HARVARD
The Memorial Church

Order of Worship

The Second Sunday of Advent

December 6, 2020
11 am

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES UPON ENTERING THE SANCTUARY OF THE MEMORIAL CHURCH.
Order of Worship

Prelude
Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland
Nicolaus Bruhns (1665–1697)

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath
The first Advent candle, representing peace, is lit. During this time congregants are invited to light their Advent wreaths.

Leader: He will come like frost.
One morning when the shrinking earth
opens on mist, to find itself
arrested in the net
of alien, sword-set beauty.

People: He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him.

Leader: Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation for the One who will
lift up the low places, make the mountains small, and the uneven ground
smooth. Today we light the candle of Peace, as we wait for Jesus to come
again to turn violence into peace. Thanks be to God.

Hymn
No. 91, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”
Veni Emmanuel
See end of worship bulletin. The congregation stands and sings.

Call to Worship
From Isaiah 40 and Isaiah 2:

Minister: A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

People: Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;

Minister: The uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

People: Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together.”

Minister: Come, let us set out in the light of the Lord.
CONFESSION

_In unison:_

Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being, whose face is hidden from us by our sin, and whose mercy we forget: cleanse us from all offenses, and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires; that humbly we may draw near to thee, confessing our faults, confiding in thy grace, and finding in thee our refuge and our strength, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

HYMN

No. 94, “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”  
_Genevan 42_  
See end of worship bulletin. The congregation stands and sings.

GREETING & THE PEACE

OFFERTORY

_The offering collected goes directly to fund the Memorial Church Grants Committee’s recipient organizations and their important work in our local communities. Checks can be written to the Memorial Church with the memo line “Grants Committee.” Give online at https://memorialchurch.harvard.edu/donate._

“And the Glory of the Lord” from _Messiah_, HWV 56 (1741)  
_George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)_

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

_Isaiah 40:5_

DOXOLOGY

_The congregation stands and sings._

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all people here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

FIRST LESSON

_Isaiah 40: 1–11_  
_from the New Revised Standard Version (OT)_
ANTHEM
“And He Shall Purify” from Messiah, HWV 56 (1741)  George Frideric Handel
And he shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness
Malachi 3:3

SECOND LESSON
Mark 1: 1–8  from the New Revised Standard Version (NT)

PRAYER HYMN
The congregation remains seated.

Day by day, dear Lord, of the thee three things I pray: to see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, follow thee more nearly, day by day.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER
In unison:
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.
Following the Lord’s Prayer, the Prayer Hymn is repeated.
SERMON
Searching for the Beginning

HYMN
No. 96, “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”  
Winchester New
See end of worship bulletin. The congregation stands and sings.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE
Improvisation on “Savior of the Nations, Come”  
Paul Manz (1919–2009)

OUR MISSION
The Memorial Church of Harvard University is a space of grace in the center of the Yard, rooted in the good news of Jesus Christ. Affectionately known as “MemChurch,” we pursue partnerships within and beyond Harvard, empowering community members to serve the world as well-informed, compassionate, moral citizens. Through worship and ministry outreach, MemChurch aims to promote justice and mercy by confronting life’s challenges, differences, and our own imperfections with courage, empathy, and an ethic of love. By doing so, the Memorial Church seeks to educate minds, expand hearts, and enrich lives.
Today is the Second Sunday of Advent. The preacher is Professor Stephanie Paulsell, Interim Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church, Susan Shallcross Swartz Professor of the Practice of Christian Studies, Harvard Divinity School. The service is led by the Reverend Alanna C. Sullivan, Associate Minister in the Memorial Church and the Reverend Westley P. Conn, Ministry Fellow in the Memorial Church. You will also hear the voices of some of the family members and friends with whom we are sheltering and for whose help with the liturgy we are most grateful. The first lesson is read by Alden Fossett ’21, Student Deacon and Student Advisory Board. The second lesson is read by Howard Kaye Jr. The music for this Sunday’s service is provided by Edward Elwyn Jones, Gund University Organist and Choirmaster. The offertory and anthem are taken from archival recordings of the Harvard University Choir and the Harvard Baroque Chamber Orchestra. The prelude and postlude this morning were recorded on the organ at First-Plymouth Church in Lincoln, Nebraska this past week by David von Behren, Assistant University Organist and Choirmaster.

Eric, Carey, and Liam Andersen light the second candle of Advent, representing peace. Liturgy for lighting the Advent candles is an adaptation of scripture, the German carol *Vom Himmel Hoch da komm ich her*, and the poem “Advent Calendar” by poet and priest, Rowan Williams.

**MUSIC NOTES**

George Frideric Handel’s most famous work, *Messiah*, was composed in London in 1741 and was premiered in Dublin in 1742. Handel repeatedly revised the work, which reached its most familiar version in a performance to benefit the Foundling Hospital in 1754. This morning’s choral offerings come from a 2011 performance by the Harvard University Choir and the Harvard Baroque Chamber Orchestra, and feature two famous choruses from the work’s opening part, subtitled by its librettist, Charles Jennens, “the prophecy and realization of God’s plan to redeem mankind by the coming of the Messiah.”

The German-Danish composer Nicolaus Bruhns was a pupil of Dietrich Buxtehude. Though his life was short, and very few of Bruhns’s compositions survive, the pieces that exist are recognized as some of the finest works in the North German organ tradition. His fantasia on the familiar Advent chorale is a continuous work, though it is divided into clear sections. Each section develops a different phrase from the chorale’s melody. Paul Manz was born in Cleveland and, following studies in Chicago, studied in Belgium with Flor Peeters and Germany with Helmut Walcha. In addition to an active career as recitalist, teacher, and composer, Manz had a long tenure at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Manz was known for popularizing the genre of the “hymn festival” in America, where his performance of organ solos based on hymns would be interspersed with congregational singing. His influential and widely-played organ arrangements combined American style elements with the then-contemporary German neo-baroque chorale prelude style; today’s postlude is a flashy toccata whose chorale melody is heard in the pedals.
SUSTAINING PRACTICES FOR PERILOUS TIMES
Join the Harvard Chaplains for Sustaining Practices for Perilous Times, an opportunity to learn and share what keeps us going through these fractured and difficult days. This series will take place on Mondays from 5:00–5:30pm, concluding on December 14, and will feature members of the Harvard community offering insight into their personal spiritual practices. Each session will offer a chance to learn from a diversity of ways of creating and sustaining meaningful frameworks for living life in perilous times. Weekly themes will include connection through discussion, prayer, music, contemplative reading, embodied practice, and sabbath/Shabbat. Come every week or for a single session. Contact Rachel_leiken@harvard.edu with any questions. More information and registration is available at https://guestlist.co/events/667452

INSTAGRAM LIVE
Join us on Instagram Live for a 10–15 minute reflection on a spiritual practice each Thursday at 7:00pm. Be sure to follow us @memchurch!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
The Church School offers Christian education classes for children ages three through sixteen. All classes are held on Sundays in the Fall and Spring Terms from 10:00–10:45am. To register and learn more, please visit the Church School for Children page on our website. The Church School will conclude Sunday, December 20 and resume in the Spring Term.

The Faith and Life Forum seeks to enrich our spirituality by promoting religious literacy and cultural competency. The Forum is held Sunday mornings during the Fall and Spring Terms from 9:30–10:30am. The Forum will continue next Sunday, December 13, with Professor Stephanie Paulsell, Interim Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church, Susan Shallcross Swartz Professor of the Practice of Christian Studies, Harvard Divinity School. To participate, please visit the Faith and Life Forum page on our website.

Contact Ministry Fellow, Rev. Westley (Wes) Conn (westley_conn@harvard.edu) to learn more about opportunities for faith formation.

WORSHIP
Sunday services are broadcast on Harvard’s radio station, WHRB 95.3 FM in term; a live stream of the service is available at whrb.org. Recordings of Sunday Worship Services and Sunday Sermons are available on our website, memorialchurch.harvard.edu, during the week following the service. Sunday Sermons and Morning Prayers are also available on SoundCloud at http://bit.ly/sundaysermons and http://bit.ly/morningprayers respectively, and on iTunes—search “Harvard Memorial Church” from your iTunes app.
STAY CONNECTED TO THE MEMORIAL CHURCH
E-mail: Join our e-mail list and stay up-to-date with all the happenings in the Memorial Church. To sign up, visit our website at memorialchurch.harvard.edu
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/harvardmemorialchurch
Follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/memchurch
and Instagram: instagram.com/memchurch
Watch us on YouTube: youtube.com/memchurchharvard

NEXT SUNDAY’S SERVICE
Next Sunday is the Third Sunday of Advent. The preacher will be the Reverend Westley P. Conn, Ministry Fellow in the Memorial Church.
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Veni veni Emmanuel
Latin, 8th cent.

stanzas 1, 2: John Mason Neale, 1851, alt.
stanzas 3, 4: Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916

VENI EMMANUEL 88 88 88
Plain-song, Mode 1
Processionale, 15th cent.
adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1854

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive
2 O come, thou Dayspring, now appear and cheer us by thine
3 O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things,
4 O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one

Is rael, that mourns in lonely exile
ad vent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of far and night; to us the path of knowledge heart and mind; bid envy, strife, and quarrels

dis cease; and fill the world with heaven's peace.

night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. Re-

joyce! Re-joyce! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!
Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

1 Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;

2 Hark, the voice of one that crieth in the desert far and near,

3 Make ye straight what long was crooked, make the rougher places plain;

...comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.

calling us to new repentance since the kingdom now is here.

Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;

Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;

For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad;

tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.

...let the valleys rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.

and all flesh shall see the token that his word is never broken.
On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry

1 On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry an -
nounces that the Lord is nigh; awake and hearken,
for he brings glad tidings from the King of kings.
hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

2 Then cleansed be every breast from sin; make
straight the way for God within! Yea, let us each our
people shine and fill the world with love divine.
we adore and Holy Ghost for ever more.

3 For thou art our salvation, Lord, our
advent sets thy people free; whom with the Father
people prepare for Christ to come and enter there.
we adore and Holy Ghost for ever more.

4 All praise, eternal Son, to thee, whose
nouns that the Lord is nigh; awake and hearken,
for he brings glad tidings from the King of kings.
hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.