

The Songs of Christmas

Service of Worship December 11, 2022 9:30am
The Third Sunday of Advent

Gathering

CALL TO WORSHIP (*video*)

WELCOME

Rev. Sue Trigger

SONG TO GATHER

“Snowdrop”

Christopher Callender, banjo
clawhammer banjo credited to Kirk McGee

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Lara and Conor Schesser

Reader: The song of John the Baptist is found in the words of the prophet Isaiah. John is the voice crying in the wilderness saying, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

Reader: It is a message of good news, filled with hope. For the one who will bring salvation for all people is coming and John is going to get things ready.

Reader: John’s ministry prepared the way for the coming of Jesus by crying out for people to repent and be baptized. He was crying out for everyone to make a new start, a realignment of the heart to prepare them for the ministry Jesus was about to bring. John’s song called the people to join him on the beginning of a journey. He called out to the people to open their eyes and see God coming into their presence.

Reader: Today we re-light the candles of hope and love and we add the third candle, the candle of good news. May our eyes be opened to see God coming to us today.

ALL: Holy God, John embodied Isaiah's song and became the voice crying in the wilderness. He proclaimed the good news that the Messiah was coming. He spoke a word from you about overturning the sin of the world and all its rulers. Open our eyes so we can see you coming into our lives today. Open our ears to hear you calling us to continue Christ's work today. Amen.

* SONG TO PRAISE

"Prepare Him Room"

as sung by Sovereign Grace

Praise Team/**ALL**

Oh behold, the myst'ry now unfolds; See the star shine on the virgin foretold.

Angels sing and light up the sky, hope rings out in a newborn's cry.

Swing wide, you ancient gates for Christ is born today!

Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.

God with us, the promise has come to be; This, the one the prophets were longing to see.

In the darkness a blazing light, to the hungry the words of life;

his kingdom now is near for those with ears to hear.

Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.

Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.

Oh, our hearts, as busy as Bethlehem. Hear him knock; don't say there's no room in the inn.

Through the cradle, cross, and grave see the love of God displayed;

Now he's risen and he reigns. Praise the Name above all names!

Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.

Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.

Let the King of glory enter in.

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

(Children ages 4 through 1st grade may go to Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time. Greeters at the back of the Sanctuary will go with children to Room 12 downstairs where parents may pick up their children following worship. Our Nursery welcomes young children and our ushers can assist families to the nursery located in the children's wing. Worship bags are available for children who stay in worship.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

We need you so desperately, O God: we need to accept you for who you truly are, not what we expect. Too often, we choose flickering candles and bulbs over your true light: we choose to hide who we truly are; both the sins that shame us, and the potential that frightens us. We need your light, your justice, your joy, your plan. Hear us, forgive us, and help us accept you for who you truly are, not what we expect. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you and all others!

SONG OF PEACE

“Christmas Time’s A Comin’”
Grace Mountain – Christopher Callender, director

by Rhonda Vincent

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 3:2–6 (NRSVUE)

Liz Chandler

During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

SONG TO REFLECT

“Light of the World”

as sung by We the Kingdom

Praise Team – Carrie DeVries, director

*Light of the World, Treasure of Heaven, brilliant like the stars in the wintery sky.
Joy of the Father, reach through the darkness, shine across the earth, send the shadows to flight.
Light of the World, from the beginning the tragedies of time were no match for your love.
From great heights of glory, you saw my story. God, you entered in and became one of us.*

*Sing halleluia, sing halleluia, sing halleluia for the things he has done.
Come and adore him, bow down before him. Sing halleluia to the Light of the World.*

*Light of the World, crown in a manger, born for the cross, to suffer, to save.
High King of Heaven, death is the poorer. We are the richer by the price that he paid.*

*Sing halleluia, sing halleluia, sing halleluia for the things he has done.
Come and adore him, bow down before him. Sing halleluia to the Light of the World.*

*Light of the World soon will be coming with fire in his eyes, he will ransom his own.
Through clouds he will lead us straight into glory and there he shall reign forever more.*

*Sing halleluia, sing halleluia, sing halleluia for the things he has done.
Come and adore him, bow down before him. Sing halleluia to the Light of the World.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 3:7–18

(NRSVUE)

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.” As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“A Song of Good News”

Rev. Sue Trigger

Hymn Text: Comfort, Comfort Now My People

GENEVAN 42

1. Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrow's load;
Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.

2. For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
Bidding all men to repentance, since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way!
Let the valleys rise to meet Him, and the hills bow down to greet him.

3. Make ye straight what long was crooked, make the rougher places plain:
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign,
For the glory of the Lord now o'er the earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token that his word is never broken.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

SONG TO GIVE

“Come Lord Jesus”

as sung by Vineyard Worship

Praise Team/**ALL**

You will flood our souls with light, bring the broken world to rights.
As you swallow death with life we will be singing.
Come Lord Jesus, come redeem us. We will wait for you.
When the night gives way to the light, our hearts will know it is you.

And still waters you will stir as we’re changed from who we were.
We’re no longer ‘neath the curse, you’ll find us singing.
Come Lord Jesus, come redeem us. We will wait for you.
When the night gives way to the light, our hearts will know it is you.

We reach for you with hopeful longing. We join the earth in all its groaning.
And the trees will clap their hands, and the rocks will join the song.
Come Lord Jesus, come redeem us. We will wait for you.
When the night gives way to the light, our hearts will know it is you. (2x)

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*SONG TO RESPOND

“Prepare Him Room”

as sung by Sovereign Grace

Praise Team/**ALL**

God with us, the promise has come to be; This, the one the prophets were longing to see.
In the darkness a blazing light, to the hungry the words of life;
His kingdom now is near for those with ears to hear.
Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.
Prepare him room~ prepare him room. Let the King of glory enter in.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

SONG TO SEND

“Christmas Time’s Comin’” with “I’ll Fly Away”

Grace Mountain

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

The Songs of Christmas

Praise Team

Carrie DeVries, director

Cal Sweeten – hammered dulcimer & marimbala

Stephen Wing – guitar & vocals

Melanie Townsend – keyboard

Donna Goeckler – vocals

Jami Howe – vocals

Daniel Cole – drums

Carrie DeVries – piano & vocals

Grace Mountain

Christopher Callender, director

Donna Goeckler – vocals

Terri Monrad – vocals

Matt Stromberg – guitar

Miles McDonald – mandolin

Christopher Callender – banjo

David Svoren - bass

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