

*CALVIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH*

**Online Worship Service – Third Sunday of Advent – December 13, 2020**

Revised Common Lectionary Readings  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Year B

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalm 126 / Luke 1:46b-55  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Opening Prayer**

We thank you, O God, for all those who have pointed to Christ, without whom we would not be here today. Give us eyes to see him today and a vision for his present and coming kingdom, that we too may likewise point to Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Fill us and all our places with your Holy Spirit, that we may rejoice in you and the great things you have done, are doing, and will do. Amen.

**Call to Worship**

Luke 1:46-50

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
**For he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.**  
The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.  
**His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.**

**Lighting of the Advent Candle**

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life."

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord!

**Make a highway in the desert for our God.**

From ages of old, no ear has heard, no eye has seen one so glorious as the Lord our God, for whom we wait.

*(Light 1<sup>st</sup> purple candle)*

Every valley shall be lifted, every mountain and hill, made low; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

*(Light 2<sup>nd</sup> purple candle)*

God's anointed one is coming – to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to announce the time of the Lord's favor.

*(Light pink candle)*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

**Those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.**

*\*readings are from John 8:12, Isaiah 40:3, Isaiah 64:4, Isaiah 40:4-5, Isaiah 6:1-2, Isaiah 9:2*

**Hymn**

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*  
Glory to God Hymnal, #129

**Confession\***

Luke 1:50-53

*"...His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation...He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their throne, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty..."*

**Merciful God, you love justice; why, then, do we persist in wrongdoing and every form of evil?**

Isaiah 61:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:22

**You have given us the gift of your Spirit; why, then, do we quench the Spirit among us?**

1 Thessalonians 5:19

**You have given us the words of the prophets and the Word himself; why, then, do we despise and ignore what we have heard from you?**

1 Thessalonians 5:20

**You have sent the light into the world; why, then, have we loved darkness rather than light?**

John 3:19

**Forgive us. Restore us. Till and tend us as your garden until righteousness and praise spring up, for the sake of Jesus Christ.**

Isaiah 61:11

*\*by permission from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion., (c) 2014 Westminster John Knox Press*

*(personal confession)*

**Assurance and Peace**

Psalm 126:3, 6

*"The Lord has done great things for us...Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy..."*

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God**

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Scripture**[Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#)[John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)**Sermon***Waiting in Hope, Pointing in Faith***Hymn***The People Who Walked in Darkness**Glory to God Hymnal, #86, vv. 1, 3-5***Announcements****Minute for Mission***Christmas Joy Offering*

Lydia Chopoorian, Mission Committee

**Offering**

John 1:8

*"He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light."*

Please prayerfully consider the time, talents, or gifts you have received, and how you can give them back to God in love and service to others.

## Prayer of Dedication and the Prayers of the People\*

*\*portions adapted from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion., (c) 2014 Westminster John Knox Press*

Gracious God, teach us to give thanks in all circumstances, for you are always with us. Thank you for the privilege of sharing what we have with others, of giving ourselves away in love, and of receiving the gifts that others share with us. With our whole being, spirit and soul and body, we rejoice in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God who restores, you have done great things for us and we rejoice! You have sent prophets, who point the way to justice and show the way to you. We thank you for sending good news to us and repairing so much that we have devastated.

And so in this season of light, we lift up in prayer all who wait in darkness, perhaps even ourselves: those oppressed, by things within and systems without; those imprisoned, by chains within and locks without; those held captive, by habits within, and forces without; and for all who are brokenhearted – though we read much of joy and rejoicing this time of year, we know that for many of us – especially this year – these are not times of good cheer.

There are so many among and around us, including ourselves who are adjusting and learning to live with our many different losses, brought out in stark relief during the holiday season; for those for whom the holidays are made difficult or painful by the absence of someone, whether it is for the first time this year or that ache has become a regular and expected part of our holiday experience, Lord we pray: be the light shining in our darkness, and though we admit there are times the darkness seems too powerful, remind us again that your light cannot be overcome and though it sometimes seems as the faintest of embers, it yet stubbornly shines. Lord bind up all of us who are brokenhearted.

We pray for the world, our nation, and our communities still in the midst of this pandemic. Especially the states in which many of us live, as we watch the cases and infection rates rise to unfortunate heights here in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. We are grateful for the vaccines on their way and for those who have worked so hard to make them a reality. May these days teach us of our common humanity and all the ways, seen and unseen, in which we are connected to one another.

Help us to remember the oppressed, the brokenhearted, the captive, and the imprisoned; the poor and the lowly.

We pray for those mourning the death of loved ones; for those who are sick, or who are recovering from surgeries. And for those in places such as Chapel Hill, Atria, Waterman Lake, the Holiday, and the Highlands assisted living facilities.

Lord, in all things – in times of waiting and in times of harvest, keep us mindful of each other; friend, enemy, stranger, and neighbor alike. Guide us that we may point the way for each other, bearing witness in word and deed to where your light shines.

And in all the jostling and jingling of these days, do not let us lose sight of you or those whom you especially came to serve.

Light of the world, live among us always, full of grace and truth. For we are bold to pray together the prayer you have taught us, saying

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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**

*My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout*  
*(Canticle of the Turning)*  
 Glory to God Hymnal, #100

**Charge and Benediction**

adapted from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:7

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us bear witness to the light of the Lord.