

In-Person Bulletin for Worship

December 12, 2021

9:00 Service

Prelude Lo, How a Rose is Blooming (Es ist Ein' Ros')
O Little Town of Bethlehem (St. Louis)
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (In dulci Jubilo)
Angels We Have Heard on High (Gloria)

arr. Benjamin M. Culli
arr. Janet Linker
arr. Emily Maxson Porter
arr. Frederick Frahm

Announcements

Carol Wetzel

Lit candle is brought in reminding us of Christ in our Midst.

Lighting the Candle of Joy

Frize Family

This morning we light the candles of Hope and Peace, and we light the third candle, Joy, marking that our time of preparation is now half over.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; **again I will say, Rejoice.**”

The world says, “Worry,” **and we say, “Rejoice.”**

The news says, “Fear,” **and we say, “Rejoice.”**

The world says, “Be happy,” **and the church says, “Be faithful.”**

(Light 3 candles, 2 purple and the pink one)

As we light our third Advent candle,

We pray for hope, peace, and joy.

Come now, O child of Mary.

Come now, O Prince of Joy.

Let us pray: God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Call to Worship

Carol Wetzel

Prepare the way of the Lord!

Let us sing praises to the Lord,

for God has done glorious things.

Let us shout aloud and sing for joy,

or great in our midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Come, let us worship God.

Musical Meditation: “Prepare the Way, O Zion”

arranged by mark Sedio

Prepare the way, O Zion,

your Christ is drawing near!

Let every hill and valley

a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory,
foretold in sacred story.
O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.

*TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812, rev. 1819; trans. Augustus Nelson, 1958; adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980, alt;
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MUSIC (BEREDEN VÅG FÖR HERRAN 7.6.7.6.7.7 with refrain); Then Svenska Psalmboken, 1697;
arr. American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930, All rights reserved. First Presbyterian Church, FDL, WI OneLicense #A-730666*

Prayer of Adoration

Let us pray: Lord, we have come to this place from a world of demands and schedules.
We have sought hope and peace and have found them here.
Now we seek the inner joy that only your presence can bring to our lives.
Open our hearts and our spirits to your love. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. **AMEN.**

Call to Confession

Trusting in God's salvation, faithfulness and merciful love,
let us confess our sin and the sins of the world,
as we lift our voices together.

Prayer of Confession

It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn a deaf ear because we feel we just can't meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything but rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

Take a few moments for your own silent confession

Assurance of Hope and Forgiveness

The messenger has been sent to you, proclaiming that there is One who is Coming who will heal and lead you. Know that this is a great gift from God, who has always and will always love you. **AMEN.**

Glory to God Hymnal #583 "Gloria, Gloria"

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

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Scripture Readings:

Zephaniah 3:14–20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing

¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

Luke 3:7–18

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' ¹¹In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' ¹²Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' ¹³He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for

you.’ ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Message: “An Invitation to Joy” (Don’t Postpone the Joy) *Rev. Mary Council Austin*
Pastoral Prayer

Prayers of the People

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.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who have sinned 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.

Because You Gave: Brief presentation by Tom Ott from Sleep in Heavenly Peace

Invitation to Dismiss to Fellowship Hall for Blessing of the Angel Tree Gifts

Sending Music: *(assembly dismisses during this instrumental piece)*

The Trees of the Field You shall go out with Joy

by Stuart Dauerman

Benediction

Presentation and Q & A in Fellowship Hall: Sleep in Heavenly Peace *by Tom Ott*