

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:

Instrumental Ensemble

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)

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)

December 22, 2019 8:30

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