

Sunday, November 29, 2020

First Sunday of Advent

Hope

Isaiah 64:1-9

- ¹ Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains would tremble before you!
- ² As when fire sets twigs ablaze
and causes water to boil,
come down to make your name known to your enemies
and cause the nations to quake before you!
- ³ For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.
- ⁴ Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.
- ⁵ You come to the help of those who gladly do right,
who remember your ways.
But when we continued to sin against them,
you were angry.
How then can we be saved?
- ⁶ All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.
- ⁷ No one calls on your name
or strives to lay hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and have given us over to our sins.
- ⁸ Yet you, Lord, are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
- ⁹ Do not be angry beyond measure, Lord;
do not remember our sins forever.
Oh, look on us, we pray,
for we are all your people.

Candle Lighting

Today we light the first candle of Advent, the candle of Hope. (*Light Candle*)

If ever there was a year we needed Advent, this is the year. We hardly know how to describe the year we have lived through. We hesitate to reflect on all the mess around us in 2020. All we know is that nothing seems right, nothing seems like it used to be, nothing.

We light this first candle as a sign of our hope. Hope that you can meet us, even in the mess of our world. Hope that you still see us, though we feel we are lost in the rubble. Let this light be the guide that brings us to Emmanuel once more.

We light this candle in Hope.

Response

O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Prayer

Jesus, in the messiness of the world around us we need your light to shine. Make us to be a hopeful people so that your light will shine in us and through us to the world. Amen.