



Reach One More For Jesus!

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020

PRELUDE "He Is Born" Traditional French Carol Thelma Downey

MEDITATIVE THOUGHT

God, we pray for all who are lonely in this season, or exhausted, or grieving. Give them the courage of Mary as You fill them with the Holy Spirit.

WELCOME Betty Neese

CALL TO WORSHIP

Betty Neese

L: Welcome, dear people, God has blessed our gathering.

P: We come again on this journey, following the Light.

L: God's Light shines for us today, bringing peace and comfort.

P: May we, like Mary, respond to God's presence and love, with confident joy. Amen.

OPENING HYMN "Angels from the Realms of Glory" vs. 1 & 2 Hymnal Page #220

1. Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth; ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

2. Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night, God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

OPENING PRAYER

Betty Neese

In the rush of preparation for holiday celebration, we come to worship to be fed by God. We need the peace, hope, love and joy that this season represents. We need to listen again, with wonder, at the magnificent words of Mary, as she proclaims her faithful participation in God's most miraculous gift. Open our hearts this day, Lord, to receive the words and the blessings, to be fed, and, then, to be those who will share with others as You have shared with us. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

Advent Candle Lighting

Don & Terry Foster

Light Hope, Love, Joy Candles

Reader: We live on the brink every day. We stand on the threshold between this world and the next one. We live and move between the ordinary and divine, between the mundane and the mystery. Too often, we forget to look up and see the angels in our living room. We forget that the love we give, and live, is a sign of eternity, God with us, right now. We forget that company is coming.

Luke tells us that God's favor came to a girl, an ordinary girl. It might have been you or your daughter; it might have been the girl down the street or your grandchild. But the messenger of God came and greeted her and said, "The Lord is with you." What a gift and a promise: Emmanuel, God is with us.

We light these candles with peace in our hearts for the promise of proximity, the nearness of God. Even when we forget to listen, to lean into that presence, God is as close as our own breath. This, in a confused and confusing world, is a peace that passes all understanding. It is the peace that knows that company is coming.

Light the Peace Candle

Reader: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

READINGS

Betty Neese

Psalm 138:1

¹ I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart; before the “gods” I will sing your praise.

Luke 2:10-11

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

John 14:27

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE “GOD’S GIFT EXCHANGE!”

Pastor Tom

1. We Give God Our Worry, He Gives Us His Peace.

2. We Give God Our Hurts, He Gives Us His Healing.

3. We Give God Our Grief, He Gives Us His Joy.

PRAYERS OF THE PASTOR AND PEOPLE

Pastor Tom

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Pastor Tom

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

GIVING BACK TO GOD (TITHES AND GIFTS)

Pastor Tom

DOXOLOGY “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Hymnal #95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Betty Neese

Dear God, accept these offerings, the fruit of our labor and lives, in obedience of our faith, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory forever! Amen.

CLOSING HYMN “Away in a Manger” vs. 1 & 3

Hymnal Page #217

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray; bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

BENEDICTION

Pastor Tom

POSTLUDE “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” Polish Carol

Thelma Downey