

MORNING WORSHIP

Live on Facebook at 10:00 AM

Coffee hour at 11am after service via Zoom

Code: 229508663 PW: 056996

December 20, 2020

4th Sunday of Advent

Before we begin Worship we acknowledge that we worship on the traditional grounds of the Anishinaabe (meaning "the people") People, and we honor their elders both past and present.

Order of Worship

Prelude

A Poem by Maya Angelou "Love's Exquisite Freedom"

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
Live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

Gathering

Today we gather in love and light in the name of God, we gather in love and light and light four candles with the Creator of Light; +Jesus, the Light of the World; we gather in love and light with the Holy Spirit, the Light who illumines our path. Light four candles, breathe in love and light, breathe out love and light...breathe in love and light, breathe out love and light...**Amen.**

Hymn #240 vs 4 "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He is coming, tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining!

Call to Worship

During Advent, we are called to settle into the exquisite darkness, to hibernate, rest and restore.

This cycle was given to us at the time of Creation.

The prophets assure us that the darkness will not overcome us

They call us to watch for the Light, and be warmed by its rays.

We are called to wait, to trust in promises made.

Winter Solstice Litany

From the rising of the midwinter moon, may darkness and light dance together, O shining One.

In this season, make us short on grumpy thoughts, **long on sharing words of gentleness.**

Make us short on being rushed, **long on attentiveness.**

Make us short on seeing what's right before us, **long on peering into the horizon.**

Make us short on overlooking the dark sky, **long on gazing at the twinkling stars.**

Make us short on tradition as habit, **long on re-owning and re-creating.**

Make us short on rushing, **long on wondering and pondering.**

Make us short on walking past those sleeping in the cold, **long on sharing blankets and hot tea.**

Make us short on longing for what's next, **and long on savoring the darkness.**

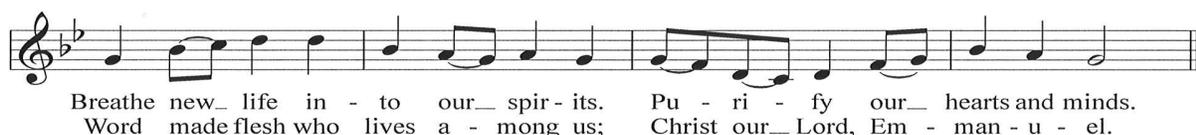
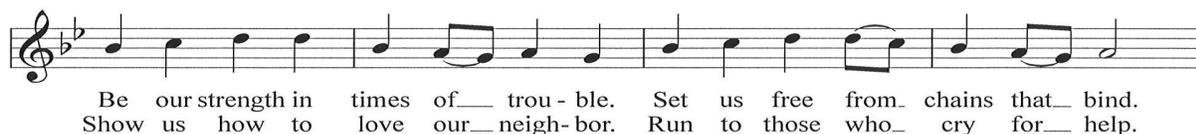
Gathering Song #272 vs 1, 3 & 4 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as seers of old have sung,
It came, a flow'r so bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half-spent was the night.

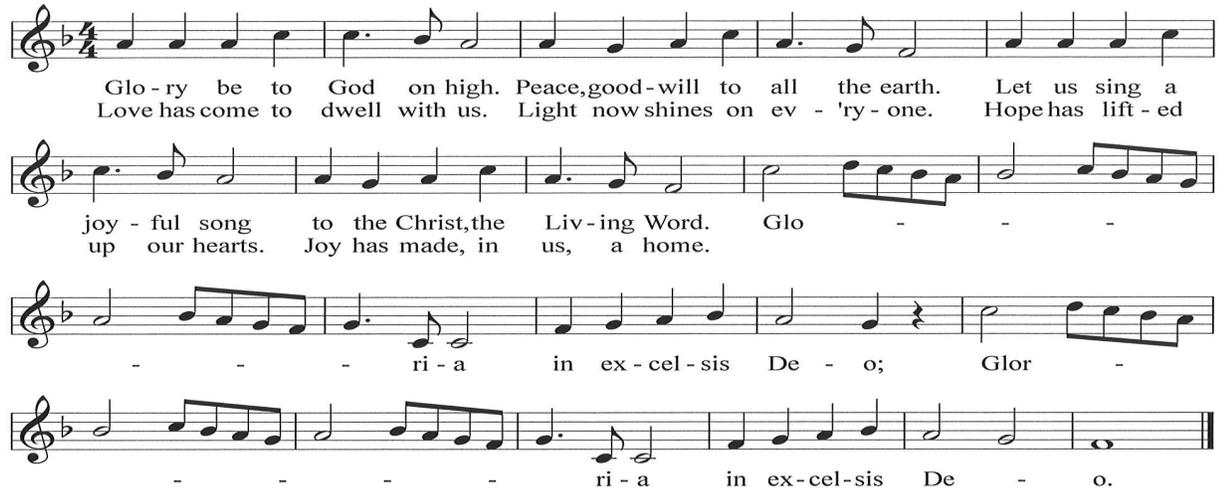
This flow'r, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air;
Dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
from sin and death he saves us
and lightens every load.

O Savior, child of Mary,
who felt our human woe;
O Savior, king of glory,
who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length, we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven
and into endless day.

Kyrie



Glory to God



Glo-ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev-'ry-one. Hope has lift-ed
joy-ful song to the Christ, the Liv-ing Word. Glo-
up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home. - - -
- - - ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o; Glor -
- - - ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord is with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray:

God of love and light, fill us with your Spirit of courage and liberty. When we are tempted by hatred, let us sow love and light. When we encounter hate, let us sow love and light. And when we witness or receive the gift of love and light, let us recognize your presence, leap for joy, and boldly, bravely, freely sow love and light all the more. Come, Jesus, come! **Amen.**

Word

Psalmody Luke 1:46b-55

And Mary said,

“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.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for 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.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

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



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
Al - le - lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 1:26-38

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message: "Its All Cycle-Logical: Celebrating Solstice" with Dee Sweet

Hymn of the Day # 740 vs 1, 5, & 6 "God of the Sparrow"

God of the sparrow, God of the whale, God of the swirling stars,
How does the creature say Awe? How does the creature say Praise?

God of the neighbor God of the foe, God of the pruning hook,
How does the creature say Love? How does the creature say Peace?

God of the ages, God near at hand, God of the loving heart,
How do your children say Joy? How do your children say Home?

CREED STATEMENT

We believe in Creator, Father-Mother Spirit, who called the world and all that is in it, into being, who spoke the creative-forming word, and all came forth who created women and men and set them free to live in love, in obedience to the will of supreme love and in community with all.

We believe in Creator, Son and Brother, who, because of love beyond our understanding, love for creation, entered the world to share our humanity, to rejoice and to despair; to set before us the paths of life and death, and walk them with us; to be rejected and die, but finally to conquer death and bind the world to himself for all time.

We believe in Creator, In-Dwelling Spirit, who invites us into community, that we may through faith and that community of oneness, experience uplifting and sustaining grace; that we may fulfill our human responsibility to reach out to our neighbor, whoever that may be; that we may rejoice in the constant nature of creation and the wondrous joy of life itself.

We believe in Creator, whose word teaches us that all things grow together, the Circle of Life; that the paths of life and death, good and evil, too often come together, that choices are not clearly defined; but that we confidently and responsibly tread the path we choose and only the true One can be our judge. We believe in Creator, who is present and working in this world through all creation. AMEN

Prayers of Intercession

God of power and light, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence especially for Wally and Colleen, Paula, Chick, Bill, Ruthann, Beverly, Chuck, Wilma, Brad, Audra, Barb, Gene, Deb, "Tiny," Pavel, Alla, Oliver and Victoria. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those who suffer from the coronavirus, and those who have died from the coronavirus. Receive the dead into your gentle embrace and comfort their loved ones with the power and protection of your peace. Give hope and healing to those who are sick and protection and healing hands and hearts, to the care givers and those on the front lines. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of our native ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Cross your hands over your heart. Look to the Light! Move your hands to your shoulders. Squeeze. Feel the hugs and love of the people.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray:

God of Light, our world is a very dark place. Therefore, we offer the gifts of ourselves, our time, and our resources, trusting you will use us to set the world aglow with your loving presence. May we give glory to you as our offerings continue to shine in your created Kingdom. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father 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.

Announcements

Blessing

May the sun, moon and stars glow on you like a great fire. May you rest and hibernate in the exquisite darkness. May you and the whole of the planet be yoked to new life through God's holy light and holy darkness.

Sending Hymn #292 ELW vs 1 & 3 "Love Has Come"

Love has come a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear now their song of joy arises: Love! Love!

Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking. Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.

Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

May you know how unique and powerfully important your light and love is in the world. And may you let it shine my friend, let it shine! **Thanks be to God!**