

Worship on November 27, 2022 (CCLI: License Number #3156883)
(Welcoming Elder: Anne Neuman)

Sunday Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- BOP 119 Hope of a star (vs. 1) – lighting the HOPE candle
- Call to worship (Advent hand-out)
- Praise song – BOP 129 Prepare the way, O Zion
- Words of Assurance
- Time for our children and youth
- Praise song – BOP 307 God of the sparrow, God of the whale

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Matthew 24:36-44
- Sermon: Unexpected hope: Jesus
- Hymn – BOP 252 He is Lord
- Communion at the Lord's Table

We Respond

- Offering & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 109 All earth is waiting

We Serve

- Benediction

Welcome and Announcements

As we come into the presence of our God, let us open our hearts and minds,
and focus on our Lord and King.

Lighting up the Advent Candle Hope Is A Star (BOP#119)

Vs. 1: Hope is a star that shines in the night Leading us on till the morning is bright
When God is a child there's joy in our song The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong
And none shall be afraid

Responsive Call to Worship – hand out

Reader 1: We are people of hope.

Reader 2: God longs for a day when weapons will be replaced with tools for rebuilding.

People: We see your goodness and signs of new life all around us.

Reader 1: The first candle of Advent reminds us that we are called to live as people of hope.

Reader 2: We light this candle to remind us to see God's hope shining in our world.

Reader 1: Let us pray:

People: Holy One, help us to walk in the light of God. May our lives reflect the warmth and wonder of this flame. Make your church a place of hope in our community. Amen.

Praise song – BOP 129 Prepare the way, O Zion

<u>Vs. 1</u> Prepare the way, O Zion: your Christ is drawing near! Let every hill and valley a level way appear. Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story, Oh blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.	<u>Vs. 2</u> He brings God's rule, O Zion; Christ comes from heaven above. His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love. Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding. Oh blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.
<u>Vs. 3</u> Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Saviour's rule embrace, and tidings of salvation proclaim in every place. All lands will bow rejoicing adoration voicing. Oh blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.	

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Almighty and everlasting God, You hold all our days in your hands, and embrace us in your everlasting arms. In a tired and violent world, you are hope. In a hectic and busy world, you are peace. In a cold world, you are comfort. In Jesus Christ, you bring love into this world, and call us to embody his love in all we do and say. In our worship this day, we offer you our love and loyalty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Make us one in worship and service, so that the world will see your hope at work in us and through us, making all things new.

God of hope, we confess that we often prefer accepting half-truths and pleasing ideas, rather than your challenging word. We praise our own cleverness rather than your wisdom. We have exploited others for our benefit and used the earth without a thought for its wellbeing. In your mercy, forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct who we shall be through the mercy of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This time we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (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.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Receive the Good News in hope. With great mercy, God forgives what we have confessed and offers us new life in Christ. Trust in the hope that you are forgiven and that, with God, new things are possible.

May the peace of the Lord be with you. Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

Prayer for children and youth

God of love and grace, we thank you for your love for us and for our children and youth. Bless them with your love. Encourage them to open their hearts and minds. Let them ask questions. Let them have the truth. There are too many confusions and distractions to come to your presence. Among the chaos, be the centre and let your presence be standing up in their hearts, so they may build personal relationship with you. Capture their hearts and be their Lord. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Praise song – BOP 307 God of the sparrow, God of the whale

<u>Vs. 1</u> God of the sparrow God of the whale God of the swirling stars How does the creature say Awe How does the creature say Praise	<u>Vs. 2</u> God of the earthquake God of the storm God of the trumpet blast How does the creature cry Woe How does the creature cry Save
<u>Vs. 3</u> God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty grave How does the creature say Grace How does the creature say Thanks	<u>Vs. 4</u> God of the hungry God of the sick God of the prodigal How does the creature say Care How does the creature say Life
<u>Vs. 5</u> God of the neighbour God of the foe God of the pruning hook How does the creature say Love How does the creature say Peace	<u>Vs. 6</u> God of the ages God near at hand God of the loving heart How do your children say Joy How do your children say Home

Prayer for Illumination:

God of hope and healing, we turn to your Word to hear your will and your wisdom for our times. Open our hearts and minds by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit so that we might hear what you are saying to the church through Christ, your Living Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 24:36-44

36 'But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 37 For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, 39 and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. 41 Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. 42 Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. 43 But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour. **"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."**

SERMON: Unexpected hope: Jesus

Today's sermon title is **"Unexpected hope: Jesus"**

Jesus is our hope. God created us, but we sinned. We were separated from God. We were under the power of death. Jesus came. Jesus lived with us and for us. Jesus bore our sins and he died on the cross. He cleansed our sins and made us clean. Jesus removed the disconnectedness between

us and God. Jesus restored the broken relationship with God and he gave us life. Without Jesus, we would be under the wrath of God because of our sin. We did not do anything, but for our sake, Jesus came for us, and Jesus saved us. We cannot have any hope without Jesus. So, our lives are filled and overflowing with the love of Jesus.

When Jesus came to earth, no one expected that the King would come in the way he came. The coming of the Messiah, the Redeemer, was foretold, so there were people waiting for the coming of the King. But, not the way Jesus came.

Jesus, from birth, was not expected. Today's passage is talking about **Noah's Ark**. God told Noah to build a huge boat. In God's eyes, the sin of the people was too much to tolerate. They left God. God decided to start again. Noah and his family were the only righteous people on the whole earth. Therefore, God told Noah to build an ark. Some say that it took 120 days and others believe he had as many as 300 years. **Whether it's 120 days or 300 years, people had a chance to get to know what Noah was doing.** Noah's ark was not a secret. People made fun of Noah for obeying this ridiculous command to make an ark on the top of the mountain. No water was water around. **V38, "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark."**

This is **not referring to drunkenness or gluttony**. This means just **everyday meals**. And "marrying and giving in marriage" indicate that people presumed that there would be a future, assuming there was time for another generation to be born. Then, all this came crashing down upon them, and they were swept away.

Unexpected. Their expectation of future was different than God's plan.

In an unexpected way, Jesus came. In an unexpected time, Jesus will come again for us.

So, **we are living in between times**. Jesus was born in the past, and Jesus will come again in the future. **We are living in between Jesus' two comings.**

Advent is the season of preparing our hearts for the second coming of our King Jesus, as we remember the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the famous Bible stories of waiting is **the Parable of the Ten bridesmaids**. There were 10 bridesmaids. Each person was holding a lamp. Five were wise, but the other five were foolish. The foolish had their lamps, but no oil with them. The bridegroom was delayed. All ten of the bridesmaids became drowsy and slept. All of the sudden, someone shouted, **"Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!"** All of them got up and trimmed their lamps. But, wait, do all ten bridesmaids have all they need? No, Five of them did not have oil. So, the ones without oil asked the ones who have oil, **"Give me some of your oil, for our lamps are going out!"** But the wise bridesmaids answered, **"No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go and buy some for yourselves!"**

So, they left and went to buy some oil. When they came back, the bridegroom already came in and those who were ready already went with him into the wedding banquet.

The door was shut. They knocked, but they were rejected. This is the conclusion of this parable.

V13, "Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." (Matthew 25:13)

V36, in today's passage, **"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."**

Connection to the Noah's story and the story bridesmaids. They did not know the day and the hour. Noah's ark was unexpected. The time of the bridegroom's coming was unexpected. Likewise, the time of Jesus' coming is unexpected. But, the coming of Jesus brought us hope! Hope for future, hope for eternal life, hope for reconciliation with God, hope for tomorrow.

Then, how do we prepare our hearts with this unexpected hope, Jesus?

Today's passage states, **v42, "Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming."**

What does this mean to keep awake?

Christians have long debated **when and how this day of judgement will take place.**

A first line of thinking is this. This might be the most common. Jesus will return on any day. God's elect will be raptured. They will be lifted up in their physical bodies to the Lord while the sinful people are left behind to incur God's wrath. With this view, we must get ready for any given day, because these things may take place in our lifetime, unexpectedly.

A second line of thinking has seen the day of judgement not at the end of human history, but at the time of each individual's death. Each of us will stand before God's judgement seat as soon as we die. We will have to give an accounting of our life and be weighed in the Lord's balance. There is a clear lesson. We dare not put off doing what Jesus has commanded. None of us can know when death will overtake us, and then it will be too late. So, before it's too late, we need to prepare the Lord's coming.

Lastly, a third understanding of this passage emphasizes the symbolic character of Jesus' language. The point is not to speculate about a day of judgement sometime in the future, whether at the end of all humanity or at the death of each individual, but rather to confront us with God's radical claims on us here and now. Each day is a day of judgement. Each day is a day of the Lord's coming. Every night, when going to bed, I look back of the day asking myself. **"Did I live in the way of Christ?" "Did I trust in him alone?" "Have I allowed myself to be distracted by selfish desires?"**

We might think that we should choose one view. But, we cannot be sure any of these. What we know for sure is this. Jesus came 2000 years ago and he will return for us. We live between the times. To live between the times is, above all, to trust and hope that God has begun and will continue, to transform us more and more into the stature of Christ, in whom all of God's mercy and lovingkindness becomes manifest. Therefore, in Advent, the Sunday of Hope, we remember the coming of Jesus. He promised to return for us.

If he comes tonight, or if he comes now as we are gathered to worship him, what would he say to us? Is he going to be proud of us? Do we have the desire of making our loved one proud?

I do. I want my boys to be proud of their dad. In the same way, I want my God my Lord, Jesus Christ, to be proud of my life. No one know when Jesus would come back. Keep awake and be ready to welcome Jesus as we remind ourselves with the unexpected coming of Jesus in 2000 years ago. We wait for Christmas not because of family gatherings and presents, but we are waiting for the most precious present from God, Jesus Christ. Jesus came to us to be with us. That's Emmanuel, God with us. Have Jesus Christ in your hearts and hope for the coming of Jesus Christ.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Praise song: BOP 252 He is Lord

**He is Lord He is Lord He is risen from the dead And He is Lord
Every knee shall bow Every tongue confess That Jesus Christ is Lord**

Communion At The Lord's Table This is the time for the Communion at the Lord's Table. Through the words of God's prophets, God gave us hope by promising us the Redeemer. And now we rejoice that in God's Son, Jesus Christ, the Saviour has come and will come again in power and glory making all things new.

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say **BOLD** print together)*

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: Blessed are you, gracious God, Creator of light, Giver of life, Source of love. You guide the sun, cradle the moon, and toss the stars. At your word, the earth was spun on its course among the planets. You breathed life into humankind and set us among all your creatures, in a covenant of love and service. Even when we turned away from you, you did not forsake us. You sent your prophets to call us back to you. We give you thanks for your unending mercy to each and to all, **as we join the song of creation to give you praise:**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: Mighty and tender God, In Jesus of Nazareth, you revealed your light, your life, and your love in words that confront and comfort us, in compassion that heals and frees us, in hope that challenges and changes us. We gather at this table to give thanks for his gifts to us. As we take the bread and cup at the table he prepares for us, fill us with such longing for your kingdom that our worship leads us to witness to his love through our lives. As we come to your table with our whole hearts, **we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Now send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine, O God, that all who share this loaf and cup may be united with Christ and in Christ. So let us shine the light of your hope into the world you love. Through Christ, by Christ, with Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory is yours, O God and Father Almighty.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE – prepare your Bread and Wine

“This is the **body** of Christ, broken for you.” (BREAD)

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us take it)

“This is the **blood** of Christ, poured out for you.” (CUP)

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

God the Father, almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, we thank you for your love sending your one and only Son Jesus Christ. We celebrate your love for us. We give thanks to you and we praise you for your sacrifice to give us hope and life. Thank you.

God the Son, Jesus Christ, we praise you for your humble heart. You shrank yourself and dressed yourself with mere human body to be one of us, so we can hear you. Also, you bore all our sin and died for us to reconnect our brokenness with God the Father.

God the Holy Spirit, we thank you for being with us with intimate fellowship within us. From each of our heart, you speak your wisdom and you guide our steps. Help us listen to your small whispering voice in our daily lives.

As we come and worship you on this Advent season, we celebrate your coming to us. Emmanuel. God with us. Holy God is with sinful us? It's easy to say it. And it's just one of your many names. But, what was the price for you to be with us! It was the precious blood of your own Son. God, thank you for your love. As we celebrate Christmas, fill our hearts with your unfathomable love and help us spread out your love through our lives.

God of hope and healing, we gather at your table to remember Christ's life and death, to proclaim his resurrection, and to await his coming again.

We remember those who do not feast in joy today. We pray for all who are in sorrow, loneliness or pain. We pray for all who live in fear or hunger or poverty. We pray for nations that struggle for peace and justice and we pray for world leaders facing the challenges of this present time. Inspire in them the hope we know in Christ Jesus.

Be with Israel. After Jerusalem bombing, embrace your people with encouragement and peace and hope. Embrace the people of Iran and Ukraine. God, Emmanuel, be with them. Take care of them.

We also pray for our congregants. We pray for the Crakes. Be with the family. Give peace upon them. Fill their hearts with hope.

There are people who are going through difficult times. You know them. Speak to them your love and embrace them with your warm heart.

God of hope, as we remember your love, fill us with the hope. Come into our hearts Lord and be our Master and King. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. This Sunday we celebrate the Advent of Hope, coming to us in Jesus Christ. Think of your gifts as seeds of that hope which we can plant in the world God loves for Christ's sake. Let us pray for our offering.

Offering prayer:

God, our hope and our help, receive our gifts as seeds of gratitude for your gift to us in Christ Jesus. Bless these seeds with growth so that hope will sprout in people who struggle with despair, and places trying to rebuild after devastating loss. Be their hope and their help, through Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey BOP 109 All earth is waiting

Vs. 1	Vs. 2
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All earth is waiting to see the Promised One And open furrows await the seed of God All the world bound and struggling Seeks true liberty It cried out for justice and searches for the truth	Thus says the prophet to those of Israel “A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel,” One whose name is “God-with-us” our Saviour shall be With him hope will blossom once more within our hearts
Vs.3 Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain Open new highways New highways for the Lord He is now coming closer So come all and see And open the doorways as wide as wide can be	Vs. 4 In lowly stable the Promised One appeared Yet feel his presence throughout the earth today For he lives in all Christians and is with us now Again with his coming he brings us liberty

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Christ will come again as he came to us in 2000 years ago. He is life and he gives us life. He will come to us in unexpected ways. So, keep awake so you will be able to sense God’s presence. Fill your hearts with hope for Jesus.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.