



TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 19, 2021

Welcome and Announcements

We're all like localized vibrations of the infinite goodness of God's presence. So love is our very nature. Love is our first, middle, and last name. Love is all; not love as sentimentality, but love that is self-forgetful and free of self-interest. -- *Fr. Thomas Keating*

All you need is love, Love! Love is all you need. – *The Beatles*

Prelude “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*” (*Richard Purvis*)

Tower Bell

***Call to Worship**

All through this season of Advent, we have encountered Hope, Peace and Joy.

Today, Trust and Love are the theme.

Today we will hear the story of surprising commitment, and unexpected calling.

We will hear again of Mary and God's wonderful love.

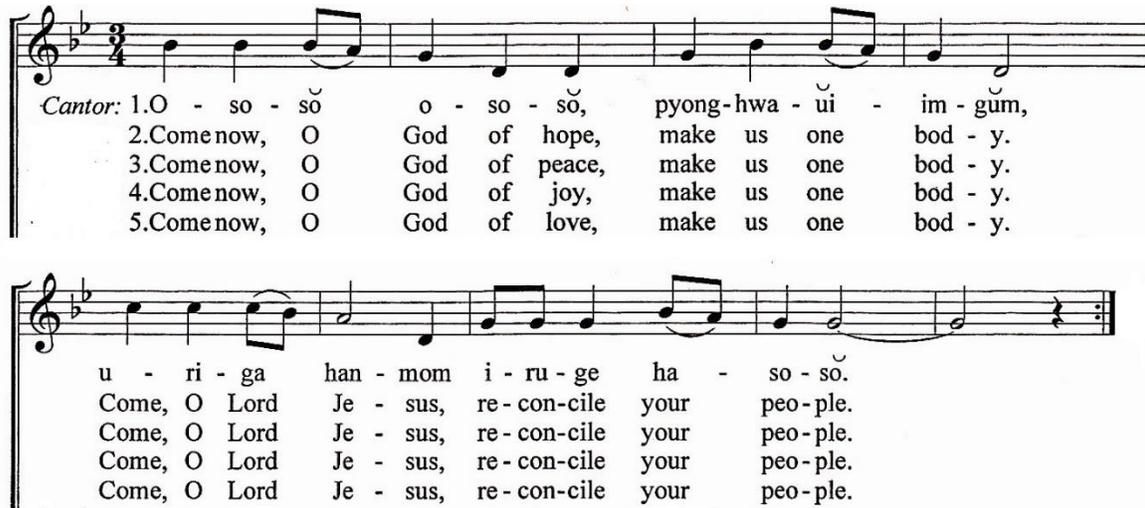
Today we will be challenged to believe in all that God can do.

Open our hearts, Lord, that we may be ready for Your love.

AMEN.

***Invocation**

Lighting the Third Candle of Advent:
LOVE



Cantor: 1. O - so - sŏ o - so - sŏ, pyong-hwa - ũi - im - gŭm,
 2. Come now, O God of hope, make us one bod - y.
 3. Come now, O God of peace, make us one bod - y.
 4. Come now, O God of joy, make us one bod - y.
 5. Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.

u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sŏ.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, re - con - cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, re - con - cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, re - con - cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, re - con - cile your peo - ple.

The Word became flesh and made His home among us. We have seen His glory, glory like that of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. John testified about him, crying out, “This is the one of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is greater than me because He existed before me.’” From His fullness we have all received grace upon grace; as the Law was given through Moses, so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ. (*John 1:14-17*)

Responsive Prayer for Advent 4

One: In the beginning was the Word—spoken and breathed, a promise made and kept.

All: We will work to trust the good news—God’s promise is true!

One: The Word was in the beginning, and through Him all things come into being.

All: Eternal and near at hand, already and not-yet, God’s promise is the foundation of all life.

One: Trust in God!

All: We will wait with faith, giving voice to Christ’s LOVE for all.

Scripture Lesson

From the Hebrew Prophets: Micah 5:2-5a
(The Message)

Micah (more properly Micaiah) was one of the first “writing” prophets, who served three kings in Jerusalem and all Judah (the Southern Kingdom) for over 50 years. He witnessed the fall of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, and its capitol, Samaria, to the Assyrian empire, and prophesied as the invaders continued moving south to threaten Judah. Micah’s major emphasis was that all Israelites—from both of the divided kingdoms—fell under the covenants God made with Abraham and Moses; and that even though they broke those covenants repeatedly, God would send them new David-like king to restore Jerusalem and the whole nation to its former glory...and that shepherd king/leader would come from the same small backwater town that David did: Bethlehem.

But you, Bethlehem, David’s country, the runt of the litter—
From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule Israel.
He’ll be no upstart, no pretender. His family tree is ancient and distinguished.
Meanwhile, Israel will be in foster homes until the birth pangs are over and the child is born, and the scattered brothers come back home to the family of Israel.
He will stand tall in his shepherd-rule by God’s strength, centered in the majesty of God-Revealed. And the people will have a good and safe home, for the whole world will hold him in respect—Peacemaker of the world!

Anthem

“Holy Child of Bethlehem” (Arr. by Lloyd Larson)

Gathering Together in Prayer

Silent Prayer—Pastoral Prayer

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Offertory Invitation

Christmas is all about gifts—the excitement and the fun of receiving them, and especially the greater joy of giving. In joy we offer these gifts, and ourselves, for the work and ministry of the Manger's Child.

Offertory

“The Journey”

(Lloyd Larson)

Where is He, O where is He? His star blazes in the night;
as we trace the changing skies, He is hiding from our sight.
Can you tell us where He lies? We would worship Him tonight,
We will Journey til we find, and our search is turned to sight.

Your guiding light shows us the way; we see your morning star ascend! To you
dear Christ, all searches come,
In you our Journey finds its end.

The star beams its golden ray over sleepy Bethlehem,
where with joy we find the Child, and with gifts we
Worship Him.

While we thought we came to you in a little starlit place,
It was You who came to us, Christ the glory of God's face.

Scripture Lesson

From the New Testament Gospels:
Luke 1:39-56 (NRSV)

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked with favor on the lowliness of His servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name. His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, according to the promise He made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

Sermon “You want WHAT? Love? Well...It’s Costly, You Know...”
Pastor Barry Bordenkircher

***Hymn #185** “*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*” (Mendelssohn)
(see last page)

***Benediction**

May God, who has begun a good work within you, continue that work until the day when Christ Jesus returns. May your love overflow more and more; may you continue to grow in knowledge and understanding, so that you can clearly discern what really matters, and so that you may stand pure and blameless before God on the day of Christ’s return.

The God who calls you is faithful! Go in peace, and serve the Lord!

Postlude “*Hark The Herald Angels Sing*” (Lanis Smith)

Today's Worship Leaders:

Preaching Today: Rev. Barry Bordenkircher

Liturgist: Laura Haas

Organist: Michael Sullivan

Choral Director: Dobin Park

Thanks to all the musicians and to Michael Sullivan and Dobin Park for assisting with filming and to Dobin Park for film editing.

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185 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Right-eous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be - hold him come, off-spring of the Vir - gin's womb:
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
 veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with th'an - gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.