause.) And now let’s take 3 deep breaths. One to be here… one to be together….and one to create space for God.

Now we enter Advent together.

**OPENING AND LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH (Stu Sklamm and Linda Donaldson, and Charlotte Cook)**

Stu: You are Dawn, morning stars shall sing!

Linda or Reggie (and all, muted): Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Stu: You are Dawn, birds awake and sing!

Linda or Reggie (and all, muted): Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Stu: You are Dawn, rising sun shall sing!

Linda or Reggie (and all, muted): Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Stu: You are Dawn, Son of Justice sing!

Linda or Reggie (and all, muted): Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

*Next* ***Charlotte Cook*** *lights two Advent candles on Zoom. As she lights the candle, she says the following words – and everyone lights their own candle.*

**Charlotte Cook:** Please join us as in lighting your first Advent candle. (Light candle.) We pray:

God of light, be with us in darkness. Bring light into our world.

**Linda** (and all, muted): Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

**CALL TO WORSHIP ()**

Beloved Community, we come together in Advent because it is with each other that we are able to keep watch in the darkness… to prepare the way… to recognize the Spirit among us… and to announce the good news of Emmanuel, God with us. We come together to celebrate the great fact that God is in love with us. And so we pray: Emmanuel, God with us, we give you this next hour with confidence that you will act in us and through us. We believe that you will give us light for our next step. Amen.

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME ()**

….

Now Who will read from the xth chapter of Isaiah. Then Who will offer questions for our reflection, and you might stay with whatever question calls you.

**READING 1 – () (Betty:** Any slide? Where to start and stop?**)**

**IF you’ll be using slides, show where Betty should start and stop your images.**

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**   **()** (**Betty:** any slide here?)

**SILENCE** **(Betty:** Reflection slide, time, chime, stop slide**)**

**[Is an intro needed here]**  Now Who will read from the xxth chapter of the Gospel of Mark.

**READING 2 –**   **() (Betty:** Any slide? Where to start and stop?**)**

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**   **()** (**Betty:** any slide here?)

**SILENCE** **(Betty:** Reflection slide, time, chime, stop slide**)**

**READING 3 –**   **() (Betty:** Any slide? Where to start and stop?**)**

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**   **()** (**Betty:** Any slide here?)

**SILENCE** **(Betty:** Reflection slide, time, chime, stop slide**)**

**[Do we need a cue here or can it just flow?]** Now Who will lead us in sharing reflections.

**SHARING TIME ()**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you listened and as you reflected on these readings. To help everyone glimpse the many ways God is among us, we ask you to speak with some conciseness, and only once until everyone has had an opportunity. That helps us to glimpse the many ways God is among us. We welcome new voices, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening,

As you share your feelings, please use "I” or “me". And let's leave a bit of silence between speakers. A bridge of silence allows us to take in what was just said and gives others the chance to gather their feelings to share.

So let’s begin in silence as we gather our reflections. (Pause for 30 seconds.)

Now who would like to start our sharing? Remember to unmute yourself to speak and mute yourself again afterwards.

(Sharing)

Is there anyone else who would like to share? [Pause.]

And/or: 11:25 PM – I am sorry to say that we will have to bring our spoken sharing to an end. For those who would still like to share, jot down a word or phrase now so that, after our final blessing, you can add a thought in Chat for Betty to send out later.

Thank you.

Now Greg and Pat Campbell and Linda Donaldson will lead us in prayer.

**COMMUNITY PRAYERS (Linda Donaldson, Greg & Pat Campbell) (Betty:** Slide**)**

**Greg:** Let us pause and gather the prayers that are rising in us, as we wait on the Lord.

**Betty:** Start slide – art © Jan Richardson, used with permission.



**Linda:** Contemplative musical meditation: Wait on the Lord whose day is near. Wait on the Lord. Keep watch, take heart. (Repeat for about 45-50 seconds.)

 **(Betty:** Stop Slide 7.**)**

**Linda:** Now let us pray.

**Pat (sung):** Come quickly, Lord, in mercy, come.

**Greg:** God within us, keep us alert to notice and to nurture your presence in us and in our world. For this we pray. **Pat** (and all, muted): Come quickly, Lord, in mercy, come.

**Greg:** God among us, thank you for those who commit their lives topeople who are poor, marginalized, or unseen. May we stand with them in solidarity with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. For this we pray. **Pat** (and all, muted): Come quickly, Lord, in mercy, come.

**Greg:** God beyond us, shine in our darkness and make us your light. For this we pray.

**Pat** (and all, muted): Come quickly, Lord, in mercy, come.

**Greg:** For what else shall we pray? wait

(Shared prayers)

**Response to each (sung by Pat, and by all, muted):** Come quickly, Lord, in mercy come.

When prayers become less frequent – **Greg:** Would anyone else like to offer a prayer? [30 sec.]

**Greg:** Thank you. O God, we will do all we can to make our prayers real, and we entrust the outcome to you. Amen.

**OFFERTORY ()**

**Prayer Leader**: During the four weeks of Advent, we are inviting a different person each week to share their Advent tradition. Today Who will share his.

**Tradition sharer:** (1-2 minutes – the tradition and its value as I prepare for Christmas.)

**Prayer Leader:** Let us now take time to name for ourselves an action we will do this week in gratitude for all that we have received from God. [Pause.]

In thanksgiving for the presence and power of Jesus Christ, and in unity with the Holy Spirit, let us pray. God of abundance, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures so we that we may be a light and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION ()**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

to know that you trust us to be your body in this world.

We are part of that body as we let go of all that separates us from you,

and as we embrace one another and your entire creation with merciful love.

We give you thanks for your presence in us. [Pause.]

We remember the night before Jesus died.

At dinner with friends, Jesus knew all that would soon be asked of them,

and, loving them to the end, Jesus showed them how to care for each other

as they went out into the world.

First Jesus washed their feet.

Then he looked at what was in front of them, the bread and the cup,

gifts of the earth and work of human hands, and blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now into what is front and center in our lives

knowing that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it. [Pause.]

Let us invite God into ourselves so that we become God’s living presence. [Pause.]

Holy One, you transform us as you nourish us here.

May we nourish others with your presence.

Amen.

**OUR FATHER ()**

Now let us join our hearts as if we could join our hands to pray in harmony with Christians throughout the world in the words that Jesus gave us:

**All (muted):** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Your kingdom come. Your 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 do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING ()**

(Any source – e.g., Judy Sholes’ Advent prayers, sent out with the first Advent Traditions)

Amen.

**CLOSING SONG: (Reggie Ott)**

**Musician’s choice of song for Week 3 People, Look East (3 verses) – or – Let the Valleys Be Raised (2 or 3 verses).**

Verse 1: People, look east. The time is near

Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.

Verse 2:

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.

Verse 3:

Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.

Verse 4:

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

Verse 5:

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

**Let the Valleys Be Raised** by Dan Schutte

Let the valleys be raised, and the mountains made low,
Every meadow and field overturn.
Make the pathway straight; and the highway run smooth,
For the coming of God in our day.

1. God has come to the people,

As was promised of old.
He has raised up a Savior,
In the sight of us all.

1. You little child, go before him,
Like the prophets of old,
Bringing news of his coming,
By the mercy of God.
2. God has come like the morning,
On the darkness of night,
As a light to the people,
Like the breaking of day.

**RESOURCES:**