

**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**  
**Peaceful Joy/Peaceful 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**  
**Peaceful Joy/Peaceful Joy**

**Reading**

Let the sea laugh, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who dwell in it!  
Let the waters clap their hands;  
let the hills ring out with joy  
before the Beloved, who radiates [Peace] to all the earth.  
For Love reigns over the world with truth and justice  
bringing order and balance to all of Creation.

**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**  
**Peaceful Joy/Peaceful Joy**

## **Advent Candle Lighting**

We continue our journey toward Christmas this week. This week we will in addition to lighting the candles of Hopeful Joy, Loving Joy and Unabashed Joy we will light the candle of Peaceful Joy.

We don't often think about joy as "peaceful." We think of it as exuberant and somewhat "happy-clappy." It certainly can be. But over the last three weeks we have taken a deeper look at joy. We are now aware of the power of the joy that resides like an always-flowing river of grace and presence of God that we can dip into when we need it most. Peaceful joy says "stick with it, beloved, it will be alright" even when it doesn't feel completely right, right now. Peaceful joy says to us, "it doesn't have to be this way." We can shift from joining the chaos to being in the quiet eye of the storm where Emmanuel, "God With Us," has set up residence. And we can be "Emmanuel" for each other when the storms threaten to overtake the people, community, creation around us. Let us all take a deep breath in and breath the breath out the breath of peace.

Today we light the candles of Hopeful Joy, Loving Joy, Unabashed Joy and now Peaceful Joy.

## **Prayer**

Let us pray:

Holy God, we await again the arrival of Your son, the Prince of Peace.

We long for the peaceful waters of joy that run deep and wide underneath all of life.

When we feel the chaos of life bearing down on us,

Help us to remember that it doesn't have to be this way.

Help us to step into a slower rhythm that is your Peaceful Joy.

Let truth and grace rule our hearts this day. Let truth and grace rule our church this day. Let truth and grace rule the world this day... in the name of Peace. 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*  
**Peaceful Joy/***Peaceful Joy*

## Children's Time

### Word in Song:

Chancel Choir

## Sacred Reading

The name Emmanuel means “God with us.” From both the Hebrew and Christian narratives, we hear the yearning for this “Emmanuel”—for God to become so present that God’s peace, truth, love, and justice reign among all the world and bring balance to what feels out-of-sorts. From Isaiah:

*Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Holy One will give you a sign, Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a child, and shall call him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.*

And then the Isaiah scripture is referenced in Matthew’s telling of the birth narrative:

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to

dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Holy One appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

‘Look, the young woman shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel’,  
which means, ‘God is with us.’

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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

**Sermon** Rev. Wendy Bruner

**Hymn** Binder #65 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

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

**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 #66 “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

**Benediction**

**Postlude**