

Third Sunday of Advent
December 12th at 10:00 a.m.

“The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.’”

Luke 1:30

Greeting and Welcome

Prelude Music “Greensleeves” Publisher: Chorister's Guild. *Used with permission.* Bell Choir

Choral Introit “Prepare the Way of the Lord” Music: Jacques Berthier and the Community of Taize, 1884. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

****Call to Worship***

God has called us to gather as beloved children.

“Here are we, the servants of the Lord.”

God calls us into unknown places that we could never foresee for ourselves.

Even amid uncertainty, we rejoice because God is with us.

In the face of fear, let us take a “leap of faith” into the unknown.

We are ready, “Nothing is impossible with God!”

****Opening Prayer***

Eternal God, thank you that you loved us so much that you sent your son to be born of a virgin, to become our savior. Thank you that he died for us and rose again, so that we could have his resurrected life in us. He truly is our salvation. Thank you for his life, his example, and his redeeming work on Calvary’s cross. May the name of Jesus be lifted high today. Amen.

****Hymn of Praise*** UMH #220 “Angels from the Realms of Glory” Words: James Montgomery, 1816. Music: Henry T. Smart, 1867. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

**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:**

Refrain:

**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:**

(Refrain)

**3. Sages, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations;
ye have seen his natal star:
(Refrain)**

**4. Saints, before the altar bending,
watching long in hope and fear;
suddenly the Lord, descending,
in his temple shall appear:
(Refrain)**

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Reader 1: On the first and second Sunday's of Advent we lighted the candles of hope and peace.

Light Hope and Peace Candles

Reader 1: On this third Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of JOY.

JOY comes to Mary like a jolt in the night. In her surprise, in her yes, in her wild openness, JOY beckons, a joy that flows not from what is rational but what is holy, a joy that flowers in the night and bears fruit that feeds a world in need.

Light Candle

Sung Response: "Emmanuel, Emmanuel" UMH #204 Sing Twice. Words and Music: Bob McGee, 1976. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us,
his name is called Emmanuel.**

Reader 2: Let's pray:

Generous God, give us JOY that flowers in the night. May your presence surprise us and even jolt us as we go through our days. May your presence open us to say yes to what brings wholeness for us and others. May we notice you truly with us, here and now. Amen.

Children's Moment

Anthem "E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come" Arr: Paul Manz. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

Gospel Reading Luke 1:26-38 NRSV

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The word of God for the people of God

Thanks be to God

Sermon "God with Mary, the Faithful" Rev. Matthew B. Sergent

***Response to the Word** Advent Affirmation of Faith

Our souls magnify the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior, for he looks with favor upon us and sees our unrealized potential. In the tradition of Mary, and all who have said "yes" to God, we stand here today, to add our assent to theirs.

Like Mary, we feel overwhelmed; we wonder if we are worthy, or capable, of following the calling.

Like Mary, we have our questions and we will not be afraid to ask them.

Like Mary, we will hear and ponder the assurance that God will empower us.

Like Mary, we will strive to say — "Let it be with us according to your will."

To whatever God is inviting us at this time in our lives, and relying on God's grace, we say "yes."

***Hymn** "The King of Glory Comes" #2091 TFWS. Words: Rev. Willard F. Jabusch. Words: Trad. Israeli folk song. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

Refrain:

The King of glory comes, the nation rejoices.

Open the gates before him, lift up your voices.

1. Who is the King of glory, how shall we call him?

He is Emmanuel, the promised of ages.

(Refrain)

2. In all of Galilee, in city or village,

He goes among his people curing their illness.

(Refrain)

3. Sing then of David's Son, our Savior and brother;

In all of Galilee was never another.

(Refrain)

Prayers of the People

Giving of our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory "O Holy Night" Arr: A.C. Adam. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.* Soloist: Sung Hee Rho

**Doxology* UMH #94 *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

Praise God from Whom all Blessings flow!

Praise God all creatures here below!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Sending Forth Hymn* "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear #218 UMH Words: Edmund H. Sears, 1849. Music: Richard Storrs Willis, 1830. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

1. It came upon the midnight clear,

that glorious song of old,

from angels bending near the earth

to touch their harps of gold:

"Peace on the earth, good will to men,

from heaven's all-gracious King."

The world in solemn stillness lay,

to hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!

4. For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

****Benediction***

Postlude "For Unto Us a Child Is Born" Arr: G. F. Handel and F. Lopez. *Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Lighting the Advent Candle taken from Break Through: United Methodists of Greater New Jersey, 2021. Affirmation of Faith By Ann Siddall, Stillpoint Spirituality Centre and Faith Community.