

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
Compassionate Joy/Compassionate 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
Compassionate Joy/Compassionate Joy

Reading

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!
Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!
Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for he commanded and they were created.

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*
Compassionate Joy/*Compassionate Joy*

Advent Candle Lighting

Today, we see only the Christ Candle. The other Advent Candles have helped us prepare for the birth of Jesus. We re now in the Christmas Season which used to be lovingly celebrated as the twelve days of Christmas. We don't pay much attention to that anymore. These days, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day happen and then it feels like it's all over. But I'm here today to say nothing is over. Especially when it comes to joy.

The hard work begins and so you are going to need to keep lighting my light in your midst all year long, perhaps especially in this next year, to remind you that you are not alone as you strive to bring more justice and joy into the world. People are fleeing many places in fear for their lives. Sometimes it is a country far away, sometimes it is fear and oppression in our own country, city, or even our homes. So many need refuge. So many need hope, love, joy and peace.

The work continues. And remember, I am always with you. Always with you. Do not be afraid.

Pastoral Prayer

Holy Living One,
You who are our Joy,
Give us the strength we need to face the cruelty of the world
and meet it with as much Hope, Love and Peace as we can.
We give you thanks for the time we have had to
contemplate what joy means in our lives
and prepare ourselves for the work we will commit to
in this next year, offering compassion in all we do.
Let wonders of your love rule our hearts this day.
Let wonders of your love rule our church this day.
Let wonders of your love rule the world this day...
In the name of Compassion.
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*
Compassionate Joy/*Compassionate Joy*

Children's Time

Word in Song:

Wilke/Dodson Family

Sacred Reading

Psalm 98 Interpreted by Nan Merrill
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 an ever-present gift in our lives.
All the ends of the earth have seen the glory of Love's Eternal Flame.

Make a joyful noise to the Beloved all the earth; break for into grateful song
and sing praises!
Yes, sing songs of praise extolling Love's way; lift up your hearts with
gratitude and joy!
Let the voices of all people blend in harmony, in unison let the people
magnify the Beloved!
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 Love to all the earth.

For Love reigns over the world with truth and justice, bringing order and balance to all of creation.

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

Sermon Hymn Sing

Hymn Hymnal #125 “Angels We Have Heard on High

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 #67 “Joy to the World”

Benediction

Postlude