

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva

English-Speaking Congregation
20, rue Verdaine CH1204 Geneva, Switzerland
Telephone / Fax: 022 310 50 89

Emails: pastor@genevalutheran.ch office@genevalutheran.ch www.genevalutheran.ch

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Willis Organist: Regine Kummer

Ministers of Music: Terry MacArthur, Koko Taylor

Third Sunday of Advent + 13 December 2020

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: *People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Macau*

Welcome

Prelude

Regine Kummer

Opening Words

When confinements cease and we can sing together again,
we'll think we're dreaming.

Our mouths will break forth in laughter, free of fear,
and shouts of joy will leap from tongues released.

The sowing in tears is all too present.

Nevertheless, we prepare garlands of light to lift our faint spirits,
and repair what has been devastated
to reap righteousness and praise.

Hymn

In Thee is gladness

German: Johann Lindemann. English Catherine Winkworth

Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi

1. In thee is glad - ness a - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus, sun - shine of my heart. By thee are
2. Je - sus is ours! We fear no pow - ers, not of earth or sin or death. He sees and
giv - en the gifts of heav - en, thou the true re - deem - er art. Our souls thou
bless - es in worst dis - tress - es; he can change them with a breath. Where - fore the
wak - est; our bonds thou break - est. Who trusts thee sure - ly has built se -
sto - ry tell of his glo - ry with heart and voic - es; all heaven re -
cure - ly and stands for - ev - er. Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are pin - ing to see thy
joic - es in him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for glad - ness, tri - umph o'er
shin - ing, dy - ing or liv - ing, to thee are cleav - ing; naught can us sev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!
sad - ness, love him and praise him and still shall raise him glad hymns for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Would you remind us again, God of light,
of the source for a smile,
of the assurance of your love,
even if we feel unbalanced,
of the possibility of the deeper gladness
even when the familiar rituals disappear into the isolated night?

Kyrie

Mabel Wu: Hong Kong



Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
Ky - rie e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son. Ky - rie e - le - i - son.

Melody, Mabel Wu © 1994 Taosheng Publishing House, Hong Kong.

If our hearts do not leap,
might you give us a drumming finger or a tapping toe to jiggle us away from a fixation on loss?
If we are much more gathering gloom than shining star,
might you surprise us with a jolt into the light?

Kyrie

Mabel Wu: Hong Kong



Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
Ky - rie e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son. Ky - rie e - le - i - son.

Melody, Mabel Wu © 1994 Taosheng Publishing House, Hong Kong.

We do not ask forgiveness when we don't feel like dancing.
But we confess too little attention to the Spirit you place within us,
the Spirit you place upon us.
Too often captive to our own needs,
we leave too many captives enslaved.
Too often blinded by our own broken hearts,
we miss the garland of gladness that might release others from their ashes.
Too often soured by anger,
we short-circuit the mourning that brings healing,
the acceptance of loss that releases the repair of the ruins,
the inner gratitude that celebrates the miracle of being alive.
Move in us, God of life,
so even that little something that just might be your spark of joy
gets planted in us,
brings forth shoots, and springs up,
so that we exult with our whole being the wonders of your love,
knowing we are a people whom you have blessed in Jesus Christ.
Amen

Kyrie

Mabel Wu: Hong Kong



Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
Ky - rie e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son. Ky - rie e - le - i - son.

Melody, Mabel Wu © 1994 Taosheng Publishing House, Hong Kong.

Words of Assurance

Hymn of Praise

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts

Sarin Sam. English S T Kimbrough Jr.

Sarin Sam: Cambodia

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts, the Guard - i - an of my life. Ho - ly,". The second staff continues the melody with lyrics: "ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts, the u - ni - verse sings your praise. O Cre - a - tor,". The third staff concludes the piece with lyrics: "who all things has made, you are wor - thy to be a - dored and praised." Chord symbols (C, Am, Em, Dm) are placed above the notes to indicate accompaniment.

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Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion-- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Response to the Word

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Response to the Word

Now we light the candle turning the Psalm into a prayer:

You have done great things for us, and we rejoice.

Epistle Reading

I Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Based on antiphons from Advent Vespers

based on 15th-century French processional

O, come, blest Day-spring, come and cheer our spir - its by your ad - vent here;
 dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night, and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 Re - joi - ce! Re - joi - ce! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Gospel Reading

John 1:6-8, 19-28

The Gospel according to John, chapter 1.

Glory to you, O Lord.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Gospel Acclamation

Re - joi - ce! Re - joi - ce! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Sermon

Andy Willis

Hymn

Joy to the world

Isaac Watts 1719: England

Lowell Mason (1792-1872): USA

1. Joy to the world the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive its King; let eve - ry
 2. Joy to the world the Sa - vior reigns! Let us our songs em - ploy, while fields and
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the ground; he comes to
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions prove the glo - ries

heart pre - pare him room and heaven and na - ture sing, and
 floods, rocks, hills and plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 make his bless - ings flow far as the curse - is found, far -
 of his right - eous - ness and won - ders of his love, and
 and heaven and na - ture

heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 won - ders of his love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

sing, and heaven and na - ture sing.

Apostles' Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven. He is seated at the right hand of the Father
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

Prayers of Intercession

God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The Passing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

Gathering of Gifts

Advent 3

music by Terry MacArthur

*O Come, blest Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

For the shadows put to flight,
for the song that infiltrates the gloomy clouds of night,
for the cheering spirits that override our fears,
we give you thanks, God restoring us, filling our mouths with healing laughter.

For the memories of love revealed,
for the stories that continue to amaze us, to free us,
for the cords that hold us together,
we exult in you, God of all, with tongues shouting, 'Joy to the world.'

For your Spirit upon us,
the Spirit of your Beloved, Jesus Christ,
with good news for the oppressed,
liberty for the captives,
release for the prisoner,
*we rejoice in you,
carrying the sheaves,
returning to the home where we dance in your presence,
forever, and even now.
Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.*

Sending Prayer

Benediction

Announcements

Closing Song

Awake! Awake

Marty Haugen: USA

4. Re - joi - ce, re - joi - ce, take heart in the night, though dark the win - ter and cheer - less,
the ris - ing sun shall crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry;
may God fill ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

* * *

Thank you to those assisting with leadership in today's worship service:

Readers: Jet den Hollander

Prayers: Suna family

Videography: Ray Woodcock

Flowers: German-Speaking Congregation

Singer: Rena Igarashi

Church School teachers: Ashley Seeber, Chad Rimmer, Natalie Rimmer, André du Plessis

Birthdays Ulema Frodeman, Elizabeth Wabuge, Susan Steinhagen, Nanah Naing'olah, Suzie Lyon, Grete Willis, Nancy Bazan, Emese Pósfay, Oliver Rosenbauer, Emilia Rosenbauer.

Anniversaries Portia & Glen Mpufane.

This Week's Schedule:*

Tuesday, 15 Dec.	12h00	Bible study
	19h00	Bible study
Thursday, 17 Dec.	12h00	Centering Prayer
Sunday, 20 Dec.	11h00	Worship on Fourth Sunday of Advent
<i>Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9h00–17h00; Fridays, noon–16h00</i>		

**(all activities take place online, unless otherwise noted)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: Online Annual Assembly at 13h00

Our annual year-end assembly will be held online today at 13h00, using the videoconferencing platform Zoom. In addition to voting on a budget for 2021 and appointing a new nominations committee, we will also hear an update from the personnel committee regarding the transition in our music ministry. Members should plan to attend!

Some important notes regarding the Assembly:

- The assembly materials are available to [read or download here](#).
- If you have not yet registered and are able to attend, please send an email to Andy Willis at pastor@genevalutheran.ch by 12h30 today so that he can send you the link to join the meeting.

Daily Advent Devotions

In addition to our Sunday worship services, daily video devotionals are being produced to help us pray through this season together. The devotions are led by various members of the community, and a new video will be uploaded to view on our website each day:

<https://genevalutheran.church/advent-daily-devotions/>

Christmas Worship Services

Christmas worship services will be online-only this year and will take place at the following times:

24 December, Christmas Eve: 17h00
25 December, Christmas Day: 11h00
27 December, First Sunday of Christmas: 11h00

All services will be broadcast on our [YouTube channel](#). In this year when our community is more scattered than gathered, we continue to trust in the promise that Christ comes to us wherever we are.

Sign Up to Read Lessons or Lead Prayers in Worship

Would you be willing to read scripture lessons or lead the prayers of intercession for an upcoming live-streamed worship service? These portions of the service are typically led by members recording themselves from home, and we are currently looking for volunteers for the months of January and February. You can sign up [using this form](#). Feel free to contact Elisabeth Benn or the church office with any questions.

Online Centering Prayer – Thursdays at 12h00

Centering Prayer is silent prayer for around 20 minutes, often done in a group setting. More details are [here](#). A group from our congregation meets to practice Centering Prayer every Thursday at 12h00 via Zoom. All are welcome—here's the link to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86798266012>

Online Coffee Hour

An online coffee hour is being held regularly after worship—it's a great opportunity to connect with one another, and all are welcome to participate. ***If you have not yet joined one of the online coffee hours and would like to be added to the list*** for future Sundays, please send an email to office@genevalutheran.ch and we will gladly add you to the list.

An Update from Our Treasurer

Dear brothers and sisters,

Greetings, we hope that you and your families are all doing well. As we go into the final month of the year (and get ready for the festive season), we wanted to give an update on our current financial situation. As of the 30th of November, we have managed to raise the amount of 289,735CHF. This means that during the month of December, we will need to raise 32,633CHF in order to reach our targeted budget amount and fully fund our ministry for 2020. This is a manageable goal, but we need your generous support to reach it. Please do remember the congregation in your year-end giving. We thank you for your continued and gracious giving throughout this challenging year.

*Thank you and God bless,
Samuel Mungure, Treasurer*

Details for making a year-end gift can be found on our website:

<https://genevalutheran.church/giving/>