



"From Generation to Generation"

Week 2, December 4, 2022: "God Meets Us in Our Fear"

Gathering Music

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Worship Leader: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, "What are you afraid of?" From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

Teenager: Not being enough.

Adult: Not making enough of a difference.

Child: Falling down.

Older Adult: That we will forget we belong to one another.

Teenager: Climate change.

Adult: My child having to learn gun violence drills at school.

Child: Spiders.

Older Adult: Not having someone to take care of me; not having someone who knows my stories.

Teenager: My mental health slipping.

Adult: Ending up alone.

Child: Nightmares.

Older Adult: Stopping short of following God all the way.

Teenager: Today we light the candle of peace, because we so desperately need God's peace in the midst of all we fear.

Another worship leader or reader lights the candle.

Teenager: May this light be a reminder that Christ is coming. God was with generations before, God is with us today, and God will be with us tomorrow. Even now, God is on the way. Amen.

Advent Hymn

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Chorus

Hail to the Lord's anointed
Great David's greater Son
Hail in the time appointed
His reign on earth begun

Verse 2

He comes with comfort speedy
To those who suffer wrong
To help the poor and needy
And bid the weak be strong

Verse 1

He comes to break oppression
To set the captive free
To take away transgression
And rule in equity (C)

Verse 3

To give them songs for sighing
Their darkness turn to light
Whose souls condemned and dying
Are precious in His sight (C)

Verse 4
He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth
Love joy and hope like flowers
Spring in His path to birth

Verse 5
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove
His Name shall stand forever
That Name to us is Love (C)

CCLI Song # 7013163
James Montgomery | Sandra McCracken
© Words: Public Domain
Music: 2012, 2015 Integrity Worship Music (Admin. by Integrity Music)
Paper News Publishing (Admin. by Integrity Music)
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI License # 944110

Call to Confession/Prayer of Confession/Words of Forgiveness

call to confession

Fear can be a good thing. It can help us be attentive while driving down the highway. It can alert us to possible accidents. It can motivate us to do our best.

However, fear can also be harmful. For so many of us, fear of the other, fear of failure, or fear of the unknown has led us to make sinful choices in our lives—choices such as building walls or tearing others down.

Today, in confession, we ask for mercy and pray for guidance. As we confess, we come before an entirely merciful and loving God who says to us, “Do not be afraid.” Let us pray:

prayer of confession

Patient God, you know just how often we make decisions from a place of fear rather than love. You know just how often we allow fear to take the place of logic, fanning unhealthy fires in our lives. You know just how often we tuck your words, “Do not be afraid” on dusty shelves and in the back of closets, stubbornly holding onto our own point of view. Forgive us for giving fear the microphone. Silence the voices of scarcity, shame, and rejection, which spark and feed so much of our fear, to recenter us in love. With hope we pray, amen.

words of forgiveness

Family of faith, even when we forget God’s words, God does not forget us. Even when we lose our way, God does not lose us. Even when we fall short or make mistakes, God forgives and holds onto us.

Children’s Time

Scripture Lesson

Luke 1: 26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ And Gabriel came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! God is with you.” ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by these words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can

this be, since I am a virgin?”³⁵ The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.”³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Advent Hymn Here I Am *Text: Anna Stickland, 2021 | Music: Traditional French Carol (17th Cent.)*

1 Angel Gabriel came to Mary
In the hills of Galilee
Apprehension and confusion
Filled her, wonder’ing what’s to be
“Do not be afraid,” the angel told the maid
“God has rightly favored thee”

2 Though his words were filled with glory
Still the message brought great fear
“Who Am I to bear the savior
With the pathway so unclear?”
“Here I am” she pledged; the angel Gabriel fled
Quickly as he had appeared

4 Whether we may feel we’re ready
For the task before us laid
God will strengthen and uphold us
Even when the fear won’t fade
We say “Here I am” to God’s transcendent plan
Trusting God to lend us aid

Sermon “From Generation to Generation: God Meets Us in Our Fear”
Pastor Jo Ellen Axthelm

Response to the Word, Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a God who knows our fears.

We believe in a God who says, “Be not afraid.”

We believe in a God who kicks off her shoes and wades into the muck of our lives with us.

We believe in a God who stitches herself to our heels, and invites us to dance.

We believe in a God who hemmed stars into the night sky so that we can find our way home, and who sends us friends with open doors, so we can find our way to love.

We believe in a God who finds us in our fear and does not leave us alone.

Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Prayer Hymn

Verse 1
A family hiding from the storm
Found no place at the keeper's door
It was for this a child was born
To save a world so cold and hollow

Make Room

Verse 2
A sleeping town they did not know
That lying in a manger low
A Savior king who had no home
Has come to heal our sorrows

Chorus 1

Is there room in your heart
Is there room in your heart
Is there room in your heart
For God to write His story

Verse 3

Shepherds counting sheep at night
Do not fear the glory light
You are precious in His sight
God has come to raise the lowly

Chorus 2

You can come as you are
It may set you apart
When you make room in your heart
And trade your dreams for His glory
Make room in your heart
Make room in your heart

Verse 4

A mother holds the promise tight
Every wrong will be made right
The road is straight the burden's light
For in His hands He holds tomorrow

CCLI Song # 7101018
Mark Hall | Matt Maher
© 2017 Be Essential Songs (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC)
I Am A Pilgrim Songs (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC)
My Refuge Music (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC)
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI License # 944110

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Offering

Offertory

Light of the World

Avery Rodocker

*Doxology

*Prayer of Dedication

God of Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow having blessed us with time, talent, and treasure, we in turn are to bless others in our stewardship of all you entrust to us. Receive the financial offerings we make and put them to good use. Amen.

Advent Hymn

Glory (Let There be Peace)

1 One star
Burns in the darkness
Shines with the promise Emmanuel
One child
Born in the stillness
Living within us Emmanuel

Chorus
We're singing Glory Glory
Let there be peace let there be peace
Singing Glory Glory
Let there be peace let it start in me

2 One voice
Speaks for the voiceless
Hope for the hopeless Emmanuel
One love
Brings us together
Now and forever Emmanuel

Bridge
Do not be afraid
God's love is strong enough to save us
Nothing stands in the way
God's love is strong enough to lead us

Ending

Let there be peace let it start in me

CCLI Song # 7071972

Chris Stevens | Matt Maher | Rachel Taylor Popadic

© Meaux Mercy (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

Moody Producer Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

Be Essential Songs (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC)

I Am A Pilgrim Songs (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC)

Rachel Taylor Music (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC)

For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

CCLI License # 944110

Benediction

Passing of the Peace