

**ADVENT THREE**  
**A Service of Song, Word, & Table**  
December 14, 2025

\* Please rise in body or spirit.

**WELCOME**

**PRELUDE**      Jubilate, Exsultate      Victor C. Johnson  
Good News

*Translation: Rejoice in God! Let us rejoice today! Sing to God a new song!*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Beloved, we gather to rejoice in God who does wondrous things, who promises that someday all manner of things shall be well.

**We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

We worship with joy now, confident that God will not stop until all creation is at peace.

**We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

We lift up our voices in song and story, in prayer and praise, as we remember and rejoice in all that God has done and will do among us.

**We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

Come! Let us worship God with joy as we work with God toward the day when all of creation lives in everlasting joy.

**Come! Let us rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

**\*HYMN**      Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates      UMH 213

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE — JOY**

Advent reminds us that we are people who share a story, the story of Jesus, who enacts peace by judging in favor of the poor and deciding with equity for the meek of the earth. We long for the day when “the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.”

**Today, we choose to live the story of peace, believing that true peace comes when we seek the flourishing of all God's creation.**

We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to bring Light to the places the world seeks to hide until that day when all creation lives together in harmony and abundance.

**\* A READING FROM THE GOSPEL**

Matthew 11:2-11

This is the Word of God for the People of God.  
**Thanks be to God!**

**(11:00) ANTHEM**    We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom    Michael Burkhardt    Chancel Choir

Text (note: verses in bold will include congregation. It should be okay to just put those on the screen, not in the printed bulletin, since it's only at 11am)

**We wait the Peaceful Kingdom,  
when wolf and lamb shall lie  
in gentleness and friendship  
without a fear or sigh,  
when lion shall be grazing,  
when snake shall never strike;  
a little child shall lead us  
both strong and weak alike.**

Where is the Peaceful Kingdom?  
When will this new day start?  
We long for peace and comfort  
to reign within each heart.  
Yet not in our lives only,  
nor simply in our home -  
we pray that all Creation  
will one day find Shalom.

When wars of desolation  
and hate come to an end,  
when nation meets with nation  
and call the other "Friend,"  
still peace in all its fullness  
will only have begun:  
Shalom for all Creation  
begins with justice done.

**That little child shall lead us  
to walk the Chosen Way,  
to share the Peaceful Kingdom,  
to greet God's newborn day.  
The child born in a stable  
is sent to break our chains,  
to bring through Word and Table  
the Day when justice reigns.**

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## **HOMILY**

**MUSICAL RESPONSE** Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (vs 1,2)      UMH  
216

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

We gather together in this season of Advent  
anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share  
love  
amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty.

*Moment of silence*

**God, we confess that we have often placed our hope in  
people and things that can't fulfill our every need.**

**We have searched for peace in shallow places.**

**We have mistaken joy for temporal pleasure and artificial exhilaration.**

**We have put limits on the ways we love,**

**excluding those who need our loving kindness the most.  
God, when we have lost our way, show us yours.  
Guide us to the hope in you that will renew our strength.  
Lead us to your peace that transcends all understanding.  
Fill us with a joy we can only experience in your presence.  
Remind us that you have always loved us with an everlasting love,  
so that we may share that love with others. Amen.**

**Words of Assurance**

In this season of desolation and uncertainty, it is good to know that God's love for us is sure—that God's commitment to us is definite—that God is guiding us as the compassionate companions that we are called to be for each other.

Let us live into this gift.

Amen.

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**REGATHERING HYMN**      Emmanuel, Emmanuel      UMH 204

**INVITATION TO OFFERING & CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Gracious God of deep joy, even when storms rage and doubts rise, you call us to see with kingdom eyes—to look for healing, hope, and signs of your grace breaking in. In this Advent season of expectation and weariness, we bring these gifts as expressions of joy, rooted not in ease but in trust. May our giving bear witness to your good news: that the blind still see, the lame still walk, and the poor still receive care. Use these offerings and us as signs of your coming reign, lights in the storm, and carriers of joy. In the name of Jesus, our hope and our Redeemer. Amen.

**OFFERTORY**      Rejoice Greatly      G.F. Handel      Amanda Porter,  
soprano

**DOXOLOGY**  
Emmanuel

*Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow* Veni

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING  
Greensleeves**

May the Creator of the Holy Way be with you.

**And also with you.**

Do not be afraid, people of God, but lift your hearts to the holy One.

**Our hearts will be filled with God's hope and grace.**

Children of God, offer songs of goodness to the One who keeps faith forever.

**We offer glad praises to the One who comes with justice.**

**Sung responses tune:**

You carved a holy way  
through chaos, Unveiling God,  
rejoicing with Word and Spirit as creation  
    trickled down mountains to form rivers,  
    birds built nests in shrubs and trees,  
    bees and butterflies pollinated meadows.

These great, and good, things were  
for those formed in your image  
so we might be with you in wonder,  
    but we were blinded by sin's  
    sparkling seductions and could not  
    envision the life you offered to us.

Patiently, you sent prophets to us,  
who urged us over and again to return,  
    but we continued to look favorably  
    upon the gifts offered by sin and death.

So you emptied your strong heart,  
becoming weak in the baby

born in Bethlehem for us.

With those you have put back on their feet,  
with those you knock off our presumptions,  
we sing our carols to you:

**O Holy God of power and might! Hosanna in excelsis!  
Blessed be the one who in your name comes! Hosanna in the highest!  
Lift, lift your hearts up high! Sing praise to God, and glorify!  
Joy, joy, for Christ is nigh, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

Holiness is the path you walk, Gracious God,  
and your Child, Jesus, is the One  
who comes with justice for all your people.  
When we are worry, world, and work weary,  
he comes to strengthen our hearts,  
to stand us back on our feet.

When disappointment silences us,  
he comes to teach us  
how to proclaim the good news.

When we cannot see our way out of our foolishness,  
he comes to point us toward salvation's dawn.

When we were held captive by sin,  
he came, giving himself in love,  
so joy might dance in our hearts,  
and we could gather bouquets  
of resurrection gladness as  
death ran away.

As we draw closer to the joy of his birth,  
as we remember his death and resurrection at this feast,  
we bear witness to the holy way of faith which is a mystery:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.  
Hosanna in excelsis! Hosanna in the highest!**

Gather your people in these moments,

and lead us along the holy way to the Table  
where the Spirit anoints the bread and the cup  
and blesses all who have come for this feast.  
As we are strengthened by the bread,  
may we show the way toward healing  
to the imprisoned,  
the sightless,  
the sufferers of chronic pain,  
those who struggle to hear.

As we drink from grace's cup,  
may we notice what you are doing in our midst  
so grief and loneliness  
will disappear, never to be seen again.

And when all time has drawn to a close,  
when we are gathered with our sisters and brothers  
at Advent's Table in eternity with you,  
we will rejoice in your forever,  
God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

### **LORD'S PRAYER (SPOKEN IN YOUR HEART LANGUAGE)**

**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.**

**R3 Amen, Amen! Hosanna in excelsis! Amen, Amen! Hosanna in the highest!**

**MUSIC AT COMMUNION**  
& Stephen Montoya, piano

Dr. Daniel Cummings

**INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

\* **SENDING HYMN**      Hail to the Lord's Anointed      UMH 203

**BENEDICTION**

Advent people, go now in the blessing of God's joy, confident that the day we await is close at hand and ready to cooperate with God in building the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

**POSTLUDE**      Carol of the Bells      Dr. Daniel  
Cummings & Stephen Montoya, piano