

Peace UCC
Advent 3 – December 13, 2020
"I Believe in God: Ode to Joy"

Prelude "Joy to the World" arr. Jim Brickman
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Welcome

Advent Candle Lighting "I Believe" Mark A. Miller

Opening Hymn "We Hail You God's Anointed" Tune: Ellacombe

Children's Time to Shine: *"This Little Light of Mine"*

Reading: *Isaiah 57: 14-19 (CEB)*

It will be said: "Survey, survey; build a road!
Remove barriers from my people's road!"
The one who is high and lifted up,
who lives forever, whose name is holy, says:
I live on high, in holiness,
and also with the crushed and the lowly,
reviving the spirit of the lowly,
reviving the heart of those who have been crushed.

I won't always accuse,
nor will I be enraged forever.
8 It is my own doing that their spirit is exhausted—
I gave them breath!
I was enraged about their illegal profits;
I struck them; in rage I withdrew from them.
Yet they went on wandering wherever they wanted.
I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.
I will guide them,
and reward them with comfort.

And for those who mourn,
I will create reason for praise:
utter prosperity to those far and near,
and I will heal them, says the Lord.

The Witness of Music "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" arr. Sue Clauss
Chancel Choir

Reading: *Luke 1: 1-4; 26-56 (CEB)*

Many people have already applied themselves to the task of compiling an account of the events that have been fulfilled among us. They used what the original eyewitnesses and servants of the word handed down to us. Now, after having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, I have also decided to write a carefully ordered account for you, most honorable Theophilus. I want you to have confidence in the soundness of the instruction you have received...

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"

The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God."

Then Mary said, "I am Holy One's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my God should come to me? As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. Happy is she who believed that the Holy One would fulfill the promises made to her."

Mary said,

"With all my heart I glorify the Holy One!

In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.

God has looked with favor on the low status of God's servant.

Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored
because the mighty one has done great things for me.

Holy is God's name.

God shows mercy to everyone,

from one generation to the next,

who honors God as God.
God has shown strength with God's arm.
God has scattered those with arrogant thoughts and proud inclinations.
God has pulled the powerful down from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly.
God has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty-handed.
God has come to the aid of his servant Israel,
remembering God's mercy,
just as God promised to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants forever."
Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her home.

Sermon

Litany of Belief

Prayers in the Stillness "In the Stillness" Lindy Thompson & Mark A. Miller

How shall we join God's work in the world?

Doxology "Believe" Henry Smith

Believe, with a joyful heart!
Believe, and shine your light!
Believe, because the song we sing is sung for all!

And now let the weak say, "I am strong;"
let the poor say, "I am rich
because of what our God has done for us."
Believe!

Carol of Resistance "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You" Tune: Hymn to Joy

Benediction

Postlude "I Believe" Mark A. Miller
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Worship Notes

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