

ADVENT EVENING PRAYER 2021: **DECEMBER 16**

ADVENT III + *Destination: Joy* + *Rest Stops On the Way*

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 55: 1-13

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;

let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

SOLO

During SOLO: REFLECTION and INSTRUCTION

1. *What feels “messy” in your life? In our world right now?*
2. *How does God give you resiliency? What do you need on the way?*
3. *What brings you joy?*

After SOLO: PRAYER STATION and CANDLE-LIGHTING

Like the soil, life can be messy, but we pull from it what we need to grow, like nutrients feeding a seed. A seed in the richest soil cannot grow without water. God’s love and vision “waters” us, bringing forth resiliency and sprouting joy, allowing us to see with new eyes how something alive and totally different can come out of our messy circumstances and experiences. Everything accomplishes that for which God purposes.

Pick up a seed. Plant it or drop it in the bowl of soil. Sprinkle water on it, remembering that the messy stuff of our lives is what God uses to grow us into something new to fulfill God's purposes.

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.**

HOLY WATER

Christians believe water used at our baptism is of the Holy Spirit. All water is holy as it gives life from the heavens.

Receive the waters sprinkled upon you tonight as a blessing of all you are today and all you will become!

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.