

ADVENT EVENING PRAYER 2021: **DECEMBER 2, 2021**
ADVENT I + Destination: Joy + Choosing Direction

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord.

For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

REFLECTION

1. *Is there a place that keeps you from being present here?*
 - a. *Maybe it is somewhere behind you that you need to let go of?*
 - b. *Maybe it is somewhere you hope to be in the future?*
2. *How will you establish yourself here, wherever you are now, for your own good?*
3. *How will you seek the welfare of others in this place?*

SOLO

PRAYER STATION and CANDLE-LIGHTING

The rock represents where your heart or mind is lingering, or is hoping for, but where you cannot be right now. Pick up a rock and say a prayer of release as you let go of the rock, laying it down for God to carry.

The ribbon represents your commitment to where you are now - to this place; this community. Pick up a ribbon and tie it to the wreath as a declaration of joy! A decision that you will build your life here, seeking the welfare of this city, the neighborhood where you live; the people who are with you here.

Then, light a candle. Kneel or bow before God with your prayer and your intentions: with your heart ready to heal, your mind ready to put down roots, your spirit resolved to find joy!

PRAYER

Gathering our many prayers into one, let us pray together.

**Settle our hearts, O God,
to prepare a pathway for your Christ.
By his coming speak peace to your people
and turn out hearts toward you,
that your steadfast love and faithfulness
may bring joy to all the earth.
Amen.**

The light shines in the darkness.

And the darkness has not overcome it.

Continue worship with The Annunciation on page 8 of the songbook.

Prayer adapted from Holden Prayer Around the Cross: Handbook to the Liturgy, In Silence We Wait. Prayer for Advent, p.66.