

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Including Lighting of the Advent Candles

Sunday, December 24, 2023

THEME: Our Just Peace: Our Spirit Waits



“The days are surely coming when all promises of the Holy One will be fulfilled.” Jeremiah 33:14

GATHERING

Prelude: “Greensleeves” Richard Purvis

Greeting and Welcome to Worship

*Call to Worship

Leader: Stop. Listen. Pay attention. Love is coming near.

People: We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.

Leader: The Hope Bringer, Peace Maker, Joy Sustainer grows in a womb, preparing to be born among us. So we wait.

People: With Mary, we long for the coming of the Child who will transform the world, bringing justice where injustice reigns, fullness where hunger persists, and favor to the ones the world calls lowly.

Leader: So let us join our voices and our lives in magnifying God, our Savior!

People: We come to wait and to declare the coming of the Love that transforms us! AMEN

* Hymn: #101 “No Wind at the Window” (*Sung to the tune of Away in a Manger*)

*Prayer of the Day and Confession (*Inspired by Luke 1:46-55*)

Leader: Every notion we have about power, success, wealth, and achievement, God takes and tosses out the window. More importantly, God comes to us to upset our notion that we have to save ourselves, that we can save ourselves. In Jesus, God comes to us, removing our sin, our failures, our expectations, so we might have new life.

(Please join me as we pray, saying,)

Advent God, we confess we are not the people you hope us to be. The very ones you favor we too often ignore or ridicule. The ones you knock off their pedestals, we admire and emulate. We are so focused on having more and more, we risk being sent away empty. Forgive us, Mighty God, and look upon us with grace. If we take tidings of comfort and joy seriously, we will offer peace and good will wherever we go. If as shepherds who left their fields, we will leave behind familiar responsibilities to discover new ways you come to our world. If we would be like the magi, we would set out from familiar territory seeking extraordinary ways to honor you.

(Silence is kept, then we pray:)

Even now—yes, even in this very moment, God comes to us, bringing hope, bringing joy, bringing peace as freely offered gifts. If we can, we will live secure in God’s love, serving Jesus the Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, in whose name we pray. AMEN

Leader: Thanks be to God!

PROCLAIMING GOD’S WORD

Anthem: “Carols for Advent” Patrick Liebergen

Scripture: Psalm 89:1-4 and Luke 1:26-38

Sermon: “A Song in Tune with God”

*Hymn: #111 “From Heaven Above”

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Offering of Tithes and Gifts including Prayer of Thanksgiving

For the wondrous gift of the Christ, we are thankful, O God. For one who lived among us and has shared our burdens, Your generous outpouring of grace reminds us of the fruitful life we are called to bear. In the Christmas season before us, may we embody the willingness to share and contribute to your coming reign, through Christ Emmanuel, AMEN

Announcements and Sharing Joys and Concerns

Litany of Sending - Mary's Song – A Contemporary Expression

Leader: God's Name: Holy, Mercy, Redeemer, Fulfiller. . . Rejoice like Mary! Dance from the depths of your soul!

People: The Mighty One has done great things! Holy is God's name.

Leader: God showed mercy to our mothers, mercy to our sons. God dethroned the masters and crowned the slaves.

People: The Mighty One has done great things! Mercy is God's name.

Leader: God shone light on the tears of the displaced. God turned their sorrows into rainbows. The Mighty One has done great things!

People: Redeemer is God's name. God filled the mouth of the child in famine. God fulfilled the promise of saving this world. The Mighty One has done great things! Fulfiller is God's name.

From The Africana Worship Book, Year B (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007), 77.

* Hymn: #110 "Love Has Come"

*Charge and Benediction

Leader: Beloved, the wait for the Messiah is almost over and has only just begun. Go from this space carrying the love that transforms us in our hearts, that our lives may give birth to hope, peace, joy, and love wherever we go.

People: AMEN.

*Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, June 2023.

Postlude: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" Jason Payne

The End of Worship
The Beginning of Service

*Those who wish may stand

Rev. James Shuler, Interim Pastor
Mrs. Dianne Yuninger, Organist/Choir Director

Prayers of the Congregation

Prayer Person this week: Christine Eshleman

Leacock Presbyterian Church

First met in Leacock Township in 1724, recognized by the Synod in 1740, moved to Paradise in 1840.



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