

Worship Guide

December 12, 2021: The Third Sunday of Advent



GREETING AND INTRODUCTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Good friends, Rejoice. God is with you.

P: Even though we are imperfect and too often have turned our backs on God, still God is with us.

L: God's love is forever. You are beloved.

P: Even when we behave in ways which are contrary to what God would have us do.

L: God forgives and loves you and seeks your well-being.

P: Praise be to God for such wondrous love. AMEN.

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, it is getting more and more difficult for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and divisive distractions. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need are all around us. Sometimes the social discord and the needs of our neighbors can be overwhelming. 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.

OPENING HYMN: *Blessed Be the God of Israel #209UMH*

*1 Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free,
who visits and redeems us, and grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill the promise to bring our people peace.*

*2 Now from the house of David a child of grace is given;
a Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven.
Before him goes the herald, forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation, the harbinger of day.*

*3 On prisoners of darkness the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner's eyes,
to guide the feet of pilgrims along the paths of peace;
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease!*

LIGHTING OF THE 3RD ADVENT CANDLE

Reader 1: 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 (**Isaiah 35:10**)

Reader 2: The first candle was the candle of Hope. *Light the 1st Advent Candle*

Reader 3: The second candle was the candle of Peace. *Light the 2nd Candle*

Reader 4: We light the third candle as a symbol of Christ our Joy. *Light the 3rd Candle* (the pink candle)

Reader 5: May the joyful promise of your presence O God, make us rejoice in our hope of salvation.

ALL: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel !

RESPONSIVE HYMN: *Light the Advent Candle #2090 TFWS (verse 3)*

Verse 3: Light the Advent candle three ,

Think of heavenly harmony;

Angels singing, "Peace on Earth"

At the blessed Savior's birth.

Refrain: Candle, candle burning bright

Shining in the cold winter night

Candle, candle burning bright

Fill our hearts with Christmas light.

SCRIPTURE

First Old Testament Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Second Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 12:2-6

Gospel Lesson: Luke 3:7-18

L: The word of God, for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God!

HYMN OF PREPARATION: *The First Song of Isaiah 2030 TFWS*

Refrain: Surely, it is God who saves me;

I will trust in him and not be afraid.

For the Lord is my stronghold

and my sure defense,

and he will be my Savior.

*1. Therefore you shall draw water
with rejoicing from the springs of salvation.*

And on that day you shall say,

Give thanks to the Lord and

call upon his Name. [Refrain]

2. Make his deeds known

among the peoples;

see that they remember

that his Name is exalted.

Bridge:

Sing the praises of the Lord,

for he has done great things.

and this is known in all the world.

3. Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion,

ring out your joy,

for the great one in the midst of you

is the Holy One of Israel. [Refrain]

MESSAGE: The Joy of Home

Betty Frederic

SONG BEFORE & AFTER TIME OF PRAYER: *O Lord, Hear Our Prayers#2200TFWS*

O Lord hear our prayer, O Lord hear our prayer When we call, answer us. O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord here our prayer Come and listen to us.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (after each time of silence, we'll finish with the words "Lord in your mercy" and you are invited to respond, "**Hear our prayer.**")

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. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

OFFERING

This is an opportunity to share the goodness that has been given to you. Consider sending an offering to PO Box 630, Skowhegan, ME 04976. You are also invited to support an organization or church in our local community that is making a positive difference in people's lives.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CLOSING HYMN: *Gather Us In #2236 TFWS*

- 1. Here in this place new light is streaming
Now is the darkness vanished away
See in this space our fears and our dreamings
Brought here to you in the light of this day
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken
Gather us in, the blind and the lame
Call to us now and we shall awaken
We shall arise at the sound of our name.*
- 2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery
We are the old who yearn for your face
We have been sung throughout all of history
Called to be light to the whole human race
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty
Gather us in, the proud and the strong
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly
Give us the courage to enter the song.*

*3. Here we will take the wine and the water
Here we will take the bread of new birth
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters
Call us anew to be salt for the earth
Give us to drink the wine of compassion
Give us to eat the bread that is you
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true*

*4. Not in the dark of buildings confining
Not in some heaven light years away
But here in this place the new light is shining
Now is the kingdom, now is the day
Gather us in and hold us forever
Gather us in and make us your own
Gather us in, all peoples together
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

Go forth in joy and gladness and singing,
knowing that with God as our Guide and Holy Way,
even we cannot go astray! AMEN!

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The New HEARTS AND HANDS THRIFT SHOP

Co-Managers: James Barto and Ila Libby

Hours of Operation: Wednesdays 9 AM to 12 PM

*****Call James @ 207-858-0257 to arrange drop off donations or for more information**

The Thrift Shop will be holding an indoor Christmas sale in the fellowship hall each Saturday, from 9 AM– 12 Noon until Christmas.

CLOTHING CLOSET

The Clothing Closet is open on Wednesdays 9 AM to NOON and 5 PM to 7 PM

The Donation Bin will be open December 8—December 15.

THE CUP CAFÉ

Our CUP Café is open on Wednesdays 9AM—12 NOON.

Each week we offer a light lunch, lemonade, coffee and snacks. We also have FREE Wi-fi.

FREE DRIVE THRU COMMUNITY MEALS

Our free Drive Thru Community meals are on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Our next meal will be on December 14th. Chicken Fajitas and dessert. Call 207-474-3915, leave your name and number of meals. Pick up time is between 5pm and 6 pm that evening.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LENDING PROGRAM

Do you or someone you know have need for a wheelchair, walker, crutches, canes, etc.? If so, we have many of these items available through our medical lending program. This is offered by ap-ointment. Call 207-474-3915 and leave your name, phone number, and the item that you need. Someone will contact you. This is an outreach through the partnership of Common Unity Place and Centenary United Methodist Church.

SKOWHEGAN AREA YOUTH GROUP

Thursdays from 5:30-7 pm at Centenary UMC on the Dr. Mann Rd. Snacks and activities provided. For more information, please call Sharon Newell or Kevin Tansey at 207-708-0767 or 207-877-5987.

*If you have unwanted or broken Christmas decorations, please bring them in and drop them off in the Sunday School Room. We will use them for craft projects to sell.

BIBLE STUDY COMING IN JANUARY 2022!

“Behold, I am *COMING SOON*” Rev 22:7

Bible Study on the Book of Revelation

Or All you ever wanted to know about the end of time, as prophesized by the prophet John

Tuesdays from 10:00 am - 11:00am in the “Café”

- 1/11 Who, What, Where, When, Why and How?
- 1/18 How Soon is Soon? Or How Can Soon Not Be Soon?
- 1/25 The Players: Good Guys, Bad Guys, Beastie Boys and Girls.
- 1/31 What’s Happening Here? Places and Events.
- 2/15 Are These Sevens Lucky or Unlucky?
- 2/22 What Would Jesus Do, and What Would Jesus Have Us Do
About the End of the World?

Contact John Malek (399-2955) with Questions or to sign up...“Soon!”

*****Pre-Reading the whole Book of Revelation before will help you understand more*****