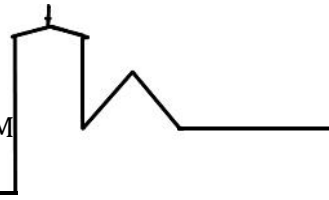


# 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT = LOVE

Westminster Presbyterian Church 12/22/2024 · 10:30AM



## GATHERING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE RISEN CHRIST

### THE PREPARATION

Picardy  
O Magnum Mysterium  
The Angel Gabriel

John Joubert  
Morten Lauridsen  
John Bryan

### WELCOME

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: *Stop. Listen. Pay attention. Love is coming near.*

**All: We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.**

One: The Hope Bringer, Peace Maker, and Joy Sustainer grows in a womb, preparing to be born among us.

**All: We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.**

One: With Mary, we long for the coming of the Child who will transform the world, bringing justice where injustice reigns, fullness where hunger persists, and favor to the ones the world calls lowly.

**All: We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.**

One: So let us join our voices and lives in magnifying God, our Savior!

**All: We come to wait and to declare the coming of the Love that transforms us! Amen.**

### OPENING PRAYER

### LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE - LOVE

*Veni Emmanuel (sung together)*

**Vs. 4 O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; Bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come thee, O Israel.**

One: *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky – sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.*

**All: Today we light three candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.**

One: *We name this candle Hope. (light the first candle)*

One: *We name this candle Peace. (light the second candle)*

One: *We name this candle Joy. (light the third candle)*

One: *We name this candle Love. (light the fourth candle)*

**All: We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of love. Even when sharp words**

**rattle in our ears, and our hearts sit cold and numb, we set our face steadily towards the light.**

*One: Listen now to the wisdom of the early Christians:*

*“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way; God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us”  
(1 John 4:7-12)*

**All: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of love this week, help us to become the signs of love that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s love. – Amen.**

**\*HYMN 600**

**Song of Mary (Magnificat)**

*Morning Song*

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION (RESPONSIVE)**

**What shall we do, O God? We can never do enough to deserve your love. We confess that we are not always truthful. We have defaced the purity of your love for us. We have embraced ugliness and oppression rather than honorableness and grace. Out of fear, we have distorted your cries for justice to benefit ourselves. We have given less than our best to others and to you. Forgive us, we pray.**

*Lord, in your mercy...*

**Hear our prayers.**

**TIME FOR SILENCE AND PERSONAL CONFESSION**

**\*KYRIE**

Lord have mer - cy Christ have mer - cy

Lord have mer - cy up - on us

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

\*GLORIA *(sung together)*

*Winchester New*

**All: Praise to You, eternal Son, Whose advent has our freedom won.  
Whom with the Father we adore, And Holy Spirit, evermore.**

## HEARING THE WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Micah 5:2-5

*The Word of the Lord...*

**Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80 HYMN 206

O Hear Our Cry, O Lord

*Vineyard Haven*

EPISTLE: Hebrews 10:5-10

GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-55

*The Word of the Lord...*

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON:

**"A Place For Mary"**

**Rev. Tim Mitchell**

### *RESPONDING TO THE WORD*

\*HYMN 19

**To a Maid Engaged to Joseph**

*Annunciation*

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(Bronwyn Angela White)

ONE: Mary let go of fear by faith and engendered a mothering God.

**ALL: This faith may lead us through labyrinths of doubt, laughing hysterically, shouting in protest, lurching in denial, and finally making it to a place to stand.**

ONE: By faith, Joseph took comfort from a dream, embracing complex, reconstituted, extended family relationships.

**ALL: This faith might reshape our preconceptions, birthing new ways of being the family of God.**

ONE: Faith is the opposite of belief:

**ALL: a bright-side-up coin whose shadow-side is hope.**

ONE: Faith is relationship and way of life:

**ALL: caring for orphans and widows, casting out demons of self-doubt, and despair, and occasionally raising the dead.**

ONE: This is our faith:

**ALL: Living as if we matter.**

ONE: Living with uncertainty yet acting with confidence,  
walking the star-led spiral to the heart of  
everything:

**ALL: God in us, now-and here.**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*May the peace of Christ be with you. And also with you.*

**THE GIFT OF MUSIC**  
*(see insert)*

**A Maid Most Gentle**

*Traditional French/  
Andrew Carter*



*SEALING THE WORD*

**INTERCESSIONS AND  
SUPPLICATIONS**

*In your mercy.... Lord, hear our prayer.*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**(PRAYING TOGETHER) 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.**

**\*HYMN 16**

**The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came**

*Gabriel's Message*

**\*CHARGE AND  
BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

**Toccata on Veni Emmanuel**

*Andrew Carter*

Leading in worship  
today:

**The Rev. Tim Mitchell**

**Dr. Polly Brecht, Organist-Choirmaster**

**Lara Reem, soprano · Joseph Strauss, tenor**

**Kate Kortemeier, alto · J. Douglas McQueen,  
tenor**

**Dave Kortemeier, bass**

**Westminster Presbyterian Church · 1420 W. Moss Ave., Peoria, IL 61606**

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