

Prelude

Welcome

“Heaven and Nature Sing” (*sung as call and response*)

Sing a new song to the Lord/Sing a new song to the Lord
Lift your hearts with gratitude/Lift your hearts with gratitude
Sing a new song to the Lord/Sing a new song to the Lord
Lift your hearts with gratitude/Lift your hearts with gratitude
and Joy,/and Joy
Hopeful Joy/Hopeful Joy

Your steadfast love and faithfulness/Your steadfast love and faithfulness
is ever present in our lives/is ever present in our lives
Your steadfast love and faithfulness/Your steadfast love and faithfulness
is ever present in our lives/is ever present in our lives
with Joy,/with Joy
Hopeful Joy/Hopeful Joy

Reading

O sing to the Beloved a new song,
for Love has done marvelous things!
By the strength of your indwelling Presence,
we, too, are called to do great things:
we are set free through Love’s
forgiveness and truth.
Yes, your steadfast Love and faithfulness
are ever-present gifts in our lives.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the glory of Love’s Eternal Flame.

Sung call and response continue

We sing/We sing
We sing/We sing
Joy to the World/Joy to the World
Heaven and nature sing/Heaven and nature sing
Joy to the World/Joy to the World

Heaven and nature sing/*Heaven and nature sing*
with Joy/*with Joy*
Hopeful Joy/*Hopeful Joy*

Advent Candle Lighting

Today we start a journey toward Christmas. We do this by working to bring light and joy into the world. The light comes from the Advent wreath, the joy comes from us.

Today we will light the first Advent candle. The candle of Hopeful Joy. Here is the thing about joy. Joy is always around. Joy is always with us and we can always find it EVEN when things are not so great. That's what makes it different from "happiness." Because, yes, some things are not so great in this world, but Joy is still here. Joy is still hopeful. Hope is the thing that can surprise us, that DOES surprise us. And surprise happens most often when we allow ourselves to open and look around and change our perspective. So... we get surprised by a different way of looking at things, it brings us hope and we reconnect to the joy that has been there, is there, all along. That's what we'll celebrate today.

Today we light the first Advent candle. The candle of Hopeful Joy

Prayer

Let us pray:

Holy God, you are our joy.

You are the joy that runs deep and wide underneath all of life.

This is our hope, that You are ever-present and constantly
shifting our fear to compassion,
and grinding our swords into plows.

Let us prepare him room in our hearts this day.

Let us prepare him room in our church this day.

Let us prepare him room in the world this day...
for Hope.

Amen. ©

Reprise call and response

We sing/*We sing*

We sing/*We sing*

Joy to the World/*Joy to the World*

Heaven and nature sing/*Heaven and nature sing*

Joy to the World/*Joy to the World*

Heaven and nature sing/*Heaven and nature sing*

with Joy/*with Joy*

Hopeful joy/*Hopeful joy*

Children's Time

Word in Song:

8:30 Chancel Choir

11:00 Children's Choir

Sacred Reading

The season of Advent is a time of anticipation. In the momentous conversation between Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama that resulted in the publication of the *Book of Joy*, one of the “pillars” of joy they identified was “perspective.” Opening ourselves to a different perspective can bring a sense of hope in the midst of despair—allowing joy to creep in no matter what. Opening to the perspectives of others can shift our fear to compassion, turning swords into plows. Salvation is near, says the scripture, when we wake up, when we prepare room in our lives for new Light, new insight, new hope to enter. Let us hear from the prophet Isaiah:

“God will judge between the nations,

and settle disputes of mighty nations.

Then they will beat their swords into iron plows

and their spears into pruning tools.

Nation will not take up sword against nation;

they will no longer learn how to make war.

Come, house of Jacob,
let's walk by the Lord's light."

And a reading from the Letter to the Romans:

"... make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work [God] began when we first believed. We can't afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!"

For the wisdom contained in these holy words we give thanks. Amen.

Sermon Rev. Wendy Bruner

Hymn Hymnal #122 "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"

Prayers of the People

Communion

Minister: As we gather around the table to be nourished by this meal we remember that this is not our table this is God's table and that means all are welcome at this table. The bread is gluten free and there is grape juice in the cup.

Gathering around the table as we celebrate life together we remember so many stories shared around tables;

Liturgist: Tables where bread is broken and cup is poured out, where families gather and generations share, where stories are remembered, refined, reshaped.

Minister: Gathering around the table this morning,
we break the bread and
touch the mystery that in our brokenness
we become whole;

Liturgist: We fill the cup and remember
the abundance discovered in each new sharing
of our sacred stories. Together, around the
table, we pray:

Many: Come, Holy Spirit, come.
Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine.
Bless all of us in our eating and drinking
that our eyes might be opened,
that we might recognize the risen Christ
in our midst, indeed, in one another.
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Communion Response Binder #61 “Wait for God”

Let us pray with thanksgiving

Gracious God, you have once again shown us your love
by bringing us to this meal.
We go from here renewed in faith,
renewed in courage,
and strengthened by your presence.
Thank you for loving us so tenderly.
Thank you for challenging us
to know you better and to receive you more fully. Amen

How Shall We Do God’s Work in the World

Hymnal #514 “Over My Head”

Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, we give thanks.

We ask your blessings on these gifts of time,
talent, and treasure as we use them to do

Your work in the world. Amen

Hymn Binder #43 “Joyful, Joyful We Adore You”

Benediction

Postlude