



First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ADVENT THEME: A NEW WORLD

December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Prelude

Magnificat
Morgan Bennett, violin

Handel

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

*Greeting and Passing of the Peace

"The Peace of God be with you."

In Unison: **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

** Let us rise in body or spirit.*

Introit

What Child Is This?

Call to Advent

Kendra DelaCadena & Jon Kousgaard, liturgists

Come to this place of rest and renewal.

We sing of God's steadfast love for all people.

We proclaim God's faithfulness to all generations.

God looks with favor on the humble and lowly.

God strengthens those who are weak.

lifts up the poor, satisfies the hungry, and gives voice to the silent.

Blessed are those who walk in God's light.

Let the heavens proclaim the wonders of God.

Let all the earth rejoice in Christ's coming.

Come, let us worship in Love.

*Processional Hymn

All Earth Is Waiting

3-95
 ADVENT
 10-95
 121
 1-95

Toda la Tierra (All Earth Is Waiting)

Isa. 40:3-5; Luke 3:4-6; Matt. 1:23

Alberto Taulé, 1972; alt.
 Transl. Gertrude C. Suppe, 1987; alt.

Unison

1 To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor y el sur - co a - bier - to, la
 2 Di - ce el pro - fe - ta al pue - blo de Is - ra - el: "De ma - dre vir - gen ya
 1 All earth is wait - ing to see the Prom - ised One, and o - pen fur - rows, the
 2 Thus says the proph - et to those of Is - ra - el, "A vir - gin moth - er will

o - bra del Crea - dor; es el mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad,
 vie - ne Em - ma - nuel," se - rá "Dios con no - so - tros," se - mi - lla se - rá,
 sow - ing of our God. All the world, bound and strug - gling, seeks true lib - er - ty;
 bear Em - man - u - el": One whose name is "God with us," our Sav - ior shall be,

re - cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. (4 dar - nos li - ber - tad.)
 con él la es - pe - ran - za al mun - do vol - ve - rá.
 it cries out for jus - tice and search - es for the truth. (4 brings us lib - er - ty.)
 through whom hope will blos - som once more with - in our hearts.

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3 Mon-tes y va-lles
 ha-brá que pre-pa-rar;
 nue-vos ca-mi-nos
 te-ne-mos que tra-zar.
 Dios es-tá ya muy cer-ca,
 ve-nid-lo a en-con-trar,
 y to-das las puer-tas
 a-brid de par en par.

4 En un pe-se-bre
 Je-sús a-pa-re-ció,
 pe-ro en el mun-do
 es-tá pre-sen-te hoy.
 Vi-ve en-tre la gen-te,
 con e-l-las es-tá;
 y vuel-ve de nue-vo
 a dar-nos li-ber-tad.

3 Moun-tains and val-leys will
 have to be made plain;
 o-pen new high-ways,
 new high-ways for our God,
 Who is now com-ing closer,
 so come all and see,
 and o-pen the door-ways
 as wide as wide can be.

4 In low-ly sta-ble
 the Prom-ised One ap-peared,
 yet feel that pres-ence
 through-out the earth to-day.
 For Christ lives in all Chris-tians
 and is with us now;
 a-gain, on ar-riv-ing
 Christ brings us lib-er-ty.

*Invocation

O Wondrous God, speak to us today with a word of grace. If we are fearful, move us to confidence. If we are weary, offer us rest. If we are empty, fill us with hope. Be present with us at home, urging us to join your work of Love. We pray in the name of the One who is coming, Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

*Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Conversation with the Children

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Discord and systemic injustices have led to violence in our nation. Yet we are inspired by an uprising for justice, the people in the streets demanding change. We must build a new world in Love. So, we light this fourth candle. And with its light, we welcome all to join together in a beloved community. We make room for strangers and friends. We commit to do the difficult work. **God be with us, in this Light of Love.**

Scripture Lesson

Luke 1:46-55

For the Word of God in scripture,
 For the Word of God among us,
 For the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Oh, Yeah, Mary TOTALLY Knew

Rev. Katie Miller

***Hymn**

In the Bleak Midwinter

10
12-10-95 12-31-45
13-17-22

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina G. Rossetti, 1872; alt.

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
2 Our God tran-scends all heav - en, earth, and its do - main;
3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath-ered there,
4 What can I of - fer, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
heaven and earth shall flee a-way when Christ comes to reign;
cher - u - bim and ser - a-phim thronged the mid - night air;
If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb.

Snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed the
But his moth - er on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
If I were a wise one, I would do my part; but

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
sov - ereign God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
what can I of - fer: all my heart.

Christina Rossetti has portrayed the Christmas story, not in warm Bethlehem, but in the winter of her native England.

Tune: CRANHAM irr.
Gustav Holst, 1906

***Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

Do not fear, the angel said. We know fear from the inside out. This year we have all been confronted with life-changing circumstances and decisions where what was wise to do was often unclear. We ask for your mercy for what we've done wrong. Restore us. And be with us, giving us courage and prudence.

***Words of Assurance**

Our Wondrous God is with us now, offering grace that is more than we can ask or imagine. God's love frees us from the past and helps us to move forward into a new future. Thank you, Emmanuel, for faithful love.

Prayers

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 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.

Offertory

Mary at the Manger

***Hymn of Dedication**

VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all creatures here below. Praise Holy Spirit evermore. Praise Triune God whom we adore. Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

***Offertory Prayer**

Faithful One, accept us. We give ourselves to you. Magnify us as the living presence of Christ in the world. Amen.

***Recessional Hymn**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

CHRISTMAS

133

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Mic. 5:2; Luke 2:4-7

Phillips Brooks, 1868; alt.

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see you lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove your deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the glo - rious love of heaven.
 Cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in your dark streets shines forth the ev - er - last - ing light,
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!
 No one dis - cerns God's com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in you to - night.
 And prais - es sing, and voic - es ring with peace to all on earth.
 Where yearn - ing souls long to be whole, the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Inspired by a visit to Bethlehem. Phillips Brooks, minister of Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia, wrote this hymn for the

Tune: ST. LOUIS 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6.
 Lewis H. Redner, 1868



133 cont.

on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.
and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.
and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.
right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.
their gold and myrrh and frank - in - cense.

Refrain

Refrain

Now - ell, now - ell, now - ell, now -

ell, born in a man - ger, Em - man - u - el.

Though perhaps of earlier origins, this anonymous English carol first appeared in print in the nineteenth century. "Nowell" stems from the Latin novellae (news) and is used as a joyous greeting to celebrate Jesus' birth.

Tune: THE FIRST NOWELL Irr. with refrain
Traditional English melody
Harm. Christmas Carols New and Old, 1871
Descant, Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937

***Benediction**

Let us go forth without fear,
creating in our lives a space for
the One who longs to dwell with us,
to share our lives,
and bless our world,
and lead us into the reign of Justice and Peace.

Benediction Response

Oh Come to Us, Abide with us, Our Lord, Emmanuel

Postlude

Gloria In Excelsis

Open & Affirming Statement

In our ongoing quest for hearts that open, minds that understand,
and lives that serve, we welcome into our fellowship, membership, leadership, and employment,
all people, regardless of abilities, race, gender, sexual orientation, or any God-given characteristic.

Announcements
December 20, 2020

Prayers: Nikki Zimmerman, recently hospitalized; the family of *Yuri Skrypnik*, who died last week.

Happy Birthday this week: to *Mark Jensen, Bud Cassiday, Mary Gryva, Hadley Rudd, Erin Bock, Leigh Gustafson, Katie Sharp, Susan Dolezal, Blake Ladwig, and Emily Milton.*

Thank You: to *Morgan Bennett*, for sharing her musical gifts with us this morning.

Christmas Fund: special offering. Please mail checks to the church; indicate "Christmas Fund" in the memo line. Thank you for your generosity.

Siena/Francis House: Congregational Outreach Ministry is collecting **NEW hats, NEW mittens/gloves** and **GENTLY USED coats** through December. Men's items are especially needed. Drop off boxes are in the glass entry – please call before you come.

FirstYouth: 8 p.m., Zoom.

Activities for the Coming Week, December 21 - December 26

Lectionary Readings: Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

Monday: Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m., Zoom
Blue Christmas, 8 p.m., YouTube and FaceBook Live

Thursday: Christmas Eve service, 8 p.m., YouTube.

Friday: Christmas Day. Office closed.

Sunday, December 27

Worship: 10:30 a.m. on YouTube. Lessons and Carols.

FirstYouth: 8 p.m., Zoom

Want to donate electronically? Please scan the QR code.

