



Service of Worship December 24, 2023 9:30am
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Gathering

SONG TO GATHER

Christmas Carols
Cal Sweeten, hammered dulcimer

WELCOME

Rev. Karen Wright

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Drew & Marcie Monrad

One: Let us pray together:

All: Eternal God, who magnifies each of our souls, help us to pay attention to your signs in these last few days before Christmas. Point us toward your joy. Orient us toward the joy that you offer to us now and always. We wait together by the light of this candle.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: I will sing about the wonders of your love forever, O God!

ALL: We will tell everyone we meet about your faithfulness to all generations!

ONE: I will declare that your love stands firm, that your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens above!

ALL: Blessed are those who know you as their God, for they walk in the light of your presence!

*SONG TO PRAISE

"Make Room"
Praise Team/**All**

as recorded by Casting Crows

**A family hiding from the storm~ Found no place at the keeper's door
It was for this a Child was born~ To save a world so cold and hollow
The sleeping town, they did not know that lying in a manger low
A Savior King who had no home has come to heal our sorrows
Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?
Is there room in your heart for God to write his story?**

**Shepherds counting sheep at night do not fear the glory light
You are precious in his sight~ God has come to raise the lowly
Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?
Is there room in your heart for God to write his story?**

**You can come as you are, but it may set you apart
When you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for his glory
Make room in your heart~ Make room in your heart**

**A mother holds the promise tight~ Every wrong will be made right
The road is straight, the burden's light for in his hands, he holds tomorrow
Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?
Is there room in your heart for God to write his story?
You can come as you are, but it may set you apart
When you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for his glory
Make room in your heart~ Make room in your heart
Make room in your heart~ Make room in your heart**

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Rev. Karen Wright

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O Holy God of Promise, we so often place our trust in the things we can see, and touch, and easily believe. But you did not ask us to believe what is easy, you have asked us to believe what is true! Forgive us, Holy One, when we doubt the ways you work. Forgive us when we find it hard to believe an ancient story. Forgive us when we question how you chose to enter the world, born as one of us. Forgive our lack of faith and belief in ways which seem so impossible to believe. Help us to look in faith, open our belief, and set aside our doubts that you sent your Son,

born of a virgin – the one who has come to set us all free. We offer these prayers in the name of your Son, Emmanuel, God with us. 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**

“Hallelujah Christmas”

Praise Team/All

by Leonard Cohen

lyrics by Cloverton

I've heard about this baby boy who's come to earth to bring us joy

And I just want to sing this song to you

It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth ~ The minor fall, the major lift

With every breath, I'm singing Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

A couple came to Bethlehem, expecting child, they searched the inn

To find a place, for you were coming soon

There was no room for them to stay, so in a manger filled with hay

God's only Son was born, oh, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

The shepherds left their flocks by night to see this baby wrapped in light

A host of angels led them all to you

It was just as the angels said "You'll find him in a manger bed"

Immanuel and Savior, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Equipping

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith — to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

SONG TO REFLECT

“Joy Unto the World”

by The Afters

Praise Team

*It was a silent night, a holy night when all the world was sleeping
In a little town, on lowly ground, no one knew what was coming
In a manger, we would find our humble King
All creation held its breath when suddenly*

*Your light came breaking through the darkness, waking every heart with
Heaven singing joy unto the world
Our long-awaited Savior, you will reign forever
We are singing joy unto the world*

*Hope is here, so lift your eyes and see his glory and splendor
Son of God, love's pure light, we come before you in wonder
In a manger, we have found our mighty King
All creation held its breath when suddenly
Your light came breaking through the darkness, waking every heart with
Heaven singing joy unto the world
Our long-awaited Savior, you will reign forever
We are singing joy unto the world*

*Joy to the world! The Lord has come!
Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare him room
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven and nature sing
All heaven and nature sing*

*Your light came breaking through the darkness, waking every heart with
Heaven singing joy unto the world
Our long-awaited Savior, you will reign forever
We are singing joy unto the world
Joy unto the world
Joy unto the world*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 1:26–38 (NRSVue)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called

the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words
Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“God of All Things”

Rev. Karen Wright

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

SONG FOR GIVING

“Somewhere in Your Silent Night”

by Casting Crowns

Praise Team

*All is calm and all is bright everywhere but in your heart tonight
They're singing carols of joy and peace, but you feel too far gone and too far out of reach
Somewhere in your silent night, heaven hears the song your broken heart has cried
Hope is here, just lift your head for love has come to find you
Somewhere in your silent night*

*From heaven's height to manger low, there is no distance the Prince of Peace won't go
From manger low to Calvary's hill, when your pain runs deep
His love runs deeper still
He has always loved you, child and he always will*

*Somewhere in your silent night, heaven hears the song your broken heart has cried
Hope is here, just lift your head for love has come to find you
Somewhere in your silent night*

*Lift your head ~ Lift your heart ~ Emmanuel will meet you where you are
He knows your hurt ~ He knows your name ~ And you're the very reason that he came*

*Somewhere in your silent night, heaven hears the song your broken heart has cried
Hope is here, just lift your head for love has come to find you
Somewhere in your silent night
Love will find you*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SONG TO RESPOND

“God With Us”

by All Sons & Daughters

ALL

*You've come to bring peace, to be love, to be nearer to us
You've come to bring life, to be light, to shine brighter in us
Oh Emmanuel ~ God with us*

*Our Deliverer, you are Savior
In your presence we find our strength
Over everything, our redemption, God with us
You are God with us*

*You've come to be hope to this world for your honor and name
You've come to take sin, to bear shame and to conquer the grave
Oh Emmanuel ~ God with us*

*Our Deliverer, you are Savior
In your presence we find our strength
Over everything, our redemption, God with us
You are God with us*

*You are here. You are holy. We are standing in your glory.
You are here. You are holy. We are standing in your glory.*

*Our Deliverer, you are Savior
In your presence we find our strength
Over everything, our redemption, God with us
You are God with us*

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

SONG TO SEND

“God With Us”

by All Sons & Daughters

All

**You are here. You are holy. We are standing in your glory.
You are here. You are holy. We are standing in your glory.**

**Our Deliverer, you are Savior
In your presence we find our strength**

GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

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