



A Thrill of Hope

8:45 a.m. + December 7, 2025 + Second Sunday of Advent

My many words on the subject can be summed up by a few: Be simply and wholly bereft of 'self.'

Now some say, "I am not prepared for this work, and therefore it cannot be produced in me."

Thus, they find an excuse, so they are neither prepared nor in the way to be prepared....

But if you were looking and striving after nothing but to find a preparation in all things and diligently gave your whole mind to see how you might become prepared, then truly God would well prepare you. For God gives as much care and love and earnest resolve to preparing you as to the pouring in of the Spirit once you are prepared.

Theologia Germanica, 14th century

Crossing The Threshold

A Day Full of Hope

"Let Hope Abound"

*Christ of the Dawn come bid me arise.
Lighten my day as darkness dies.
See, with the sunrise new mercies grow,
Hope is the fire that fills my soul.*

*Christ of the Morning steady my way.
Come bless the work that fills my day.
Let every action be filled with grace,
Hope is the breath that sets my pace.*

*Let hope be found in me, let hope abound.
Let hope be found in me, let hope abound.*

*Christ of the Noon, my shelter and shade.
Guard every step my feet have made.
When work feels heavy and strength is thin,
Hope is the stream that flows within.*

*Christ of the Evening gather me near,
Harvest my joy and quiet my fear.
As daylight fades and labors all cease,
Hope is the song that whispers 'Peace.'*

*Let hope be found in me, let hope abound.
Let hope be found in me, let hope abound.*

*Christ of the Night my refuge and friend,
Hold me secure as dark descends.
Till dawn returns and shadows all flee,
Hope is the dream that carries me.
Christ is the hope that lives in me.*

Advent Candle Examen

Song of Response

"Prepare the Way of the Lord"

*Prepare the Way of the Lord,
Prepare the Way of the Lord.
And all people shall see the salvation of our God.*

Contemplating a Psalm

Psalm 51, Selected Verses, Nan Merrill

*Teach me, O Beloved, that I may know my weaknesses,
the shortcomings that bind me,
the unloving ways that separate me,
that keep me from recognizing your life in me.
For I keep company with fear, and dwell in the house of ignorance.
Yet, I was brought forth in love, and love is my birthright.
You have placed your truth in the inner being; therefore, teach me the wisdom of the heart.
Forgive all that binds me in fear, that I might radiate love;
cleanse me that your light might shine in me.
Fill me with gladness; help me to transform weakness into strength.
Look not on my past mistakes but on the aspirations of my heart.*

*Create in me a clean heart, O Gracious One, and put a new and right spirit within me.
Enfold me in the arms of love, and fill me with your Holy Spirit.
Restore in me the joy of your saving grace, and encourage me with a new spirit.
Deliver me from the addictions of society, most Gracious One.
O keep me from temptation that I may tell of your justice and mercy.*

*O Gracious One, open my lips and my mouth shall sing forth your praise.
For You do not want sacrifice; You delight in our friendship with You.
A sacrifice most appropriate is a humble spirit;
a repentant and contrite heart, O Merciful One, is the gift You most desire.*

*O Most Gracious and Compassionate Friend,
melt our hearts of stone, break through the fears that lead us into darkness,
and guide our steps into the way of peace.*

Seeking God's Presence

"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 un 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.*

Contemplating the Gospel

Matthew 3:1-3, 7-8, 10-11

*In those days John the Baptizer came, proclaiming in the wilderness of Judea:
"Metanoia! For the Realm of the Heavens is near!"
For this is the one spoken of by Isaiah the Prophet,
"A voice of one crying in the wilderness,
'Prepare the Way of the Lord! Make His Paths straight.'"*

*But when John saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them,
“O offspring of vipers! Who taught you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bring forth fruit
consistent with metanoia... every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into
the fire. I baptize you in water for metanoia, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful
than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you in the Spirit of Holiness and
fire....”*

Meditation

Song of Response

“O Lord Your Tenderness”

***O Lord, your tenderness,
Melting all my bitterness,
O Lord, I receive your love.
O Lord, your loveliness,
Changing all my ugliness,
O Lord, I receive your love.
O Lord, I receive your love,
O Lord, I receive your love.***

Resting in the Silence

During these 5 minutes of silence, simply rest in God’s abiding and loving presence in this moment. Simply be here now. Descend into this Silence. There is nothing you need to do. Just relax. Sense your body. Breathe more deeply than usual. It can help to focus on the region of the heart. You might use a breath prayer to help you descend into this silence at the level of the heart, such as “Fill my heart” (inhale), “with Love” (exhale), or use a sacred word (such as Love, Peace, Abba, Jesus, or Spirit).

Song of Response

“Prepare the Way of the Lord”

***Prepare the Way of the Lord,
Prepare the Way of the Lord.
And all people shall see the salvation of our God.***

Holy Communion

“Creator of the Stars of Night”

Receiving a Good Word



Our Staff

Haley Brown – Associate Director of The Anchor House
Courtney Garrison – Ministry Assistant
Christian Ibanez – AV Production
Peter Johns – Associate Director of Contemplative Worship

Zachary Montasser – Violinist
Nick Cavazos – AV Production
Rev. Rachel Sciretti – Associate Pastor
Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. – Pastor of The Center

Today’s Music

‘Let Hope Abound – Peter Johns, ***‘Prepare the Way of the Lord’*** – Jaques Berthier,
‘Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus’ – Charles Wesley and Rowland Prichard,
‘O Lord, Your Tenderness’ – Graham Kendrick. ***‘Creator of the Stars of Night’*** – Charles H. Giffen

For information about The Center for Christian Spirituality and upcoming events, visit:
www.TheCenterFCS.org.

Please register your presence in the notebooks in the foyer.

Centering Prayer

Today | The Chapel | Immediately following worship

Worship Response

Today | The Anchor House | 10:00 a.m.

Yoga at The Center: A Posture of Prayer

Monday, December 8 | The Anchor House | 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. | \$10 per class

In this course, led by Jonathan Mangrum, we will use the practice of yoga as a lens to explore what it means to embody spirituality. Each class will include time engaging in breath work, meditation, yoga postures, and poses.



Special gastrochurch at MIMO

Wednesday, December 10 | 7:00pm - 9:00pm | MIMO | \$100

Join us as we celebrate 10 years of gastrochurch, with a special limited capacity three-course dinner with paired wine tastings in a gastrochurch style. Mimo is a hidden gem tucked away in the East End, known for their authentic Tuscan inspired dishes, and perfect pairings. We will revisit some one of our earliest gastrochurch themes and explore some of our shared core values of presence, simplicity and hospitality. It will be a night of nourishment and holy lingering. There are two ticket types available, for more information use the QR code or email Haley.



Creative Space

Saturday, December 13 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Creative Space is a nurturing, encouraging gathering of people who come together to create art and spend time in personal reflection. You will get an opportunity to explore spirituality through creative expression, as well as to be creative in a setting that is intentionally designed to enhance the spiritual. Materials are provided and everyone is welcome. No reservation is required.

Community Gathering and Potluck

Sunday, December 14 | The Anchor House | Immediately following worship

Join us for some good food and fellowship with friends from our contemplative community after worship in The Anchor House. Make a favorite Christmas treat and bring to share. Your treat can be sweet or savory, we just ask that it not need to be refrigerated or kept warm. The Anchor House will be open before worship so everyone can drop their treat off on the way to the Contemplative Worship Service if you would like.

“Carols, Songs, & Stories” with Peter Johns and Zach Montasser

Tuesday, December 16 | The Fellowship Hall | 11:30 a.m. | \$15

You are warmly invited to Chapelwood's Senior Adult Christmas Luncheon where Peter and Zach will showcase their thoughtful collaborations featuring songs of the season. You don't have to be a "senior" to attend. Registration closes Dec 9, so register today. Contact Rachel with questions at RSciretti@chapelwood.org



Poetry Circle

Tuesday, December 16 | The Anchor House | 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Join us for the next meeting of the Poetry Circle with Mark Jodon. The Center's poetry circle will share and critique our poems, explore poetic forms and devices, try our hands at writing prompts, and grow together in fellowship and community. This circle is for anyone who loves poetry, no matter your writing experience level. For more information, contact Mark Jodon at MJodon@littler.com

Save the Date

December 21 – Winter Solstice & Service of the Longest Night

Christmas Eve Service, 4:00 p.m. in the Chapel (Note this is a change from past years)

January 9-10, “Anchored in The Center” 25th Anniversary Weekend

February 20-21 – Enneagram Workshops with Sandra Smith