

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 13, 2020**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

A PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God who loves justice and truth, we remember your enduring covenant that promises good news to the poor, the broken-hearted, and the captives. You promise comfort to all who mourn and a mantle of praise in place of discouragement. Refocus us on our restoration in you. We are a people blessed, and we rejoice and praise you, O God. Grow righteousness and praise within us this day, we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

SENTENCES OF ADORATION

OPENING HYMN: *WE HAIL YOU GOD'S ANNOINTED*

1. We hail you God's Anointed, the long awaited one!
Hail in the time appointed, your reign on earth begun!
You come to break oppression, to set the captive free;
to take away transgression, and rule in equity.
2. You shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
and joy and hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth.
Before you on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,
and righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.
3. The wise shall bow before you and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore you, and praise all peoples sing;
To you shall prayer unceasing and daily vows be said,
your realm is still increasing, with you, O Christ, as head.
4. O'er every foe victorious, you on your throne shall rest;
from age to age more glorious, all blessing and all blessed:
The tide of time shall never your covenant remove;
your name shall stand forever, your changeless name of Love.

THE LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT WREATH CANDLE

THE LOVE CANDLE

Relighting the Hope and Peace Candles

Introductory Sentences

Reading of Scripture: I John 4:9 – 11

Lighting the Love Candle

Let us pray.

O God, we thank you that Jesus showed your love for every person – babies and children, old people and young, sick people and those who were strong, rich people and those who were poor. Come to us in this Advent season, and give us love in our hearts for all people. Amen.

REJOICING IN GOD’S GRACE

CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:

Mighty God, you call us to proclaim the good news, but we can be slow in proclaiming joy and faith. There are times when grief weighs us down; bitterness creeps into our hearts and minds. We feel unworthy of the task of discipleship, afraid to claim the particular gifts you have given us. Like John the baptizer, however, we are not called to save the whole world. We are called to point to Jesus and invite others into loving community. Restore our faith. Refocus our understanding of who we are in Christ that we may rejoice once more, and witness to the Light. Amen.

ASSURANCE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Old Testament: Isaiah 61:1 – 4, 8 – 11

New Testament: John 1:6 – 8, 19 – 28

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SPECIAL MUSIC: *HILL TO HILL BRASS QUINTET*

SERMON: *Proper Focus*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD’S WILL AND WORK

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

Pastor: And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord,

Unison: and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

Pastor: for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Unison: Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

Pastor: for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

Unison: and holy is his name.

Pastor: His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

Unison: He has shown strength with his arm;

Pastor: he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

Unison: He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

Pastor: and lifted up the lowly;

Unison: he has filled the hungry with good things,

Pastor: and sent the rich away empty.

Unison: He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
Pastor: according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
Unison: to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: God of comfort and promise, we pray for the brokenness of the world. For the hungry and the hurting, the disappointed and the angry, we pray for your healing and restoration. Help us be involved in creating communities that actively care for the broken. We pray for those who mourn and live with grief. May we be a presence and solace. We lift to you those discouragements we have experienced this week. Discouragements in our families, our friendships, our jobs, even discouragement in ourselves. We lift to you, O God, the different things that drag us down. Restore our faith in you, O God. Restore our faith in ourselves and each other. We have different hurts, worries, fears. We name them in our hearts and ask for help to trust you with them. Bring us comfort; plant the good news deep within our hearts. Help us to see your restoration of the world when we welcome a shy or unsure young child, when we listen to the dotting story and share the joy of a grandparent. Help us to see your promise of healing in the crusty exterior of someone genuinely trying to be kind. As we grow in faith, we pray for the ability to rejoice always and to pray continually. We trust that the one who calls is faithful. Now and always. Amen.

Pause for private intercessions

Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass.
We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

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.**

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

SPECIAL MUSIC: *HILL TO HILL BRASS QUINTET*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Unison: The prayers we offer, the gifts we give, are like seeds sown in trust that God's love will water these seeds and bring new life, hope, and joy to those who weep. Hope be within you. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

CLOSING HYMN: O HOW SHALL I RECEIVE YOU

1. O how shall I receive you, how meet you on your way,
blessed hope of every people, my soul's delight and stay?
O Jesus, Jesus, give me now by your own pure light,
to know whate'er is pleasing and welcome in your sight.
2. Love caused your incarnation, love brought unto me;
your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace,
in love all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.
3. You come, O Christ, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.
In patient expectation we live for that great day
when a renewed creation your glory shall display.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Special thanks to the Hill to Hill Brass Quintet
for sharing special music with us this morning,
and to Wes Koser for filming the service.*

*Next Sunday, November 20, we will be joined by SATORI Chamber Trio and
Pastor Bruce invites you to a Hot Chocolate Drive By following worship (12 noon).*

Hope you will join us and Blessings!