

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

9:30 AM

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Gathering

Welcome

Procession

Prelude

Lois Hunter

\*Call to Worship

One: Have you noticed? Are you paying attention? God is doing a new thing.

**All: We watch and wait in the fierce joy of the coming Messiah.**

One: You know the captives? God is bringing freedom. You know the broken-hearted? God is bringing healing.

**All: We watch and wait in the fierce joy of the coming Messiah.**

One: Beloved, listen. God is calling you. To be freed and to free your neighbors. To be healed and to heal your community. To testify to the Light among us.

**All: We watch and wait in the fierce joy of the coming Messiah.**

One: So, let us join our voices and hearts as we proclaim the story of the one whose coming we anticipate and yet is already as close as our own breath.

**All: We come to watch, to wait, and to worship in the fierce joy of Jesus Christ, the coming Messiah. Amen.**

\*Opening Hymn

Advent Candle Lighting

This morning we light three candles. The first symbolizes the hope of Christ's coming. The second shows us the peace that the Messiah will bring us. Lighting the third candle signals the joy that is soon to spread throughout the world.

*Two purple candles are lit.*

**Gracious God, the remarkable joy that the birth of your son brings is a light to brighten our personal darkness and a reason to give all humankind a reason to rejoice. May this feeling of gladness and wonder fill our days throughout the year. We pray this in your holy name. Amen.**

\*Opening Prayer

**Holy God of joy, we rejoice in the reality of who you are. We live within the joy of your love for us. Our contentment comes and goes. Our happiness ebbs and flows. Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry. But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children. And we give you thanks. Amen.**

Joys and Concerns

Silent Prayer

Special Music

Scripture Reading            Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

\*Hymn

Scripture Reading            1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Sermon

Pastor Sam

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

\*Closing Hymn

\*Blessing and Benediction

\*Recessional

Postlude

Lois Hunter

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**We invite you to keep the following people in your prayers:**

**Family of Kitty Alley**, Joan Alsever, Family of Maryann Ayd, Family of Paulette Ayd, Miriam Baker, Tammy Baskaran, Bob Reed's cousin Lydia, Bruce Beckman, Frannie Beckman, **Family of Dale Bennett**, Family of Sherry Billings, Rob Brandt, Michael Brick, family of Michael Britt, Libby Bowerman, Amanda Buckley, Roy Callahan, Carolyn's daughter Debbie, **JoAnn Cook**, Family of Chris Davis, Steve Dawson, Family of Bill Dietz, Anna Doynov, Susan Getty, Tim Eichhorn, Family of Paula Farina, Pat Finley, Taliyah Fitzgerald, Family of Baby Graham Geschke, Lynn Gibbons, Family of Karen Goles, Brenda and Georges Guerrier, Donna Hesson, Lynah Guile, Amy Humphrey, Family of Pauline Jackson, Mark Hardy, Family of Billy Hughes, Jim Hobson, Ellie Hunter, Lois Hunter, Ouita Jackson, Family of Dean Jestes, Family of Claire Kelly, Family of David Kirchner, Gene Kolnowski, Jan Lambert, Family of Patty Leupen, Laurel's Mom and Dad, Billy Lewis, Karen Martin, Ed Massey, Tiny Massey, Butch Lichliter, Lisa McClay, Family of Tom Melkus, Mary Michael, Craig Moore, Kathy Moore, Kathy Mullins, Family of Pete Murdza, Mark Nicholson, Gail Phillips Smith and Miles Smith, **Michael Smith**, Theresa Schmitt and the Mullins children, Larry and Jackie Paulus, Linda Playdon, **Family of Linda Rice**, Joyce Ritter, Bob Reed, Family of Doris Rhinehart, Dana Rosendahl, Russell Rueling, Bob Russel, Jim Bob Schultze, Family of Ed Scott, Pat Sievers, Jean Steigleman, Bob Spicher, Bob Smith, **Jack Snyder**, Lisa Summers, Sharon Truedel, Debbie Webb, Don Weinberg, Family of Harding Wescott, Bud Whitehead, family of Jamie Whitehead, family of Mary Francis Whitehead, Shannon Whitehead, Gertie Williams, Family of JoEllen Williams, Family of Reds Williams, Tom Wimsatt, Diane Withers, Family of Larry Wright, Jimmy Wylie, Family of Tony Zile

**Long-term prayer concerns:** Karyn Brandel, Jerry Fowler, Shirly Graham, Richard Giffin, Carrie Harrison, Robin Jones, Barbara Maury, Anna Catherine Miller, Dustin Summers, Ryan Whitehead and his family

**Thank you** to our Greeters and Ushers – Shannon and Ron Whitehead

**Thank you** to our Liturgist – Jim Deverin

**Upcoming Events**

- **Today – Marriotts Ridge Chamber Choir at Gary Memorial – 11:30 AM**
- **Sunday December 24**
  - **4th Sunday of Advent service – Emory 9:30 AM**
  - **Christmas Eve Candlelight – GM 5:30 PM**
  - **Christmas Eve Candlelight – Emory 7:30 PM**
- **Sunday December 31 – combined service at Emory at 10 AM**