

## Toetrede

### Liturgie van die Lig

Aansteek van die kerse

## Woorddiens

**Tema: "Pelgrims wat wag!"**

**Skriflesing: Psalm 122**

### Lied 358

Welkom, o stille nag van vrede,  
onder die suiderkruis,  
wyl stemme uit die ou verlede  
oor sterrehemel ruis.

*Kersfees kom, Kersfees kom –  
gee aan God die eer.*

*Skenk ons 'n helder Somerkersfees  
in hierdie land, o Heer.*

### Broodjies vir die pad

"They call themselves believers and thereby signify that they are pilgrims, strangers and aliens in the world. Indeed, a staff in the hand does not identify a pilgrim as definitely as calling oneself a believer publicly testifies that one is on a journey, because faith simply means: What I am seeking is not here, and for that very reason I believe it. Faith expressly signifies the deep, strong, blessed restlessness that drives the believer so that he cannot settle down at rest in this world, and therefore the person who has settled down completely at rest has also ceased to be a believer, because a believer cannot sit still as one sits with a pilgrim's staff in one's hand – a believer travels forward"

— Søren Kierkegaard

"We are all pilgrims in search of the unknown."

— Paulo Coelho

"Waiting is an art that our impatient age has forgotten. It wants to break open the ripe fruit when it has hardly finished planting the shoot. But all too often the greedy eyes are only deceived; the fruit that seemed so precious is still green on the inside, and disrespected hands ungratefully toss aside what has so disappointed them."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*

"God travels wonderful ways with human beings, but he does not comply with the views and opinions of people. God does not go the way that people want to prescribe for him; rather, his way is beyond all comprehension, free and self-determined beyond all proof. Where reason is indignant, where our nature

rebels, where our piety anxiously keeps us away: that is precisely where God loves to be. There he confounds the reason of the reasonable; there he aggravates our nature, our piety—that is where he wants to be, and no one can keep him from it. Only the humble believe him and rejoice that God is so free and so marvelous that he does wonders where people despair, that he takes what is little and lowly and makes it marvelous. And that is the wonder of all wonders, that God loves the lowly.... God is not ashamed of the lowliness of human beings. God marches right in. He chooses people as his instruments and performs his wonders where one would least expect them. God is near to lowliness; he loves the lost, the neglected, the unseemly, the excluded, the weak and broken."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*

"A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes - and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside, is not a bad picture of Advent"

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*

"Jesus stands at the door knocking (Rev. 3:20). In total reality, he comes in the form of the beggar, of the dissolute human child in ragged clothes, asking for help. He confronts you in every person that you meet. As long as there are people, Christ will walk the earth as your neighbor, as the one through whom God calls you, speaks to you, makes demands on you. That is the great seriousness and great blessedness of the Advent message. Christ is standing at the door; he lives in the form of a human being among us."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is In the Manger*

"The house lights go off and the footlights come on. Even the chattiest stop chattering as they wait in darkness for the curtain to rise. In the orchestra pit, the violin bows are poised. The conductor has raised his baton. In the silence of a midwinter dusk, there is far off in the deeps of it somewhere a sound so faint that for all you can tell it may be only the sound of the silence itself. You hold your breath to listen. You walk up the steps to the front door. The empty windows at either side of it tell you nothing, or almost nothing. For a second you catch a whiff of some fragrance that reminds you of a place you've never been and a time you have no words for. You are aware of the beating of your heart...The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment."

— Frederick Buechner, *Whistling in the Dark: A Doubter's Dictionary*

"The aim of life is appreciation; there is no sense in not appreciating things; and there is no sense in having more of them if you have less appreciation of them."

— G.K. Chesterton, *Advent and Christmas Wisdom*

"Advent is the time of promise; it is not yet the time of fulfillment. We are still in the midst of everything and in the logical inexorability and relentlessness of destiny....Space is still

filled with the noise of destruction and annihilation, the shouts of self-assurance and arrogance, the weeping of despair and helplessness. But round about the horizon the eternal realities stand silent in their age-old longing. There shines on them already the first mild light of the radiant fulfillment to come. From afar sound the first notes as of pipes and voices, not yet discernable as a song or melody. It is all far off still, and only just announced and foretold. But it is happening, today.”

— Alfred Delp, Advent of the Heart: Seasonal Sermons and Prison Writings, 1941-1944

“It is not enough to celebrate Christmas. We need to be changed and shaped by what we are celebrating. If our spiritual life is no better in spite of all our praying, fasting, and church services, then we have not yet begun to fully respond to the significance of Advent and of the Nativity.”

— Vassilios Papavassiliou, Meditations for Advent: Preparing for Christ's Birth

“If you think God has promised this world will be a five-star hotel, you will be miserable as you live through the normal struggles of life. But if you remember that God promised we would be pilgrims and this world may feel more like a desert or even a prison, you might find your life surprisingly happy.”

— Kevin DeYoung, Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will

“It is in full unity with Himself that He is also – and especially and above all – in Christ, that he becomes a creature, man, flesh, that He enters into our being in contradiction, that He takes upon Himself its consequences. If we think that this is impossible it is because our concept of God is too narrow, too arbitrary, too human – far too human. Who God is and what it is to be divine is something we have to learn where God has revealed Himself and His nature, the essence of the divine. And if He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ as the God who does this, it is not for us to be wiser than He and to say that it is in contradiction with the divine essence. We have to be ready to be taught by Him that we have been too small and perverted in our thinking about Him within the framework of a false idea about God. It is not for us to speak of a contradiction and rift in the being of God, but to learn to correct our notions of the being of God, to constitute them in the light of the fact that He does this. We may believe that God can and must only be absolute in contrast to all that is relative, exalted in contrast to all that is lowly, active in contrast to all suffering, inviolable in contrast to all temptation, transcendent in contrast to all immanence, and therefore divine in contrast to everything human, in short that He can and must be the “Wholly Other.” But such beliefs are shown to be quite untenable, and corrupt and pagan, by the fact that God does in fact be and do this in Jesus Christ. We cannot make them the standard by which to measure what God can or cannot do, or the basis of the judgement that in doing this He brings Himself into self-contradiction. By doing this God proves to us that He can do it, that to do it is within His nature. And He Himself to be more great and rich and sovereign than we had ever imagined. And our ideas of His nature must be guided by this, and not vice versa.”

— Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, 14 Vols

## Brood vir die pad

### Oor bekeer - om oortuig te word van iets heiligs

DJS

In die vroeë kerk was dit van die mees dramatiese episodes, dié verhaal van Hand. 10-15. Kornelius, godvresend, maar nié getel tot die godsvolk, sien 'n gesig. Hy moet vir Petrus laat haal, die rots waarop die kerk bou, die simbool van trou, die kerk se stem.

Intussen sien Petrus óók 'n gesig, op die dakstoep, terwyl hy bid.

Drie maal sê 'n stem hy moet slag en eet – en drie maal weier hy, omdat dié diere in sy vrome oë onheilig is. Hy ken heilig en onheilig, sonde en nié, wat mag en nié mag nie – en gaan hom nie versondig nie, al sê watter stem ook wát.

Net dan klop die gesante. Petrus gaan saam, téén sy sin.

By Kornelius gekom, sê hy dit ook, hy is daar téén sy sin. Wat hom betref, voel hy ontuis, hulle is onheilig, in sý oë. Al sý gebruike en waardes en tekste sê hy hoort nie daar nie – almal behalwe die stem. En dáárom is hy daar, teensinnig.

As Petrus eers na Kornelius luister – wat hy voorheen nooit sou doen nie – sê hy, waarlik, nóú begryp ek eers. Dat God nie onderskeid maak nie. Dat die evangelie een van vrede is, omvattende welwese. Dat Jesus Here is van álmal. Hy het dit voorheen nóóit begryp nie. Almal word gedoop en vra hy moet langer bly – wat hy doen. Vanweë die stem: Wat vir God heilig is, mag jy nie onheilig ag nie.

Dit keer Petrus se lewe om – sy sieninge, denke, gedrag, verhoudinge, bediening.

As dié stories versprei, voel vele ewe beswaard as hý vroeër, hulle ken immers dieselfde tradisies en tekste, deel sy opvattinge van heilig en onrein – en het nie die stem gehoor nie. Met dié sieninge verwar en ontstel sommige die gemeentes, sê Handeling. 'n Eerste groot sinode word belê, in Jerusalem, en as daar al ooit 'n algemene sinode was, was dit dié een.

Die hele vroeë kerk is byeen, vir dié saak van soveel belang vir die toekoms. Dis presies hoekom Handeling alles so uitvoerig vertel. Dit word 'n paradigma vir die eeue, waarvolgens die kerk telkemale opnuut moet besluit. Kinders, vroue, slawe, vreemdelinge, Jood, Griek, Skit, barbaar, kulture, rasse, nasies, tale, afkoms, voorkoms – óngeag. Wat God heilig ag – ménse, médemense, Góds skepsele – durf niemand onheilig ag nie.

Dié stories word soms die bekering van Kornelius genoem, maar dis nie eintlik die punt nie. Dis eerder die bekering van Petrus. Van die kerk. Dis net dat dit so lank duur. So verskriklik, tragies, pynlik, onophoudelik lank

<http://www.netwerk24.com/Stemme/Sielsgoed/oor-bekeer-om-oortuig-te-word-van-iets-heiligs-20161118#>



### Lied 526

Waar daar liefde is, en deernis,  
waar daar liefde is, daar is God die Heer.

*Ubi caritas, et amor*

*ubi caritas, Deus ibi est.*