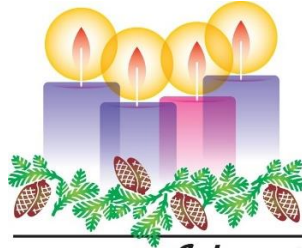




CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, BROCKTON, MA



FOURTH SUNDAY OF *Advent*

December 24, 2023

10:00 am

AN ASTERISK IN THE BULLETIN INDICATES THAT ALL FOR WHOM IT IS COMFORTABLE SHOULD RISE FOR THAT PART OF THE SERVICE

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moriah Park

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

'Comfort, Comfort You My People'

No. 122

CALL TO WORSHIP¹

One: Children of God, come together for worship.

All: Love draws us into community with praise.

One: What kind of love draws God's people together?

All: Love of all colors and kinds, like a rainbow.

One: How shall we love in Christian community?

All: We love one another like God loves us.

One: How shall we worship God together in love?

All: Let us worship together in mind, body, and spirit!

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING¹

***MUSICAL RESPONSE**

'One Candle is Lit' (vs.4)

No. 128

A TIME FOR ALL AGES

Dani Kardisco

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE¹

ALL: Loving God, we confess love does not always come easily to us. Sometimes it is easier to ignore, judge, or even hate others. We confess we have made unloving choices toward our fellow human beings, both near and far away. Forgive us, God, and convict our hearts so we might grow our capacity to love one another according to the way of Jesus. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE¹

***PASSING OF THE PEACE¹**

The passing of the peace is a theologically significant portion of Christian worship. Once we have received Christ's peace we, as Christ's disciples, must share that same peace with the world. Please take this time to do just that, share a sign of Christ's peace with those around you in the sanctuary. Some may choose to shake hands, others may want to hug, and still others may want to remain distanced with their arms crossed over their chest or holding their hands up in a "peace sign". However you choose to share Christ's peace in this moment do so with love for God and God's children in your heart.

Leader: Love inspires us to seek peace with ourselves and our neighbors, reminding us to resolve conflict with integrity. May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

***HYMN**

'Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence'

No. 124

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION¹

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:39-46

³⁹ Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. ⁴⁰ She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. ⁴³ Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ Happy is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill the promises he made to her." ⁴⁶ Mary said, "With all my heart I glorify the Lord!"

SERMON

Pastor Jeff

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Alex Green

During this time, we invite you to embrace the transition from hearing the word to gathering ourselves in prayer by taking a moment for quiet reflection either in your pew, or by coming forward to light a candle to give light to the prayer(s) on your heart that have no words to be expressed.

Come and Light a Candle...



PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF JESUS *(in unison)*

Our Creator (Father) who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

CALL FOR OFFERINGS¹

OFFERTORY 'Come, See' Schram

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE** 'Come, O Long Expected Jesus' No. 125.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION¹

AFFIRMATION OF LOVE¹

Leader: Siblings in Christ, let us proclaim the love of our faith. What is the greatest commandment in the law?

All: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

Leader: What is the second greatest commandment in the law?

All: The second is like the first: Love your neighbor as yourself.

Leader: What is the essence of Christlike love?

All: Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

Leader: It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs;

All: It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

Leader: It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

All: Love never ends. And now faith, hope, and love remain.

Leader: And the greatest of these is love.

All: This is the love of our faith.

***RECESSIONAL HYMN** 'It Came Upon the Midnight Clear' No. 153

BENEDICTION¹

POSTLUDE

Vom himmel hoch, da komm' ich her
(“From Heaven Above I Come to Earth”)

by J. Walther

Participating In Today's Worship Service:

Rev. Jeffrey Kardisco, Senior Pastor

Alex Green, Music Director

Dani Kardisco, Christian Education Director

David Wilcox, ASL Interpreter

¹Meisenheimer, Amanda. “Now in Flesh Appearing: Advent Worship Liturgy Set.” Illustrated Ministry LLC., 2022.

122 Comfort, Comfort You My People

1. Com - fort, com - fort you my peo - ple, tell of peace, thus says our God;
 2. For the her - ald's voice is call - ing in the des - ert far and near,
 3. Make you straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er plac - es plain;

com - fort those who sit in dark - ness bowed be - neath op - pres - sion's load.
 bid - ding us to make re - pent - ance since the reign of God is here.
 let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.

Speak you to Je - ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;
 O that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
 For the glo - ry of our God now o'er earth is shed a - broad;

tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver.
 let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

WORDS: Johannes G. Olearius, 1671; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.
 MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois, 1551; harm. Claude Goudimel, 1564

GENEVA 42
 87.87.77.88

♩=140-148

Unison

1. Come sure - ly, Lord Je - sus, as dawn fol - lows night,
 2. Come quick - ly, sha - lom, teach us how to pre - pare
 3. Come, fes - tive - ly sing while a - wait - ing the birth,
 4. Come, wan - der where li - on and lamb gent - ly play,
 5. Come, lis - ten, the sounds of God - with - us ring clear,

1. our hearts long to greet you, as ros - es, the light.
 2. for a gift that com - pels us with jus - tice to care.
 3. join an - gels in danc - ing from heav - en to earth.
 4. where e - vil is ban - ished and faith takes the day,
 5. and signs of a cross in the dis - tance ap - pear.

1. Sal - va - tion, draw near us, our vi - sion en - gage.
 2. Our spir - its are rest - less till sin and war cease.
 3. Wave ban - ners of good news, lift high thank - ful praise.
 4. a babe in a man - ger to fool the world's eyes.
 5. The Word once made flesh, yet the Word ev - er near.

WORDS: Mary Anne Parrott, 1988
 MUSIC: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895

CRADLE SONG
 11 11.11 11

Words © 1995 Chalice Press

1. One can - dle is lit for the hope of the age.
 2. One can - dle is lit for the reign of God's peace.
 3. One can - dle is lit for the joy of these days.
 4. One can - dle is lit for God's lov - ing sur - prise.
 5. One can - dle is lit for the Christ - birth - day here.

124 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Unison

1. Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
 2. Tru - ly God, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on
 3. Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard
 4. At his feet the six-winged ser - aph; cher - u - bim, with

trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed,
 earth he stood, word of God, in hu - man ves - ture,
 on the way, as the Light of light de - scend - eth
 sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the Pres - ence,

for with bless - ing in his hand Christ our God to earth de -
 in the bod - y and the blood, Christ will give to all the
 from the realms of end - less day, that the powers of hell may
 as with cease - less voice they cry, "Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le -

scend - eth, our full hom - age to de - mand.
 faith - ful his own self for heaven - ly food.
 van - ish as the shad - ows clear a - way.
 lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, God most high!"

WORDS: *Liturgy of St. James* (4th century); tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1864
 MUSIC: French carol (17th century); harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

PICARDY
 87.87.87

Come, O Long-expected Jesus 125

1. Come, O long-ex-pect-ed Je-sus, born to set your peo-ple free.
 2. Born your peo-ple to de-liv-er, born a child, and yet a king,

From our fears and sins re-lease us; Christ, in whom our rest shall be.
 born to reign in us for-ev-er, born your grac-ious realm to bring.

You, our strength and con-so-la-tion, come sal-va-tion to in-part;
 By your own e-ter-nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a-lone;

dear de-sire of man-y a na-tion, joy of man-y a long-ing heart.
 by your all-suf-fi-cient mer-it raise us to your glo-rious throne.

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1744
 MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard, 1830; harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

HYFRYDOL
 87.87D

153 It Came upon the Midnight Clear



1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-ri-ous song of old,
2. Still through the clo-ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un-furled,
3. And you be-neath life's crush-ing load whose forms are bend-ing low,
4. For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-et seen of old,



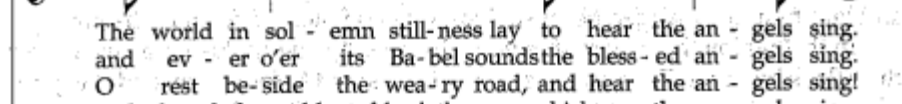
from an-gels bend-ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
 and still their heav-en-ly mu-sic floats o'er all the wea-ry world;
 who toil a-long the climb-ing way, with pain-ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev-er-cir-cling years shall come the time fore-told;



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gra-cious King,"
 a-bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hover-ing wing,
 look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift-ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o-ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol-emn still-ness lay to hear the an-gels sing.
 and ev-er o'er its Ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing.
 O rest be-side the wea-ry road, and hear the an-gels sing!
 and the whole world send back the song which now the an-gels sing.



WORDS: Edmund H. Sears, 1849
 MUSIC: Richard S. Willis, 1850

CAROL
 CMD