



ADVENT VESPERS

On these evenings of the Advent season we use Joyous Light Evening Prayer (Vespers). This service includes several places where we will pause for a meditative silence. There is no sermon; we use the silence as a time to reflect on the meaning of the reading.

Evening Prayer begins with the Service of Light. As the days approach their shortest at this time of year we express our thankfulness for light in this liturgy. We conclude with a sung litany - a prayer which is wide ranging in its subject matter.

Advent is the first season of the Church Year and is the time for preparation, not only for Christmas, but for the whole of the Church Year - indeed for the whole of the Christian life.

December 8, 2021
Accompanist

Wednesday of Advent
Diane Rauser

Joyous Light Evening Prayer

Stand as the candle enters and turn to face it.

(Silence for meditation follows each reading)

Luke 1: 57-59

Jay Miller

⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." ⁶¹They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." ⁶²Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. ⁶³He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹He has raised up a mighty savior for us

in the house of his servant David,
⁷⁰as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of
old,
⁷¹that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand
of all who hate us.
⁷²Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,
⁷³the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our
enemies,
might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
⁷⁸By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of
death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

ELW 256

"Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.

To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.

For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;
hills, bow down in humble favor.

Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.

Psalm 41

¹Happy are those who consider the poor;
the LORD delivers them in the day of trouble.
²**The LORD protects them and keeps them alive;
they are called happy in the land.
You do not give them up to the will of their enemies.**

³The LORD sustains them on their sickbed;
in their illness you heal all their infirmities.

⁴**As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me;
heal me, for I have sinned against you."**

⁵My enemies wonder in malice
when I will die, and my name perish.

⁶**And when they come to see me, they utter empty words,
while their hearts gather mischief;
when they go out, they tell it abroad.**

⁷All who hate me whisper together about me;
they imagine the worst for me.

⁸**They think that a deadly thing has fastened on me,
that I will not rise again from where I lie.**

⁹Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted,
who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me.

¹⁰**But you, O LORD, be gracious to me,
and raise me up, that I may repay them.**

¹¹By this I know that you are pleased with me;
because my enemy has not triumphed over me.

¹²**But you have upheld me because of my integrity,
and set me in your presence forever.**

¹³Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.

Amen and Amen.