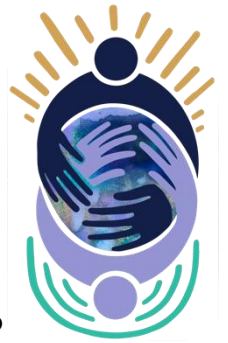


The Presbyterian Church of Okemos

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent



Preparation: “The Gospel of Luke makes it abundantly clear that there is nothing straightforward about saying yes to God. Mary’s yes is layered and complicated. Even as it blesses and elevates her, it also bewilders and pierces her. Her yes is costly. Her yes is dangerous. Her yes is lonely. But her yes is also what enables her to craft a coherent and joyful life.” - Debi Thomas, from *Into the Mess and Other Jesus Stories: Reflections on the Life of Christ*

Gathering As a People of God

Prelude

Variations on *Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland*
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Karen Keene

Choral Introit

Prepare the Way, O Zion
PCO Chancel Choir

*** Call to Worship**

Jack Harkema, Liturgist

One: Welcome to worship.

All: Welcome to worship.

One: I am glad you’re here.

All: I am glad you’re here.

One: Surely God is in this space.

All: Surely God is in this space.

One: I see God in your face.

All: I see God in your face.

One: Let us worship together.

All: Let us worship together.

*** Hymn #102**

Savior of the Nations, Come, vs. 1-4
[Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland]

Prayer of Confession

Rebecca Mattern

One: Family of faith, one of the ways we find joy in a weary world is through connection. The prayer of confession is a place of connection with God. In the prayer of confession we get to come before God with our full, messy, honest selves. And in the midst of that mess, God tells us that we are loved, claimed, and forgiven. There is no greater joy than that. So join me in the prayer of confession, not because you have to, but because you can. Let us connect with our merciful God.

God of laughter, God of open front doors and family reunions, we confess that we often doubt good news.

All: We move through this world waiting for the other shoe to drop, waiting for life to fall apart, waiting for our humanity to get the best of us.

One: Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity.

All: We lean into fear. We lean into isolation.

One: Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared.

All: Heal the wounds we have from past hurts, and teach us how to throw open our doors like Elizabeth. Show us how to find joy in connection. Amen.

Promise of the Gospel and Passing of the Peace

Rebecca Mattern

One: Faith family, I imagine that when we come before God with the truth of our lives, God meets us like Elizabeth meets Mary in our scripture today. The door is thrown open. There is laughter. There is joy. There is embracing—and it is holy. So trust this; believe this:

All: We are claimed. We are loved. We are forgiven. And we are sent to serve. And in this, there is joy! Amen!

One: As a forgiven people, let us greet each other, sharing the peace of Christ. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you. *Please greet your fellow worshippers in ways you feel comfortable.*

*** Act of Praise #583**

Gloria, Gloria

Jacques Berthier

[Gloria]

Will be sung once by soloist; please join on the second time

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

The Word

Prayer of Illumination

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Holy God, we know that you are near. We know that you are inviting us in—into your Word, into relationship, and deeper into joy. As we approach your Word, O God, we pray: do not let us pass you by. Do not allow distraction or doubt to get the best of us. Give us the wisdom to turn and run your way. Give us the wisdom to hear your wisdom, to let it sink into our bones and change us. With hope and gratitude we pray, amen.

Lighting the Advent Candle: Peace and Children's Message

Jeff, Emily & Lizzie

Old Testament Scripture

Isaiah 40:1-11

Conroy-Krutz family

Journey to Bethlehem

Nativity: Angels

Musical Response #88 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, vs. 2*

O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily

To us the path of knowledge show; and teach us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel will come to thee, O Israel.

Youth Instrumental Choir

Christmas Medley

arr: John O'Reilly

John Kinyon, Sarah Mayhew

Lizzie Conroy-Krutz, violin

Andrew Mayhew, euphonium

Connor Haskel, cello

Claire Mayhew, French horn

Even Haskel, viola

Maddie Pearson, trumpet

Alex Juarez, trumpet

Sarah Mayhew, Director

New Testament Scripture

Luke 1:24-45

Rebecca Mattern, Jeff Conroy-Krutz
Jack Harkema, Pastor Lisa Schrott

Sermon

How Does a Weary World Rejoice? We Find Joy in Connection

Rebecca Mattern

Affirmation of Faith

Rebecca Mattern

We believe that joy is a sacred gift, existing on a plane deeper than happiness, stemming from the truth that we belong to God. We believe that joy is not meant for isolation. Joy is meant to be shared, weaving us together in laughter and in hope.

And when joy feels impossibly out of reach, we believe that part of being sacred community is leaning on one another. So together we say: I will share my joy when yours runs out. You will share your joy when mine runs out. And in doing so, we will both see God. Amen.

Anthem

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

Traditional Carol

Responding to the Word

Invitation to Our Shared Ministry

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Minute for Service

Joy Offering

Kent Workman

Offering

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Invitation

Offertory

Meditation on *Of the Father's Love Begotten*
[Based on *Divinum Mysterium*]

James Southbridge

***Doxology #606**

***Prayer of Dedication**

Prayers of the People

Jack Harkema, Liturgist

The Lord's Prayer

in unison

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.

Sent Out As a People of God

*** Hymn #87**

Comfort, Comfort Now My People, vs. 1-3
[Genevan 42]

*** Benediction**

Rebecca Mattern

Family of faith, as you leave this place,
you go into a weary world—so speak tenderly.
Do the good that is yours to do.
Choose connection. Hold onto hope.
And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.
You are God's beloved. So go rejoicing.
The world needs it. Amen.

Postlude

Prepare the Royal Highway setting by Michael Burkhardt
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

** Please rise in body or spirit*

Education Time: Pastor Lisa will lead a discussion on Old Testament passages used during the Advent season.

Next Week December 17, 2023: Third Sunday of Advent

Scripture: Psalm 126; Luke 1:57-66

Education Hour: Reflecting on the Art of Advent and Christmas. We will practice *visio divina*, sharing how the art speaks into our lives.

Ushers: Gary & Trudy Sturk, Jeff & Michele Arbour

This Morning's Fellowship Team: Thank you to Jane Bobay and Barb Hoevel for supplying our snacks and to Deb Major and Wayne Scott for taking care of the coffee.

This morning's liturgy is adapted from words by the Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed. Graphic design by the Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman. A Sanctified Art LLC - *A Weary World Rejoices*
sanctifiedart.org.

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Rebecca Mattern, Interim Director of Faith Formation
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, Organist
Westin Sorrel, Chancel Choir Director
Irene Shutt, Handbell Choir Director
Edward Ennen, Sexton
Anna Thiel, Office Manager