**December 19, 2021 BAPTISM Advent FOUR**

Pre Service Slides

10:30 AM

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**Prelude (Colin Bonneau)**

Pulpit

News and announcements

Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve, Baptism on 12

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**Call to Worship**

Holy and Eternal God, you call us to gather in the midst of crisis and celebration, joy and sorrow.

**You are with us; we are not alone.**

Like Mary, may we overcome our fears.

**You are with us; we are not alone.**

Like Mary, may we find a safe place to go.

**You are with us; we are not alone.**

Like Mary, may we recognize your call for justice.

**You are with us; we are not alone.**

Like Mary, may we realize that we are

blessed and chosen by you.

**You are with us; we are not alone.**

Like Mary, may we exalt and praise your name.

**For you are with us; we are not alone.**

Holy and Eternal God,

**we praise your name today. Amen.**

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**Opening Prayer**

Caring God,

as we rush to prepare our homes and our trees, slow us down and prepare our hearts.

When we shut you out with worry and fear, renew our trust and prepare our hearts.

**If we are distracted by the clamour of the world, soothe our minds and prepare our hearts.**

In this time of worship, let the warmth of your kindness prepare our hearts to receive your word.

**Let the comfort of your healing prepare our hearts to feel your peace.**

**Let the joy of your love prepare our hearts to worship your holy name. Amen.**

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**Opening Hymn: VU 9** *People Look East* **verses 1, 4 and 5**

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**Advent Wreath Candle Lighting**

Mary proclaimed: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.

**We too gather to rejoice! How shall we rejoice?**

By adding our strength and joy to God’s work in the world:

**Lift up the lowly, fill the hungry with good things and proclaim that God’s mercy is for all.**

God comes to all people and for all people, on a cold night, within a naked baby, in a poor stable.

**Thanks be to God who sees us all as magnifiers for the Spirit.**

*Four Advent candles are lit.*

Welcome to Advent one and all.

**These weeks of letting go have allowed us to open up!**

May you feel the Spirit filling you up with love!

**In five days, our journey of Advent ends at the manger!**

Let us love as we have been loved.

**Advent Hymn:** AGCS 61

*Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free,*

*who visits and redeems us, and grants us liberty.*

*The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release.*

*God shall fulfill the promise to bring our people peace.*

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BAPTISM

Statement of Faith: #918 VU “A New Creed”

We are not alone,

we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:

to celebrate God’s presence, to live with

respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Parent’s Promises

Congregation’s Promise:

**One**: Let us rise as we able and pledge to these persons our support and care:

**All: As a baptized and baptizing people, we commit ourselves to support and uphold you within the community of faith. May God grant us all grace to live out our baptismal promise!**

Prayer over the water:

**Gracious and Holy God, Mother and Father of us all, we bless you for the gift of life and within it, the gift of water.**

We recall how your Spirit hovered over creation’s unshaped waters and how, by water comes the growth of earth.

It was through water that you led the children of Israel to freedom. It was in the waters of the Jordan, your child, Jesus, was baptized.

Now, may your spirit be upon us and work through this day’s water to link us with Jesus’ baptism and with Christians in every time and place.

**May what we do here be a sign for all of new life in Christ! Amen.**

Center

Action of Baptism

Center

**Reading from Scripture:**

**Micah 5:2-5a**

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
    who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
    one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
    from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
    when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
    to the people of Israel.  
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
    in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
    to the ends of the earth;  
and he shall be the one of peace.

**Luke 1:39-45**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

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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.**

Pulpit

**Sermon:** Be magnifiers for the Spirit’s love: lift up the lowly, fill the hungry with good things and proclaim that God’s mercy is for all.

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**Hymn: VU 22** *Wait for the Lord* (three times through)

**Invitation**

It is the season of Advent, the season of gifts and giving. With love in our hearts, let us worship God with our offerings as we anticipate in wonder the birth of the Christ child. The offering will now be received.

**OFFERING**

**DOXOLOGY Note: verse #6**

**VU #14 verse 6** *To A Maid Whose Name Was Mary*

**Prayer over offering**

In these days of waiting, O God, as Mary grew Jesus in her womb, so grow in us a spirit of generosity.

**Bring to birth within us a passion for justice and peace.**

As we share these gifts, which you have entrusted to us, so may your dream for the world come closer to fulfillment.

**We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

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**Prayers of the People with MV 220**

**Prayer Refrain MV 220**

***Love*** *shines as the solitary star,*

*Faith is the inner light.*

*You and I together mirror the Light of Lights*

*and illumine the pathway home.*

I am no longer my own, but thine.  
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be employed for thee or laid aside for thee,  
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

**Prayer Refrain MV 220**

Whether I am to step up for You or step aside for You;  
Whether I am to be lifted high for You or brought low for You;  
Whether I become full or empty, with all things or with nothing;  
I give all that I have and all that I am for You.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,  
thou art mine, and I am thine.  
So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.

**Prayer Refrain MV 220**

**The Lord’s Prayer (spoken VU 916)**

**Hymn: VU 29** *Hark The Glad Sound*

**Commissioning**

In the words of Luke’s gospel:

**“Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”**

May we also seek to fulfill our calling and to be open to the blessings of God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, now and always.

**Amen.**

Post Service Slides

**Postlude (Colin Bonneau)**

Today’s prayers were written (or inspired by) Dori White, Gill Le Fevre, Lori Van Santvoort-Jansekovich, Bob Root, John Wesley and Bill Steadman. They are used with permission, taken from *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2021-2022.