



## **Making Room**

First Week of Advent (Nov. 21)

The pandemic has laid bare economic and emotional difficulties. As we enter the Advent season, how can we ourselves become a house where the Holy will be born anew - offering respite, sustenance and care, opening the doors ever wider to those seeking shelter from the onslaught of life? No one person can do it all, but each can do something to make someone's life better one day at a time.

**Read this out loud, and together if you are with others...**

Hope waits for us at Advent  
Hope waits for us to trust.  
Hope waits for our commitment  
to a land that's kind and just.

In this time of preparation  
for the work of co-creation,  
for the birthing of a world  
that heals the ones in pain.  
Hope is born in us again!

## **Light a candle.**

Today I offer the Light of Hope to illumine the Door of Welcome.  
May this light shine in my heart, in my life, and in our community.  
May Hope awaken me to possibilities and lead to greater hospitality.  
There IS room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

What could I/we do to offer hospitality and welcome  
in the neighborhood this week?

## **An Ancient Prayer**

*Psalm 25: 4-5*

Make your ways known to me, Lord;  
teach me your paths.  
Lead me in your truth - teach it to me -  
because you are the God who saves me.  
I put my hope in you all day long.

## **A Poem**

*"An Open Space"*

by John van de Laar

The calls are always there, God,  
to be more, have more, do more,  
Every corner of our lives  
needs to be filled with something,  
Every step, every word, every thought  
must be pregnant with meaning and purpose,  
We need to prevail, triumph,

win the race!  
Except no one ever wins. Not really.  
We run as fast as we can to stand still,  
and so many get left behind,  
broken, poor, depleted.

Perhaps, in this Advent waiting time,  
we can learn to let go,  
slow down,  
open up;  
Perhaps we can begin to clear away  
some of the clutter,  
and open up a space within us  
for silence,  
for stillness,  
for hope,  
for the Holy.

And maybe, just maybe,  
as we create this open space  
we will find more room in our lives  
for generosity,  
for laughter,  
for connection,  
for caring,  
for love, for life.

Space to write your thoughts about this poem:

## Breath Prayer

Make of my heart a stable,  
a house for the holy,  
a warm and sturdy place  
for hope to live and grow.

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts,  
letting go of all we do not need.  
Take a deep breath in...  
and then breathe out regret...  
and breathe in forgiveness...  
and out again, inviting peace.

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts to the Spirit,  
inviting us to become more than we can ask or imagine.  
Take a deep breath in...  
and then breathe out fear...  
and breathe in courage...  
and out again, inviting hope.

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts,  
filling it with compassion for all those who are struggling.

We remember and pray for...

... those who are suffering economic hardship, and insecurity in basic needs;  
may abundance be shared.

... those who are suffering mentally, finding it difficult to cope;  
may paths open and hope return.

... those who are suffering illness or injury;  
may healing abound.

.... those who are suffering loneliness and isolation;  
may companionship and solace arrive.

... those who are suffering discrimination, fear and violence;  
may they know respect, respite, and safety.

May the Advent of Compassion be born in us,  
reside within us,  
move outward from us,  
to meet the needs of the world,  
making a house for the Holy that is each and every child of God.

### **A Blessing**

May God's Door of Welcome  
swing open just a little bit more.

May Jesus' humble first dwelling  
remind you of the plenty you already know.

And may the Spirit lead you into  
more possibility and hospitality that you can imagine,  
making room in The Inn for all.

May it be so.