



"Spark of Divinity" by Hannah Garrity.

Christ Church **UNITED CHURCH**
OF CHRIST

Rev. Dan Stark, Pastor
Organist, Matthew Lawrenz
Pam Kothrade, Song Leader

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November 29^h, 2020

Today marks the beginning of our Advent season and our new sermon series, *Those Who Dream*. The 126th Psalm tells us, "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream..." What does it mean to live as those who dream? In the Bible the prophets, psalmists, and the whole ensemble of characters in the Christmas story were dreamers. They received dreams. They discovered dreams. They responded to God's dreams for the world. They invite us to dream. This year hasn't been easy...Many of our dreams have been shattered or scattered. This Advent season we are invited to journey with the biblical dreamers, even as we dream of a better tomorrow. This day we focus on the theme of hope. Those who dream...keep awake.

**Please recite the purple words aloud.*

Prelude

Lo How a Rose Er Blooming

arr. Joel Raney

Words of Welcome

Opening Song

Awake, Awake, And Greet the New Dawn

**Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! The Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heavenly door and lives now inside us forever.**

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a singing,
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing,
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving kindness,
the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;
may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.**

Opening Litany

One: The power of dreams lies in waking up.

For when we close our eyes,

All: We can see a better world.

One: When we close our eyes,

All: We can dream a better dream.

One: But when we open our eyes,

All: We begin the work of faith.

One: The power of worship is the same.

When we enter this space,

All: We can see a better world.

One: When we enter this space,

All: We dream a better dream.

One: But when we leave this space,

All: We begin the work of faith.

One: So come in. Dream your dream.

All: Find hope here.

One: For in an hour,

All: We will begin the work of faith.

One: Let it be so.



*“Tear Open the Heavens”
by Lauren Wright Pittman.*

Candle Lighting Song

Lead Us To Your Light

Carol Browning

Lead us to your light, lead us out of darkness.

Lead us to your light. Come, Jesus, come. (repeat)

(solo on verse)

Lead us to your light, lead us out of darkness.

Lead us to your light. Come, Jesus, come.

One: May this light be an invitation to keep awake. May this light be our invitation to be Advent people – people who dream. Amen.

[Those Who Dream Music Video](#)

Opening Prayer

O Great Dreamer,

You dreamed up the stars in the sky.

You dreamed up that magic baby smell and the way cream sinks into coffee.

You dreamed up the crunch of fall leaves and jazz music.

You dreamed up wisteria and evergreen and the pure magic that is a six-foot-tall sunflower.

And in the midst of all of that, you dreamed up a dream for your people – a dream of hope and justice, a dream for eyes wide open, to both the world’s suffering and the world’s beauty.

So today, as we read scripture, we ask that you would plant that same dream in us. Pour out your Spirit on our hearts and minds so that we may see what you see, and dream what you dream.

Gratefully we pray, amen.

The Gloria

**Glory be to the Christ-Child,
God’s strength made weak, has come to light our way.
As the Firstborn of Creation, the Alpha and Omega, wonderful birth,
God has come to earth.**

Lyrics. Jacqueline A. Burnette

Old Testament

[Isaiah 64:1-7\(ICB\)](#)

Isaiah is the longest and arguably the most important of the prophetic books. It covers Israel’s history before, during, and after the exile. Isaiah offers the full range of God’s prophetic message – from words of judgment to words of promise. Isaiah portrays God as a mighty creator and the gentlest comforter. Isaiah is quoted more in the New Testament than any other prophet in the Hebrew Scriptures.

“Tear open the skies and come down to earth. The mountains would tremble before you. Be like a fire that burns twigs. Be like a fire that makes water boil. Do this so that your enemies will know who you are. Then all nations will shake with fear when they see you. You have done amazing things that we did not expect. You came down, and the mountains trembled before you. From long ago no one has ever heard of a God like you. No one has ever seen a God besides you. You help the people who trust you. You help those who enjoy doing good. You help those who remember how you want them to live. But you were angry because we sinned. For a long time we disobeyed. How will we be saved? All of us are dirty with sin. All the right things we have done are like filthy pieces of cloth. All of us are like dead leaves. Like the wind our sins have carried us away. No one worships you. No one even asks you to help us. So you have turned away from us. And we are destroyed because of our sins.” – Isaiah 64:1-7

Poetry Prayer

Sarah Are

They say you will come like a “thief in the night,”
The hour unclear, the day easily feared.
But I toss these words over the edge of my tongue,
And they don’t taste right.

A thief is one that I lock out.
A thief is the one that I fear.
So I ask myself –
Did I downgrade you to no more than a thief, Great Builder?
Did you form me from the dust,

Breathe life into my bones,
And paint the horizon into the sky, all
for me?
And was all of that fine,
Until you asked me to love my neighbor
as myself?
Was all of that fine,
Until you said, "Dream, don't sleep"?
Was all of that fine,
Until you asked me to wake up to the
suffering in the streets?
Did I imprison you to the role of the
thief

To keep you from getting too close?
Forgive me, Great Builder.
Tear down the door to my house.
Crawl through the window.
Slip through the attic fan.
Dance in the security light.
Scream through the letterbox until I
hear you again.
For this house is your house.
You built it.
You belong here.
I am begging you,
Break back in.

New Testament

[Mark 13:24-37 \(ICB\)](#)

Mark is the earliest written of the gospels in the Bible. Mark's Gospel is simple and unsophisticated. The opening words of Mark draw us into the entire account of Jesus' life. They connect us with the good news of Jesus' life and resurrection. In today's passage, Mark quotes the prophet Isaiah about the coming Son of Man. Mark seems to always be in a hurry and uses the Greek word *euthus* ("immediately") forty-one times. This word does not just mean that an event is about to take place quickly, but it indicates a revelatory event that breaks into our world itself. In other words, Mark speaks with urgency and immediacy because he believed the teaching, works, and life of Jesus literally break into our lives – and therefore, we need to be on the lookout for them.

"During the days after this trouble comes, 'The sun will grow dark. And the moon will not give its light. The stars will fall from the sky. And everything in the sky will be changed.' "Then people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. The Son of Man will send his angels all around the earth. They will gather his chosen people from every part of the earth. "The fig tree teaches us a lesson: When its branches become green and soft, and new leaves begin to grow, then you know that summer is near. So also when you see all these things happening, then you will know that the time is near, ready to come. I tell you the truth. All these things will happen while the people of this time are still living. The whole world, earth and sky, will be destroyed, but the words I have said will never be destroyed. "No one knows when that day or time will be. The Son and the angels in heaven don't know. Only the Father knows. Be careful! Always be ready!^[a] You don't know when that time will be. It is like a man who goes on a trip. He leaves his house and lets his servants take care of it. He gives each servant a special job to do. One servant has the work of guarding the door. The man tells this servant always to be watchful. This is what I am now telling you. You must always be ready.

You don't know when the owner of the house will come back. He might come in the evening, or at midnight, or in the early morning, or when the sun rises. He might come back quickly. If you are always ready, then he will not find you sleeping. I tell you this, and I say this to everyone: 'Be ready!'" – Mark 13:24-37

Affirmation of Faith

One: We believe in God.

All: We believe that God has dreams for humanity.

One: We believe in the Holy Spirit.

All: We believe that the Holy Spirit comforts us when our dreams turn to nightmares.

One: We believe in Jesus.

All: We believe that Jesus walked this world to wake us up, Inviting us to be the church in the world.

One: We believe in dreams.

All: We believe in the power that dreams have to show us a new way.

One: So in this Advent season,

All: We are those who dream and those who wake up. May it be so. Amen.

Sermon Those Who Dream - Hope



"Restore Us" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity.

Song of Response *Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

**Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.**

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Prayers of the People

Hear Our Prayers, O God, for...

~The Mowery and Faja families as they mourn the loss of their mom, Ernestine Faja.
 ~Our country during this Thanksgiving holiday weekend. May everyone be well and safe.
 ~Nancy Charles' work facility, as it has been struck with a COVID outbreak.
 ~Melissa, wife of Doris and Paul Mayeshiba's nephew who is recovering from lumbar fusion back surgery. Prayers for a healthy recovery.
 ~Maureen, friend of Sue Klockow, who has breast cancer.
 ~Jerry and Michelle who have been displaced from their home after a fire. They have now found temporary living arrangements in St. Francis for the next 6 months.
 ~Jean, sister of Doris Piacentine and her niece who is recovering from COVID.
 ~Kathy, Ken Klockow's sister who will be receiving home care for a serious infection.
 ~Dan, friend of Molly Pufall Brown, who is very sick with an undiagnosed illness. Prayers also for his wife and 2 young children.
 ~Kelley, friend of Nancy Charles as she receives radiation treatment for breast cancer.
 ~Bernee, friend of Nancy Kaye who has end-stage lung cancer.
 ~Joe and Laurie, son in law and daughter of Jackie Struck. Prayers for continued healing.
 ~Linda, daughter of Jackie Struck, as she receives wound care. Prayers for continued healing.
 ~Dawn, daughter in-law of Laurel and wife of Brad Dayton, as she has health issues from complications of diabetes. Continued prayers are requested.
 ~Tracy, daughter of Nancy Kaye, who is at home with Nancy awaiting liver and kidney transplants. She is doing well.
 ~Family of Ken and Sue who live in California close to the wildfires.
 ~Julene Flanagan's nephew, who is struggling with mental health issues.
 ~Julene Flanagan's family member who is struggling with health issues related to kidney disease.

Prayer Song

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come O come Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here

Until the Son of God appear, Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, Shall come to thee O Israel.

Prayer of Dedication

Doxology

Tune: The First Noel

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below
 Praise God above ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.**

A-men.

Closing Song

We Are Singing For the Lord Is Our Light

We are singing, for the Lord is our light (repeat)

We are singing, singing we are singing oh oh
We are singing for the Lord is our light (*repeat both lines*)

We are marching, for the Lord is our light (*repeat*)
We are marching, marching we are marching oh oh
We are marching for the Lord is our light (*repeat both lines*)

We are praying, for the Lord is our light (*repeat*)
We are praying, praying we are praying oh oh
We are praying, for the Lord is our light (*repeat both lines*)

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Sending Blessing

Postlude

My Heart Rejoices

Terry Osman, composer

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Happy Birthday to these wonderful people!

Charlotte Jeske December 1

Jean Duermeier December 4

John Helt December 5

Thanks

~For all of your prayers for our daughter Emily and our family. She has completed her treatments and has no sign of cancer. Doris & Paul Mayeshiba.

~"Thank you so very much for the candy and quiz. It was really fun to do. I think of you all and keep you in my prayers. Thanks again for thinking of me. As I said, I really enjoyed the gifts. God Bless each of you. Love, Jackie Struck."

~Dear Friends at Christ Church. I want to thank all of you for the pleasant surprise you sent for Thanksgiving. I am anxious to taste all the different flavors of Jelly Belly's and candy corn. I am going to enjoy the Thanksgiving riddle also. Thanks very much for your thoughtful gift. Hope you all have an enjoyable Thanksgiving.
Sincerely, Betty Budzien."

Announcements

CHRISTMAS GIFTS/ COOKIE DONATIONS/ HAT AND MITTEN TREE GIFTS GIFTS

Thanks to all of you all tickets have been distributed.

Please remember to:

*Assemble your gift(s) in a bag unwrapped with the gift tag **taped** to the outside.

*Return your gifts to church no later than Tuesday December 8th. Gifts should be placed on table near the glass case by name tags.

COOKIES

*The BVCC is requesting this year that **cookies** be wrapped by the dozen in a plastic bag or container. This is so that there is minimal handling of the baked goods.

Can you please bring them in by Tuesday December 8th? Please place on the "Cookie table" by the glass case.

HATS/MITTENS/SCARVES

*Please bring any store bought and/or homemade donations by Tuesday December 8th. Place on the table near the glass case and name tags.

*The church is open for gift drop off Tuesday-Thursday 8am-2pm & Friday 8:00am-12pm.

THANKS to everyone in advance for participating! We are truly making the holidays brighter for those in our community! If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Social Concerns Committee.

Mary Ann Mowery, Randene Wick, Sara Rogers and Debbie Hansen.

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Some Prayers and Liturgies written by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email pastor@uccmke.org.
Christ Church UCC, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

We are currently worshipping online-only. Learn more here.

<https://www.uccmke.org/covid-advent>

You can make your offering to Christ Church through [PayPal](https://www.paypal.com) or by mailing a check to Christ Church, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

