



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FENTON

To be a loving community of faith dedicated to helping people know Jesus Christ and grow, share and serve as his disciples.

3rd Sunday of Advent  
December 11, 2022 10:00 AM

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### GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

**PRELUDE** “Lo, How a Rose Ere Blooming”  
“Rejoice Greatly”

Chanah Ambuter  
Gabrielle Hoffman

### WELCOME

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Rejoice in the Lord always.

**We come to worship and rejoice.**

Again, I say “rejoice!”

**We come to worship and rejoice.**

The Lord is near!

**We come to worship and rejoice in the One who is with us!**

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

What is God like?

God is like the flame of a candle, warm and inviting. With God close by, you can look to the light and see through the darkest of nights.

The God who makes us feel loved is the source of our joy.

Today we light three advent candles: the candle of hope, the candle of love, and the candle of joy.

In moment of discouragement, even despair: the light shines in the darkness,

**And the darkness has not overcome it.**

In moments of confusion, even bewilderment: The light shines in the darkness,

**And the darkness has not overcome it.**

In moments of loneliness, even abandonment: the light shines in the darkness,

**And the darkness has not overcome it.**

Because Emmanuel came to be God with us: the light shines in the darkness,

**And the darkness has not overcome it.**

### HYMN BH #2, PH #82

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

### CALL TO CONFESSION

We live in a world of quick fixes. Of two-day delivery. Of television on demand. With computers in our pockets most of the day, we expect immediate responses to texts and emails. So it makes sense, then, that we struggle to sit with hard feelings, that we work hard to rush through or quickly past sadness, heartbreak, and uncertainty--both ours and others'. But as the season of Advent teaches

us, light and healing are slow-building things. This morning, let us confess our discomfort with darkness and difficulty and our urge to quickly rush to the light and good news.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (In Unison)

**God, this morning we confess that we have a hard time with hard times. We want to put bandages on deep wounds and pretend that everything is going to be OK. We want to say magic words and wipe all the tears away. We are shortsighted, and we are control freaks. We are unable to surrender our hurt and discomfort to you, so we often end up causing harm and heartbreak for ourselves and others. God, help us to surrender, help us to heal, and help us to be agents of your persistent, present, and slow-growing light. We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Light of the world, who stepped into our darkness. Amen.**

**DECLARATION OF PARDON**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, the promise is true: God loves us. God forgives us. God is coming to us, even now, to save us.

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Light of the world, shine on us today, so we can see your face and feel the warmth of your love. In your name, Jesus. Amen.

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** Isaiah 35:1-10

Pg. 663

**35** The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;

the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

like the crocus **2** it shall blossom abundantly

and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,

the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,

the majesty of our God.

**3** Strengthen the weak hands

and make firm the feeble knees.

**4** Say to those who are of a fearful heart,

“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

**5** Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

**6** then the lame shall leap like a deer,

and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness

and streams in the desert;

**7** the burning sand shall become a pool

and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
 the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;  
 the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
**8** A highway shall be there,  
 and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
 the unclean shall not travel on it,  
 but it shall be for God's people;  
 no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
**9** No lion shall be there,  
 nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
 they shall not be found there,  
 but the redeemed shall walk there.  
**10** And the ransomed of the Lord shall return  
 and come to Zion with singing;  
 everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
 they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
 and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

### ORCHESTRA PRESENTATION

“Sing We Now of Christmas”  
 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”  
 “The First Noel”  
 “Still, Still, Still”  
 “And the Glory of the Lord”

### NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Luke 2:1-7

Pg. 58

2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

### ORCHESTRA PRESENTATION

“O Holy Night”  
 “Mary, Did You Know?”  
 “Suite Familiar French Carols”  
 “Greensleeves”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

**OFFERING**

Generosity is the progeny of Joy. Let us provide for the ministries of this church out of our blessing with joy, because God loves a joyful giver.

*(If you would like a written prayer request included in our prayers today, please indicate that and an usher will collect them)*

*(Financial Offerings can also be placed in dropbox located in the New Narthex)*

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Let us pray:

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

**OFFERTORY**

“Carol of the Bells”

Allison Rhoades, Kim Borgert

**DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE****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 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.*

**HYMN**

“Fullness of Grace”

**CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

God the Father, who loved the world  
so much that he sent his only Son,  
give you grace to prepare for eternal life.  
God the Son, who comes to us as Redeemer and Judge,  
reveal to you the path from darkness to light.  
God the Holy Spirit, by whose working  
the virgin Mary conceived the Christ,  
help you bear the fruits of holiness. Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

“Ode to Joy”

Chanah Ambuter

Peace be with you! *...and also with you!*