

WORSHIP GUIDE DECEMBER 13, 2020

The Message of this Sunday is Joy. Joy to the world the Lord has come! And He is coming again! This is a joy that overwhelms this world. But how do you express it? Does it show? May we always ring out the joy that Christ brings.



Pastor: We begin this Advent worship service the same way we began our new life with God, in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: Last Sunday the candle of peace was lit. We light it and the candle of hope again as we remember that Christ will come again and bring to the world everlasting peace.

(during the response the candles of Hope and Peace are lighted)

(Hark the Glad Sound! CW 12)

**♪ Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.**

**He comes the captives to release, in Satan's prison held.
The gates of brass before him burst; the iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor.**

Pastor: The third candle of Advent is the Candle of Joy. It reminds us of the joy that Mary felt when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her - a child who would save and deliver his people.

C: God wants us all to have joy. The angel who announced to the shepherds that Jesus had been born told them: "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people - for to you is born this day, in the City of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

(the Joy candle is lighted)

P: I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God.

C: For He has clothed me in the garments of salvation,

P: and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness. (Isaiah 61:10a)

C: Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances.

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a)

(Oh, Rejoice, All Christians Loudly CW 45)

**♪ Oh, rejoice, all Christians, loudly for our joys have now begun
Wondrous things our God has done. Tell abroad his goodness proudly.
Who our race has honored so, that he lives with us below.
Joy, oh, joy beyond all gladness, Christ has done away with sadness!
Hence all sorrow and repining, for the Sun of grace is shining!**

P: Let us pray:

All: - Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us. Help us prepare our hearts for this gift. Bless our worship. Help us to hear and to do your word. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.



P: Today we are called to repent of our sins, to eagerly await Christ's return and to keep strong until the end.

Almighty and all merciful God, all of us have become like one who is unclean and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away (Is. 64:6) We have sinned against you, O Lord, in thoughts, words and in actions. We have wandered from Your ways and hardened our hearts. For the sake of Jesus, our Savior, forgive us. Save us from the threatening peril of our sinfulness.

P: Leave your sins with Jesus, for he has taken them from you. Arise in peace for you are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit. Go with renewed hope and joy for his love goes with you.

People: Amen.



OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Malachi 3:1-6

Look! I am sending my messenger! He will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord, whom you are seeking, will come to his temple! The Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight, will surely come, says the LORD of Armies. ² But who can endure the day when he comes? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like launderers' bleach! ³ He will be seated like a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and like silver. They will belong to the LORD and bring him an offering in righteousness. ⁴ Judah and Jerusalem's offerings will be pleasing to the LORD as they were in the days of old, in years long ago. ⁵ I will approach you to judge you. I will be quick to give testimony against those who practice occult arts, those who commit adultery, those who swear false oaths, those who cheat workers out of their wages, those who wrong a widow and a fatherless child, those who turn away a resident alien—all those who do not fear me, says the LORD of Armies. ⁶ Certainly I, the LORD, do not change. That is why you, sons of Jacob, have not come to an end.

(O Lord How Shall I Meet You CW 19)

**O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you a right?
Your people long to greet you, my Hope, my heart's Delight.
O Jesus, let your Word be a lamp to light my way,
To show me how to please you, to guide me ev'ry day.**

EPISTLE LESSON: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

This is the way a person should think of us: as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. ² In this connection, moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. ³ But it is a trivial matter to me if I am evaluated by you or by a day in a human court. Why, I do not even evaluate myself. ⁴ I do not in fact know of anything against myself, but I am not justified by this; rather, the one who evaluates me is the Lord. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing ahead of time, until the Lord comes. He will bring to light whatever is hidden in darkness and also reveal the intentions of hearts. Then there will be praise for each person from God.

(O Lord How Shall I Meet You CW 19)

**♪ He comes to judge the nations, a terror to his foes,
A light of consolations, and blessed hope to those
Who love the Lord's appearing. O glorious Sun, now come,
Send forth your beams most cheering, and guide us safely home.**

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 11:2-10

While John was in prison, he heard about the things Christ was doing. He sent two of his disciples ³ to ask him, "Are you the Coming One or should we wait for someone else?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go, report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is the one who does not take offense at me." ⁷ As these two were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the crowds about John. "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? No, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹ So what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you! And he is much more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, 'Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

(O Lord How Shall I Meet You CW 19)

**♪ Rejoice then, you sad hearted, who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed and tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you, he's standing at the door
Who best can help and cheer you and bids you weep no more.**

SERMON: ISAIAH 9:6

For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders. He will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

It's Wonderful Life When You Have a Wonderful Counselor



CONFESSION OF FAITH: (portion of the Athanasian Creed)

P: It is furthermore necessary for eternal salvation to truly believe that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh. Now this is the true Christian faith:

C: We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man.

P: He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh,

C: Equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the father as to his humanity; and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons but one,

P: One, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God; one, indeed not by

mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being, so God and man are one Christ.

C: He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead.

P: He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty, and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.

C: At his coming all people will rise with their own bodies to answer for their personal deeds. Those who have done good will enter eternal life, but those who have done evil will go into eternal fire.

ALL: This is the true Christian faith. Whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.

PRAYERS:

LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as in heaven; give us today our daily bread; forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

BLESSING:

CLOSING HYMN:

As Angels Joyed with One Accord

CW 5

**♪ As angels joyed with one accord upon the advent of our Lord,
So laud we all and bless the name of him who from the Father came.**

**In ev'ry age let praise abound He comes; we hear his voice resound.
His glorious gospel does not cease to bring us comfort, joy and peace.**

SPECIAL PRAYERS