

Prelude

Welcome

Process with light

“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
Loving Joy/Loving 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
Loving Joy/Loving Joy

Reading

Make a joyful noise to the Beloved all the earth;
break forth into grateful song and sing praises!
Yes, sing songs of praise extolling Love’s way;
lift up your hearts with gratitude and joy!

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
Loving Joy/Loving Joy

Advent Candle Lighting

Last week we started our journey toward Christmas. We lit the candle of Hopeful Joy. This week we will in addition to lighting the candle of Hopeful Joy we will light the candle of Loving Joy.

This is how Loving Joy works. You send it out into the world and it gets repeated and reverberated and resounded and repeated and reverberated and resounded. Love creates more love. And that's what we celebrate this week. We have the power to create more love in the world just by being loving. It is contagious. That's why the word "Rejoice" appears so many times in the Bible. When we "repeat the sounding joy" we affect the world around us, spreading the good news and crowding out the hateful stuff. More love equals more joy.

Today we light the Advent candles of Hopeful and Loving Joy.

Prayer

Let us pray:

Holy God, you are the source of love.

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

You are the one that helps us reach out in love,

especially to those whose fear makes it hard for them to love.

Help us when our fear gets in the way of joining the chorus of joy.

Let us repeat the sounding joy in our hearts this day.

Let us repeat the sounding joy in our church this day.

Let us repeat the sounding joy in the world this day...

in the name of Love.

Amen.

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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*
Loving joy/*Loving joy*

Children's Time

Word in Song:

8:30 Folk Choir

Sacred Reading

Research shows that our very state of being can be transformed by music that resonates in our soul so powerfully that we can't help but join in. This is the vision of "Joy to the World" as the reverberating phrase urges us to "repeat the sounding joy" of the good news of Love. The prophet Isaiah offers a vision of radical love—the wolf and the lamb living together and being led by an innocent child. Can we lift our voices to joyfully and confidently proclaim this chorus of well-being for the world?

“A shoot will grow up from the stump of Jesse;
a branch will sprout from his roots.

The Holy One's spirit will rest upon him,
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a spirit of planning and strength,
a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Holy One.

His delight shall be in the fear of the Holy One.

He won't judge by appearances,
nor decide by hearsay.

but with righteousness he shall bring justice to people who are poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf will live with the lamb,
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat;
the calf and the young lion will feed together,
and a little child will lead them.
The cow and the bear will graze.
Their young will lie down together,
and a lion will eat straw like an ox.
A nursing child will play over the snake's hole;
toddlers will reach right over the serpent's den.
They won't harm or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain.
The earth will surely be filled with the knowledge of the Holy
One,
just as the water covers the sea.
On that day, the root of Jesse will stand as a signal to the peoples.
The nations will seek him out, and his dwelling will be glorious."

And then we hear from John the Baptist that the reverberations of love and joy in the world start with the change in our own hearts toward the reign of God's love:

"While Jesus was living in the Galilean hills, John, called "the Baptizer," was preaching in the desert country of Judea. His message was simple and austere, like his desert surroundings: "Change your way of thinking for the Kin-dom of God is near.

John and his message were authorized by Isaiah's prophecy:
Thunder in the desert!
Prepare for God's arrival!
Make the road smooth and straight!

John dressed in a camel-hair habit tied at the waist by a leather strap. He lived on a diet of locusts and wild field honey. People poured out of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordanian countryside to hear and see him in

action. There at the Jordan River those who came to confess their sins were baptized into a changed life.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance – a changed way of thinking. Do not presume to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

‘I baptize you with water for repentance – a changed way of thinking, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

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

Sermon Rev. Wendy Bruner

Hymn Binder #63 “Love Has Come”

Prayers of the People (Lord’s Prayer in front of binder)

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 #33 “Open My Eyes”

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 (in front of binder)

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 #64 “People Look East”

Benediction

Postlude