**December 13, 2020 Advent Three**

News and Announcements

Prelude

NB.Lighting of candle is after opening hymn and prayers.

**Opening Hymn:** #35 VU “Good Christian Friends Rejoice”

**Call to Worship**

Come let us prepare ourselves this Advent,

**Come let our faith and hope and love be renewed.**

We call for God to come and lead all to your peace.

**We gather for a time of waiting.**

We gather for a time to prepare for the Prince of Peace to be born within us again.

**We call for God to come and bring joy upon our world.**

We come into this time to pause, to pray, and to share in our worship.

**We call for Got to come and make a home within our hearts.**

**Opening Prayer**

Let us pray.

O God we are so close – so close to being part of a miracle

**– Love born again! A great gift, a great joy.**

Even in a world topsy turvy with change and worry, you still come and ask us to smile in our hearts – for the joy that sings there, even amid sorrow and pain.

**It is different in many ways this year for us all.**

**And yet our prayer remains the same:**

**Come, Lord Jesus, friend and saviour, come. Amen.**

**ADVENT Candle lighting**

**Hymn**: #82 VU “A Light is Gleaming” (chorus and verse three)

In this season of Advent:

**we welcome the coming of Jesus as God’s gift.**

As the candle of joy is lit, take the joy of God,

revealed in Bethlehem’s child, and use it to help transform

The world with holy welcome.

**May we welcome all as we welcome Jesus.** *(the first candle is lit)*

Readings Our readings today are taken from the New Revised Standard Bible.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

**16**Rejoice always, **17**pray without ceasing, **18**give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **19**Do not quench the Spirit. **20**Do not despise the words of prophets, **21**but test everything; hold fast to what is good; **22**abstain from every form of evil.

**23**May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **24**The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

John 1: 6-8, 19-28

**6**There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7**He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. **8**He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. **9**The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’”as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

We respond: In ages past, disciples, prophets, priests and historians wrote down their faith.

**This is a faithful witness of our ancestors.**

Word of God for us today.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**: Joy Sings

**Singing:**VU 44 then 43 (Midnight Clear; Go Tell It)

**Giving Our Offerings:**

Doxology: #91 from *All God’s Children Sing* “Hey, Hey Anybody Listening?

*Hey! Hey! Anybody listening? Hey! Hey! Anybody there?*

*Hey! Hey! Anybody listening? (3 claps) Anybody there?*

We’ve got good news, good news. Good news, good news!

Jesus Christ will soon be found here!

Good news, good news! Good news, good news!

Let’s help spread the news around – here!

If I had a drum - I’d drum it, A mandolin - I’d strum it,

a hummingbird hum - I’d hum it,

Every where, Every where, Every where, Every where!

People come on, come on. Come on, come on!

Let’s sing out for Mary’s son here. Come on, come on! Come on, come on!

He’ll bring joy for everyone - here!

If I had a harp - I’d twang it, A tambourine - I’d bang it,

a fire bell - I’d clang it,

Every where, Every where, Every where, Every where!

Come on, sing out, sing out. Sing out, Sing out!

Tell the world about his birth - now! Sing out, sing out! Sing out, Sing out!

Loud and clear to all the earth – now!

If I had a chime - I’d ring it, a finger cymbal - chine it.

We’ve got this song - let’s sing it

Every where, Every where, Every where, Every where!

Offering Prayer:

Gracious God, with thanks and praise, we joyfully bring this Advent offering.

**We ask that these gifts be used to bring hope and peace to the world**

**We ask this in the name of the one you sent. The one you sent to bring us hope and peace, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Prayer of the People**

We want to connect God with your very Spirit – the one given by your Son Jesus Christ.

We will connect with others and share hop an compassion.

Help us recognize our own loneliness and connect with others who are lonely. Help us be aware of the selfishness within and around us and help us limit consuming only to comfort and not sustain.

We want to be ready for the coming of Jesus; be with us Loving God.

We want to be ready for the coming of Jesus.

Help us be sure that the love of God will find a place in our circles of chosen families and friends.

And we will be…for we are together, in spirit through your Holy Spirit and we can respond using our varied gifts and needs to the hurting in our world.

We are ready because we know your peace comes, lives and abides in us – no matter the season or Sunday.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

We gather these prayers and we turn to you as our Mother who loves us and say the prayer Jesus taught us: (Spoken, inclusive Ecumenical)

**Our Parent 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.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**And deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,**

**Now and for ever. Amen.**

**Singing: #48 VU Hark the Herald Angels**

**Sending Out**

Let us go now in joy!

**We go with peace and hope!**

May God bless you with a holy joy and with open hearts t give and to receive blessing.

**We go in hopeful joy to love and serve God!**

Today’s prayers were written or inspired by Andrea Allan, Emily Perry , Bob Root, Fraser Williamson, David Sparks and Kim Falls . They are used with permission from *Gathering’s* Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, 2020-2021 edition.