

Virtual Worship Service
The Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20, 2020
Crossnore Presbyterian Church

Welcome and Church Announcements

Rev. Kathy Campbell

Choral Call to Worship: *Creator of the Stars of Night*

Text and Music: Marty Haugen, 1987 <https://youtu.be/Cv0k2tdy6bl>



Artist, Corby Eisbacher

Marie Cook

The Lighting of the Advent Candles:

We have lighted the first three Advent Candles representing our hope, our waiting, and our watching.

We light the fourth candle of Advent, which represents our witness to the Light of Christ.

This Sunday, we will witness the faith of Mary and Elizabeth who were bearers of light and love.

Elizabeth was old, wise, and barren. Even though her time for conceiving a child had past, she believed in the angel's promise of a son, the forerunner of the Messiah.

Mary was young, strong, and spiritual. Even though her life was not easy, she heard God's voice and said yes. Her song was a prayer that would uplift those who were downtrodden.

Her lyrics shattered the proud and called the world to change.

Elizabeth would bear within her the prophet John who would prepare the way of the Lord.

Mary would bear within her the promised child, Jesus, the Light of the World.

This Advent, we respond to God's beckoning to us as well.

Let us pray:

Revealing God, visit us and fill us with your Spirit. Bring your good news to life within us. Give us courage to carry your light into the injustices and shadows of this world. Amen.

Call to Worship:

Robert Dunn

Our souls proclaim your greatness, O God.

And our spirits rejoice in you.

We will praise you as long as we live.

We will sing praises to you our whole lives long.

We will not trust in the powerful of this world,

But will trust in you—Creator of heaven and earth,

the One who gives food to the hungry,

the One who enacts justice for the oppressed.

Our souls proclaim your greatness, O God

As we worship you around the table, at the computer desk,

sitting on the couch or outside, alone or with others.

Praise be to you, O God: Our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

Hymn of Praise # 105 *People, Look East*

Bobby Taylor

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928; Music: French folk melody;

Sing along with M4V: https://youtu.be/7SPLN1g_ZFY

**People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.**

**Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.**

People, look east and sing today:

Love, the guest, is on the way.

**Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:**

**Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.**

People, look east and sing today:

Love, the rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch when night is dim,
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.



Call to Confession:

David Kidder

Every notion we have about power, success, wealth and achievement, God takes and tosses out the window. More importantly, God comes to us, to upset our idea that we must save ourselves. In Jesus, God comes to us, removing our sin, our failures, our expectations, so we might have life. Please join me as we pray together.

Unison Prayer of Confession:

We confess we are not the people you hope us to be, Advent God. The very ones you favor? All too often, we ignore them, or worse fill them with ridicule. The ones you knock off their pedestals? We continue to admire them, seeking to emulate their ways. The drumbeat for more and more? We give into the rhythm so easily, we risk being sent away empty. Forgive us Mighty God who comes in the weakness of a baby. Look with grace upon us, so we might see your love shining down. We could live secure in your hope, we could be the ones of peace for our world, we could learn to do your will, if we but welcome Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, into our hearts and into our lives.

Assurance of Pardon:

God passes the heirloom of mercy down from generation to generation, always loving, always forgiving, always calling us to new life.

As we open our hearts to God, we are filled with the Joy that was sung at the Birth, with the Hope that walked among us, with the Grace which is always with us. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

Special Music: *Mary, Did You Know?*

Sung by Pentatonix: <https://youtu.be/ifCWN5pJGIE>

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:39-56

Rev. Kathy Campbell

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made

to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home. *The Word of the Lord; thanks be to God.*

Sermon: “Can I Get a Witness?” (on a separate Zoom Link in email)

Rev. Kathy Campbell



Affirmation of Faith:

Our souls magnify the Lord,
and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior,
for he looks with favor upon us
and sees our unrealized potential.

In the tradition of Mary,
and all who have said “yes” to God,
we stand here today,
to add our assent to theirs.

Robert Dunn

Like Mary, we feel overwhelmed;
we wonder if we are worthy,
or capable, of following the calling.
Like Mary, we have our questions
and we will not be afraid to ask them.
Like Mary, we will hear and ponder
the assurance that God will empower us.
Like Mary we will strive to say -
“Let it be with us according to your will.”

To whatever God is inviting of us
at this time in our lives,
and relying on God’s grace,
we say “yes.”

(written by Ann Siddall)

Hymn of Meditation # 69 *I, the Lord of Sea and Sky*

Text and Music: Daniel Schutte, 1981

Sing along with <https://youtu.be/mgLwH5RdtPk>

Bobby Taylor

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

[Chorus]

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my words to them. Whom shall I send?

[Chorus]

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?
[Chorus]

Prayers of the People

David Kidder

Eternal God, you are love, love made clear in the life of Jesus.

You come:

In the hope kindled that keeps us from despair,
In the peace shared that encourages comfort,
In joy that makes hearts sing,
You are near, very near.

You come:

In the sudden shock of 'aha' moments,
In the laughter of a child,
In times of spontaneous affection,
You are near, very near.



Please come:

To the ones who have given up hope,
To the depressed and the despairing,
To the war torn places and the conflicted hearts,
Come near loving God, come very near.

Please come:

To people who are worrying,
To the sick and to the dying,
To those who are sobbing,
Come near loving God, come very near.

Please come:

To the ones whose faith is strong,
To the ones who look for you,
To the many who worship you this day,
Come near loving God, come very near.
As we pray the prayer Jesus taught his disciples:
Our Father...Amen.

~Written by Janice Freeston



Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings:

Marie Cook

God is at work in the world, renewing, remaking, resurrecting, bringing hope through the faith, the gifts, and the work of the church. We trust in God, and together we work for peace and justice through God's Spirit. Let us rejoice in our God-given opportunity to share in God's work.

Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

Thank you, God of Love, for the promise of this season. We are grateful for the generosity aroused in us by Christ's coming into the world. May these gifts represent a new spirit of joyous sharing among us, for the sake of all your children everywhere. Amen.

Closing Hymn # 119 *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

Sing along with the Choir from Newcastle upon Tyne: <https://youtu.be/ICt1s44cfMM>

Bobby Taylor



Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th’angelic host proclaim:
“Christ is born in Bethlehem.”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ by highest heav'n adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Charge and Benediction:

On our hearts and on our homes:
the blessing of God.
In our coming and our going:
the peace of God.
In our life and our believing:
the love of God.
At our end and new beginning:
the embrace of God to welcome us
and bring us home.

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Postlude: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

Performed by the Piano Guys: https://youtu.be/lrwZj4_DxYU

Emmanuel
GOD WITH US