

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021

Pacific Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

**THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: The Lord has come to us in love and in grace.  
All: **We come in anticipation of the wonder God is birthing in our midst.**  
One: So come, to be touched by the mystery of God with us.  
All: **We come to worship and praise Christ the Lord!**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" GtG 104 (*Verses 1-2*)

One: O Lord, how shall I meet you,  
how welcome you aright?  
All: **Your people long to greet you,  
my hope, my heart's delight!**  
One: O kindle, Lord most holy,  
a lamp within my breast,  
to do in spirit lowly  
all that may please you best.  
  
All: **Love caused your incarnation;  
love brought you down to me;**  
One: your thirst for my salvation  
procured my liberty.  
All: **O love beyond all telling,  
that led you to embrace  
in love, all loves excelling,  
our lost and fallen race.**

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**\*UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**We praise you, O God, for the joy of Christ in our midst. We thank you for your gift of love and grace. Yet we confess that too often we have ignored your coming to us. Too often we have turned a deaf ear to your call. Too often we have turned a cold shoulder to your presence in the needs of others. Forgive us for those times when we refuse to welcome you because it is inconvenient or risky to do so. As you have opened your heart to us, so open our lives to you, that we may know the full joy of your abiding in our hearts. In the name of the Christ-child we pray. Amen.**

**\*SILENT CONFESSION**

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON** (from Luke 2)

One: In this is love, that God gives us the gift of Jesus Christ to remind us of the truth of Immanuel: that God is with us.

**All: This is indeed “good news of great joy for all the people.”**

One: So rejoice and be glad, for in Jesus Christ we are loved, in Jesus Christ we are embraced, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**All: “Glory to God in the highest heaven!”**

**\*THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

*(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)*

**THE WORD**

**THE ADVENT WREATH (Mothers of Messiah): Ruth**

(“Mothers of Messiah” by Tracy Sybesma. From *Reformed Worship 85* © September 2007  
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God of the wom – en God of the men  
God of the chil – dren too  
How do your peo - ple know laugh-ter  
How do your peo - ple share joy

*ROEDER (God of the Sparrow), Tune by Carl Schalk.  
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**SCRIPTURE READING** Ruth 2:8-13

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SERMON** “Room for Ruth?” by Pastor Bill Vincent

**\*HYMN** “O Little Town of Bethlehem” GtG 121 (*Verses 1, 3, & 4*)

1. **O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.**
  
3. **How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.**
  
4. **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!**

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**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We trust in God,  
whom Jesus called Abba, Father.  
In sovereign love God created the world good  
and makes everyone equally in God's image,  
male and female, of every race and people,  
to live as one community.**

**But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.  
Ignoring God's commandments,  
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,  
accept lies as truth,  
exploit neighbor and nature,  
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.  
We deserve God's condemnation.  
Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.  
In everlasting love,  
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people  
to bless all families of the earth.  
Hearing their cry,  
God delivered the children of Israel  
from the house of bondage.  
Loving us still,  
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.  
Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,  
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,  
God is faithful still.**

*(from A Brief Statement of Faith, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Confessions)*

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**Pastor:** God of grace...

**People:** ...rejuvenate us in your joy and love.

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER** *(Traditional)*

**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 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.**

#### **OFFERING**

*Invitation*

*Reflection*

*\*Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Thank you, thank you, loving God, for gifts of grace and the gift of Christ. Accept the offerings we bring; use them to help feed a world hungry for healing and hope. Enter our grateful hearts, and use us to embody your presence and proclaim your glory. In the joy of Christ we pray. Amen.**

**SENDING**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** “Joy to the World” GtG 134

1. **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**
  
2. **Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**
  
3. **No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.**
  
4. **He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

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**\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

**Pastor:** ...And let the gathered people of God say...  
**People:** ...Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

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