

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH
A UNITED METHODIST/PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) COMMUNITY
WILDE LAKE INTERFAITH CENTER • COLUMBIA, MARYLAND
UNITED IN LOVE – UNITED FOR SERVICE

December 15, 2024

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT // IN-PERSON & ONLINE SERVICE

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Liturgist: John Telis

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WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME

PRELUDE

Patricia Hammer
Accompanist

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

GTG #93

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
behold the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide
my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in me reveal.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Then Mary said:

‘Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.’

When Joseph awoke from sleep,

he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.

OPENING PRAYER

**Dear God, fill us with your grace, that with Mary, we may rejoice in your salvation,
and with Joseph do your will; we pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE #2

Candle Lighters: Jen McClurg and George, John and Ellie Telis

Philippians 4:4-9:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

Whether we find ourselves in the dark, cozy realm of nighttime or the blazing brightness of day, God's good message of joy has come to live in our hearts. We light the candle of joy, because joy has come to us.

SONG "Light A Candle Bright and Tall" (v. 3)
(tune of "For the Beauty of the Earth")

Light a candle bright and tall
For the Joy this season brings.
Joy like fountains brimming full.
Through our world now let it ring!
Shine within our hearts today
Come, O Joy, to us, we pray.

SCRIPTURE READING #1 Luke 1:39 – 56

ANTHEM "A Child Is Gonna Come" Chancel Choir
(Pepper Choplin)

The news is troublin'; the world is strugglin',
but soon, very soon a Child is gonna come.
Many are burdened; their hearts are hurtin';
but soon, very soon a Child is gonna come.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given,
He will be a gift to the world.
Rejoice, rejoice, O Come to us, Emmanuel.

Many are cynical; despair is plentiful
but soon, very soon a Child is gonna come.
Come, be encouraged; be not discouraged
for soon, very soon a Child is gonna come.

Be strong and hopeful. We can be joyful
for soon, very soon a Child is gonna come.
Rise and be cheerful, no longer fearful
for soon, very soon a Child is gonna come.

SCRIPTURE READING #2 Matthew 1:18 – 25

TIME WITH "Mary & Joseph Each Give God
YOUNG DISCIPLES a Christmas Present" Pastor Steve Nofel

MESSAGE "EXTRAORDINARY MARY & SILENT JOE" Pastor Steve Nofel

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

OFFERTORY SONG OF REFLECTION

“Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine”

TFWS #2099

Joseph dearest, Joseph mine,
help me cradle the child divine;
God reward thee and all that's thine
in paradise, so prays the mother Mary.

Refrain:

**He came among us at Christmastime,
at Christmastime, in Bethlehem;
let us bring him from far and wide Love's diadem:
Jesus, Jesus, lo, he comes, and loves,
and saves, and frees us!**

Gladly, dear one, lady mine,
help I cradle this child of thine;
God's own light on us both shall shine
in paradise, as prays the mother Mary.

Refrain

All shall come and bow the knee;
wise and happy their souls shall be,
loving such a divinity,
as all may see in Jesus, Son of Mary.

Refrain

PRAYER OF GENEROSITY

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, but always to your glory and the welfare of your people, through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“The King of Glory Comes”

TFWS #2091

Chorus:

**The King of glory comes, the nation rejoices.
Open the gates before him, lift up your voices.**

Who is the King of glory; how shall we call him?
He is Emmanuel, the promised of ages.

Chorus

In all of Galilee, in city or village
He goes among his people curing their illness.

Chorus

Sing then of David's son, our Savior and brother
in all of Galilee was never another.

Chorus

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Patricia Hammer
Accompanist

CALENDAR: SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF DEC 15 – DEC 22

All meetings are via Zoom (unless otherwise noted).

All meetings are open to the members and affiliates of SJU unless otherwise noted. Members are encouraged to connect to, engage, and invest in the life and leadership of this Body of Christ, the church! Contact SJUColumbia@gmail.com if you wish to receive meeting and contact information on anything below:

Sun, 12/15	8:30 am	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (<i>Liturgist: John Telis</i>)
Mon, 12/16	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP
	12:15 pm	CYBER BIBLE STUDY
	7:00 pm	COUNCIL
Tue, 12/17	7:30 pm	PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Thu, 12/19	6:00 pm	A/V TECH TEAM (<i>Room 4</i>)
	7:30 pm	CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (<i>Room 4</i>)
Sun, 12/22	8:30 am	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
(Cantata)	10:30 am	WORSHIP SERVICE (<i>in-person & streaming</i>) (<i>Scheduled liturgists: Greg Phillips and Ella Phillips</i>)
	11:45 am	HOLIDAY LUNCHEON & STAFF APPRECIATION (Room 18)
	7:00 pm	SUNDAYS AT SEVEN (PM!) FELLOWSHIP

Readings are NRSV unless otherwise noted. CEB=Common English Bible; CEV=Contemporary English Version; KJV=King James Version; MSG=The Message; NIV=New International Version; NLT=New Living Translation; TIB=The Inclusive Bible

Luke 1:39 – 56

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

⁴⁶ 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 lowliness 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 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 thoughts 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 helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.'

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

Matthew 1:18 – 25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²² All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',

which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; ^[1] and he named him Jesus.

