

*Order of Worship*  
*1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT*  
9:30 am – November 26, 2023

*Participating Live?*

*Text your prayer requests to 805-309-6867 before the end of the first hymn.*

**PRELUDE**

*Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland, BWV 599*

J.S. Bach

Music: J. S. Bach. Public Domain

Kyle Hanks, organ

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (responsive)

Bob & Kathy Fierro, liturgists

In God's house, we can be joyful.

**We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.**

In God's house, we can be weary.

**We can be anxious. We can be grieving.**

In God's house, we can be honest-

**Inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful, connected or curious, and everything in between.**

This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

**Let us worship our loving God.**

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

**OPENING HYMN**

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

UMH 213

Text: Georg Weissel, 1642; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1855, Public Domain.

Music: TRURO, Psalmodia Evangelica, 1789, Public Domain.

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1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold, the King of glory waits;  
the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here!

2. Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart  
from earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.

3. Redeemer, come, with us abide; our hearts to thee we open wide;  
let us thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in us reveal.

4. Thy Holy Spirit lead us on until our glorious goal is won;  
eternal praise, eternal fame be offered, Savior, to thy name!

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES**

How does a weary world hope?

**By telling stories of hope, by lighting candles in the night, and planting seeds in the winter that will bloom in the spring.**

By praying for children as they grow, and picking up trash on the sidewalk.

**By insisting that small acts can make a difference.**

There are a million ways to practice hope. So today we light the candle of hope as a reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring hope into a weary world. Amen**

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**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. Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE**

*Luke 1: 1-23 (NRSV)*

Bob & Kathy Fierro, liturgists

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

**A TIME FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN** (Children and Youth come to the steps for a word from the pastor)

**PREPARATION HYMN**

*Star -Child*

TFWS 2095

Words: Shirley Erena Murray, Music: Carlton R. Young ©1994 Hope Music Publishing. Song #86986. Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license #734744-A. All rights reserved.

1 Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God, love Child, Christ Child, heaven's lightning rod,

**Refrain:** This year, this year let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

2 Street child, beat child, no place left to go, hurt child, used child, no one wants to know,  
**[Refrain]**

3 Grown child, old child, memory full of years, sad child, lost child, story told in tears, **[Refrain]**

4 Spared child, spoiled child, having, wanting more, wise child, faith child, knowing joy in store, **[Refrain]**

5 Hope-for-peace Child, God's stupendous sign, down-to-earth Child, Star of stars that shine, **[Refrain]**

**MESSAGE**

Pastor Diane Rehfield

**MUSICAL RESPONSE**

*The Holy Child of Mary from "Tapestry of Light"*

VFUMC Chancel Choir; Clara Johnson, Director; Kyle Hanks, Piano

Words and Music: Arr. Joseph M. Martin ©2011 Hal Leonard Corporation. Song#215587

The holy Child of Mary, O Son of perfect grace,  
You are peace and love sent from above. You are worthy of our praise.  
The stars that shine in heaven, the snow upon the trees  
Are pure and bright and filled with light, but none compares with Thee.

Every valley is exalted, each mountain made low. The crooked and the broken are now all made whole.  
The wonder of heaven will come to our night. The Son born of Mary is God's perfect light. Noel, noel.

O holy night of wonders, O night when Christ came down,  
Let the earth rejoice with tuneful noise and a jubilation sound.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Rejoice! Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ will come! Rejoice!

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**Holy God, you have given us so much. Today we have heard about the gift of a child for Elizabeth and Zechariah, who would become a gift for all the world, as he prepared the way for the coming of Christ. In response, we now offer some of what we have received back to you and your work in the world. Bless it and us, we pray, that we might use it to spread hope to all who are in need of it, in our church, in our community, and across the world. Amen**

**SENDING HYMN**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Music: 15th cent. French; arr. and harm. by Thomas Helmore, 1854. Public Domain.

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1. 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.

2. O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who ord'rest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show and teach us in her ways to go. (Refrain)

3. O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe. (Refrain)

4. O come, thou Rod of Jesse's stem, from ev'ry foe deliver them;  
That trust thy mighty pow'r to save; and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. (Refrain.)

5 O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home.  
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. (Refrain)

6 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)

7 O come, Desire of nations bind in one the hearts of all humankind.  
Bid thou our sad divisions cease; and be thyself our Prince of Peace. (Refrain)

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

*Overture to "Messiah"*  
Music: G. F. Händel. Public Domain  
Kyle Hanks, organ

G. F. Handel

*Prayer Requests & Joys*

Northridge UMC — Pastor Douglas Dickson

Northridge UMC — Ralph Kwon

All those suffering from illness or loss of loved ones.

Wayne Montgomery—Turns 92 today