

First Congregational Church

Our Church in Worship

December 12, 2021 10:00 AM

Third Sunday in Advent

PRELUDE *Noel Etranger* -- Louis-Claude Daquin Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT *A Joyful Ring* -- Barbara B. Kinyon Sabbath Bells

LIGHTING THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE The Candle of Harmony Tom Irving

Reader: This season of preparation is half done, and in the midst of all our outward preparations, we are a people seeking true joy in the arms of the One who comes to bring it. Even as night continues to lengthen, we sense the coming of the Light that will brighten our days.

People: We rejoice in the Anointed One who came and who comes. With joy-filled hearts, we seek to live in harmony as we join our lives to the life whose birth we anticipate. With Christ, we, too, will bring good news to the oppressed, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Reader: We can praise God and sing with joy, because God has replaced our mourning with the oil of gladness. So, we light this third candle and name it Harmony.
(the candle is lit)

ALL: We hear your harmony, O God, and so we rejoice! For we know you fulfill your covenant and your steadfast love endures forever. May we sing your praise, now and always. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* Michelle Harrington, soloist
-- arr. Rebecca Belliston

O come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, and free thine own from Satan's tyranny. O come, thou Dayspring, from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh; Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight. (Refrain)

O come, Adonai, Lord of might, who to thy tribes came unto Sinai's height. O come, Thou key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. (Refrain)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) Rev. Barbara Papagian

Leader: Rejoice with great joy and singing, for you shall see the glory of God.

People: Out of the desert places of our lives, we gather with joy and gladness.

Leader: Come expectantly; bring to this place all your questions, your hopes, and your dreams.

People: Out of our weaknesses and fears, we come to gain new strength and courage.

Leader: Come to behold the majesty of our God. Draw near to God's Holy Way.

People: We sense the joy God offers to us. Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.

*OPENING HYMN NO. 155 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

OPENING PRAYER (Unison)

O God of joy and gladness, smile your favor upon us, that we too might be dwelling places of your Spirit. In Jesus we have seen your promises take flesh as the blind see the light, the deaf hear the music, and the lame dance with joy. Strengthen us so that we may always do your will and thereby bless you and the world you have made. We ask this in the name of the Coming One, Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING *Gesu Bambino* -- arr. Dana F. Everson Susan Wilkes, flute

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Barbara Papagian

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT MEDITATION

OUR LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING *Celestial Celebration* -- arr. Marilyn Thompson Elizabeth Blood, piano & Adam Peithmann, organ

SCRIPTURE READINGS Peter Perich

Isaiah 12:1-6; Luke 1:46-55

SERMON *Singing of Light in a World of Darkness* Rev. Carolyn Keilig

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 164 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

BENEDICTION (Responsive)

Leader: O come, Child of the covenant, to lead us to the heirs of the promises made long ago.

People: We will go with you to those who have been forgotten, to lift all those knocked down by life to their feet.

Leader: O Come, salvation's servant, to show us the way to the joy of this season.

People: We will go with you to welcome the outsider, and to throw our arms around those whose hearts are broken.

Leader: O Come, Lover of the lowly, to fill our hands with the shawls of grace and peace.

People: We will go to wrap them around those who grieve, to place them on the shoulders of those damaged by violence.

Leader: Go in peace to love and serve our Lord, Amen.

POSTLUDE *Amen! Tell it on the Mountain* -- arr. Mary McDonald Chancel Choir
(text from hymn # 167)

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

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SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 12:1-6

You will say in that day: I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away and you comforted me. Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously let this be known in all the earth. Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Luke 1:46-55

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."

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

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