



World AIDS Day Service

Greeting

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise. Come, Emmanuel, come. A righteous Branch shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. Come, Emmanuel, come. My people will be saved and they will live in safety. Come, Emmanuel, come. Fulfill your promise.—adapted from Jeremiah 33:14-16

We Respond with Praise

Songs

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” CH 244, PH 1, PsH 329, SFL 122

“Open Our Eyes” SNC 263

Opening Litany

We gather in the name of the crucified and risen Christ
over whom death had no power and through whom
there is life eternal.

We gather as a caring community
a community of faith and hope united by God’s love.

God calls to us
to care for one another, to be compassionate and merciful.

We are the creation of one Creator God.

The child who cries is every child.

The woman weakened and tired is every mother, wife, sister,
daughter.

The man is every father, husband, son, and brother.

AIDS leaves gaping wounds in the lives of those who have
lost the ones they love the most.

God gives us the strength and courage to be present in
the midst of loss.

Across the infinity of space and time a common heart beats
in every breast.

Bearing each other’s pain and clinging to hope, we come
to a deeper understanding of our common humanity.

We are a family of nations, and each of us is created in the
image of God.

AIDS is a worldwide crisis in the midst of which there
is no “we” and “they.”

We confess that we are all affected;
when one of God’s creation suffers, we all suffer.

When our sons and daughters are touched,
we remember Mary’s agony over the suffering and death

of her beloved child.

We know Jesus identifies with all who suffer;
through him come healing and wholeness.

Come, Emmanuel, come. Fulfill your promises through us.

We Respond with Praise

Songs

- “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” CH 245, PH 9, PsH 328, SWM 81, SFL 123, TH 194, WR 154
- “Whatsoever You Do Unto the Least” PsH 210
- “Lord, Make Us Servants” SNC 204
- “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” SNC 77, SWM 207, WR 248

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,

We confess to you that we are trapped by sin and cannot free ourselves.

We have failed to love one another.

We have failed to love those living with HIV or AIDS.

We have failed to keep our promises to you.

Forgive us and fill us with your love.

Fill us with your Spirit so that our world will know your redemption draws near through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sung Response

- “Lord, My Petition Heed” PsH 86
- “Hear Our Prayer, O Lord” CH 641, PsH 624, TH 728
- “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” PsH 625, SWM 170, SFL 54, WR 489

Words of Forgiveness

God’s promise is not empty. God reaches toward the longing heart with redemption. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, came to save sinners. In him we are given new life, filled up, overflowing, free. Heaven and earth will pass away, but his words will not pass away. We have God’s promise. He will lead us to life everlasting. Amen.

God Speaks Through His Word

Suggested Scripture Passages

- Psalm 18: God delivered me when I cried.
- Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16: God is our refuge.
- Psalm 103:3: God forgives all sin and heals all diseases.
- Psalm 72: The righteous will flourish, the poor and needy will be protected.
- Isaiah 1:17: Learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.
- Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:5-13; Matthew 4:12-23: Light in the darkness; Christ’s healing power.
- Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11: Bind up the broken-hearted.
- Micah 6:8: Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God.

- Matthew 6:25-34: Strive first for the kingdom of God.
- Matthew 9:9-12, 18-26: Jesus and sinners; healing miracles.
- Matthew 9:35-10:8: Jesus' compassion; command to heal lepers.
- Matthew 10:7-8: Preach the kingdom; heal the sick; freely you have received.
- Mark 2:17: Jesus came for the sick, not the healthy.
- Luke 9:2: Preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick.
- John 10:1-10: "I have come that they may have life. . . ."
- Romans 8:12-25: The suffering of creation.
- James 1:27: The religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress. We Respond with Devotion

Songs

- "What Does the Lord Require" PH 405, PsH 293, WR 686
- "Go to the World" SNC 294, WR 553
- "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" SNC 545, WR 587

Closing

To touch, bathe, feed, or clothe a person who is ill is to do this to Christ Jesus. Today we are called to be joyful, thankful people upheld by God's goodness and grace, and reaching out in God's love. In thankfulness we commit ourselves to be a nurturing community that seeks justice. We commit to God and to one another to support, encourage, and pray for persons whose lives have been touched by HIV and AIDS. We will oppose all forms of discrimination against persons with HIV and AIDS. We will support the right of all persons with HIV and AIDS to housing, employment, services, transportation, accommodations, and health care. We will care for one another and love one another. We will be Christ's presence in each other's lives. We will be witnesses to God's unconditional love.

Blessing and Dismissal

Songs

- "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love" PH 367, PsH 601, SWM 249, SFL 251, WR 273
- "May the God of Hope Go with Us" SNC 282, SFL 82

Continuing the Theme Through Advent

For the second Sunday in Advent, the theme might be connected to preparing the way of the Lord in the face of AIDS. What practical things might your congregation do to receive the coming Christ? How might this manifest itself in the midst of the AIDS pandemic?

For the third Sunday in Advent, we might ask what kind of repentance John the Baptist would call us to. So often persons with HIV are told that they need to repent for their sins, but would John the Baptist also have messages for drug companies, for government and church leaders, for ordinary

Christians trying to live faithful lives? Consider an offering of postcards or letters to those in positions of authority. Bring John the Baptist's voice to those who do not follow through on the promises made.

On the fourth Sunday in Advent, with the greeting of pregnant Mary and Elizabeth fresh in our minds, wrestle with how local churches can help prevent HIV positive mothers from transmitting the virus to their unborn children. Scientists have found the way to block transmission; we need to ensure that all women have knowledge of and access to this treatment.