

Worshiping God at
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Third Sunday of Advent
December 11, 2022



Welcome and Announcements

Pastor Teddie McConnell

Prelude

Seung-mee Oh

Call to Worship

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

Advent means coming. (Candle is lit.)

We are preparing ourselves for the days
when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Service parts in bold: Everyone speaks in unison.
Parts with an asterisk: * Please stand in body or in spirit.

O come, let us sing to the Lord and shout with joy to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into God's presence with thanksgiving, singing joyful songs of praise.

Amen.

* Hymn #123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

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 all, from heaven's all gracious King:" the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

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.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long; beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong; and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring; O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!

And you, 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.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets 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 give back the song which now the angels sing.

* Passing of the Peace

Pastor Teddie

Let us share the peace of God with each other, as we greet one another in the name of Christ.

Call to Confession

Mary Fuhlendorf

As we continue to prepare our hearts for the birth of Christ, let us confess the sins that keep us from glorifying and enjoying our God.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Mary

Gracious God, our doubt and despair lead us to low and long-suffering places. Our eyes downcast, we find nothing for which to give thanks, we find no reason to rejoice. Yet, you call us to resist the overwhelming forces that drag us down. You call us to rejoice in a babe about to be born. You call us to lift our eyes in hopeful anticipation of your kin-dom to come. Forgive us. Help us. Save us. Amen.

Please take time now for your own silent prayers. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Pastor Teddie

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23). Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. **Amen.**

* Gloria Patri

Anthem

"Prepare!" by Diane Hannibal & Douglas Nolan

Chancel Choir

Call for the Offering

Pastor Teddie

With joy and gratitude for all we have been given, let us offer our tithes and gifts to God.

Offering/ Offertory

Seung-mee

* Doxology

* Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Pastor Teddie

Gracious God, accept these gifts in grateful response for your generosity. May these gifts bring joy to those most in need of Christ's mission and ministry. Amen.

* Affirmation of Faith (unison) (from A Brief Statement of Faith)

Pastor Teddie

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. Amen.

Sharing of Joys & Concerns / Prayers of the People / Lord's Prayer

Greg Lee

Musical Reflection

Seung-mee

Prayer for Illumination (unison)

Mary

Savior God, liberate us from the sins which distort our vision and alter our hearing as we approach your Word today. Let us not manipulate your Word to receive the message we desire. But, standing firm in your love, let us open ourselves to the truth you lay before us today. Amen.

First Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-10

Mary

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Scripture Lesson

Luke 1:46b-55

Pastor Teddie

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name; ⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Message

"A Dream of Joy"

Pastor Teddie

* Hymn #100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

(Refrain): My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. (Refrain).

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone. Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne. The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn; there are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. (Refrain).

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast: God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp. This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. (Refrain).

Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:13)

Pastor Teddie

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Alleluia! **Amen.**

Sung Benediction

All

May the Lord, mighty God,
bless and keep you forever;
grant you peace, perfect peace,
courage in every endeavor.
Lift up your eyes and see God's face,
full of grace forever;
may the Lord, mighty God,
bless and keep you forever.

Fellowship Time

Come! Join us in the Fellowship Room for refreshments, snacks, and conversation following the worship service.