



**Order of Worship  
December 12, 2021  
The Third Sunday in Advent  
10:00 AM**

*10:00 Online Worship  
YouTube Channel "Harmony UMCVA"*

**GATHERING AND PRAISE**

**Welcome**

**Prelude**

*Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*

Handbell Choir

*The prelude signals the beginning of our sacred time together. During the prelude, you are invited to prepare your heart for worship by focusing your attention upon God.*

**Call to Worship**

Meghan Walker

We come to share together  
to celebrate the God who is present amongst us.

**The Lord our God is our strength and song,  
and is even now our salvation.**

We come to share together  
to celebrate with all the world, that the Lord is God.

**With joy we gather around God's fountain of grace  
to be refreshed and renewed.**

We come to share together  
to celebrate with songs of praise and joy for the  
Lord our God's eternal presence  
is forever amongst and with us, and all peoples.

**We sing with joy:**

**Thank the Lord, our Mighty God!**

**Praise God's holy name! Amen.**

**Opening Prayer**

Meghan Walker

God of hope and peace, on the third Sunday of Advent, let us remember that the good news of Jesus' birth has the power to bring us great joy this Christmas season. Our joy isn't dependent on what is going on in our life, in our world, or the people that we are with. It doesn't depend on the gifts we give or the gifts we find under the tree. Our joy comes from you. That joy that flooded the hearts of the shepherds, the angels, the wise men, the hosts of heaven, and Mary and Joseph is the joy that still has the power to overwhelm our hearts with rejoicing. Today, we worship you in joy. Amen.

**Hymn** (See last page)

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

UMH 213

**Lighting the Advent Candles: The Candle of Joy (Pink Candle)**

Earl and Caroline Curry

**Sung Response** (See last page)

*Advent Song, Verse Three*

FWS 2090

**Children's Message**

Pastor Debra

**Morning Prayer**

Pastor Debra

**The 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Ministry of Music**

*Carol of the Bells*

Handbell Choir

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

**Prayer for Illumination (All Praying)**

Meghan Walker

**Speak to us, Lord. Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing, the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.**

**Old Testament Reading**

Meghan Walker

**Isaiah 12:2-6**

Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust and not be afraid.

The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense<sup>[a]</sup>;

he has become my salvation."

<sup>3</sup> With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation.

<sup>4</sup> In that day you will say:

“Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name,  
make known among the nations what he has done,  
and proclaim that his name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup> Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things;  
let this be known to all the world.

<sup>6</sup> Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,  
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

### **New Testament Reading**

Meghan Walker

#### **Luke 3:7-18**

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

<sup>11</sup> John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

<sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

<sup>13</sup> “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

<sup>14</sup> Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

<sup>15</sup> The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup> John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” <sup>18</sup> And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

### **Sermon**

*Advent Joy*

Pastor Debra

### **Call to Confession**

Pastor Debra

Because it is so hard to wait, it is not easy to live through Advent's days. But watch what God does during this time. God waits for us to turn from our old ways to find the right paths; God waits for us to admit what we have done, and failed to do, so we might be forgiven and graced with new life. Let us approach the One who waits - for us!

### **Prayer of Confession (All Praying)**

Pastor Debra

**Mighty and powerful God, your word says, "Rejoice always." But we would rather sulk about the things that don't go right. Your word says, "Pray without ceasing." But we go for days without even thinking about You. Your word says, "Give thanks in all circumstances." But our thankfulness is fleeting because we think we deserve blessings. Your word says, "Hold fast to what is good," while we hold fast to sinful ways of thinking and acting. Hear our confessions and free us from our sin. Send us forth today in the joy of knowing we are forgiven.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

The prophets of old have declared, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God. For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robes of righteousness. Friends, believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

### **Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings**

Meghan Walker

*Even in difficult times we remember that God has done great things for us. We choose to live our lives in joy, counting on the goodness of God in every age. As a sign of our trust in God, we share our gifts this morning, strengthening the ministry of this church and the United Methodist Church as we seek together to extend hope, summon peace, and spread joy.*

*Offertory*

*On Christmas Night*

Sussex Carol

*\*Doxology*

*Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*\*Prayer of Dedication*

Meghan Walker

*Holy One, this Advent season we wait in joy, and we give in joy. Joy for all you have given us; joy because of your sacred promises. Receive these generous offerings, and use them to spread joy in our world. Amen.*

### **Reception of New Members**

Lauren Dobbins and Justin Gooding

## **GOING FORTH TO SERVE**

**Closing Hymn** (See last page) *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

UMH 216

**Benediction**

Pastor Debra

**Be people of joy.**

**Let joy live in your heart and share the joy of Christ with all you meet.**

Share joy by seeing the good in each other.

Share joy by remembering good times and hoping for good times to come.

Share joy by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share joy.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. God in peace. Amen.

**Sung Benediction**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;**

**Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.**

**We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;**

**O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!**

**Postlude**

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

French Carol

***Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates***

*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, with us abide;  
our hearts to thee we open wide;  
let us thy inner presence feel;  
thy grace and love in us reveal.*

*Thy Holy Spirit lead us on  
until our glorious goal is won;  
eternal praise, eternal fame  
be offered, Savior, to thy name!*

### ***Advent Song, Verse Three***

*Light the Advent candle, three:  
Think of heavenly harmony;  
Angels singing "Peace on earth"  
at the blessed Savior's birth.*

*Candle, candle, burning bright,  
singing in the cold winter night;  
candle, candle burning bright,  
fill our hearts with Christmas light.*

### ***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 those of old have sung.  
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.*

*O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,  
Dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.  
True man yet very God, from sin and death now save us,  
And share our every load.*