

## *Fourth Week of Advent*

**Sunday, December 20, 2020**

**Sunday Morning Worship**

*Please join us online for worship this morning. The video will go "live" at 10:30am.*

### **Call to Worship**

Look! The young woman is with child;  
she will call him Emmanuel, for God is with us.  
A ruler will come from Bethlehem, and he will be the shepherd of peace.  
The mystery of the ages is now revealed. To God be the glory forever! Amen.

### **Opening Prayer**

God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will. Prepare our hearts for his coming again; keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom for the sake of Jesus Christ, the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**

*Light all four advent candles.*

Light one candle for joy. Because the world is broken and the wait is long, but our joy cannot be contained. Like a toddler, toppling the thrones of power with a gleeful swipe, joy pierces our silence with song, interrupts our sighing with laughter, unshackles our fumbling feet to dance. "My soul magnifies the Lord," she whispers, "and my Spirit rejoices in God my savior." So we light one candle, because it only takes one: Christ with us.

### **Sung Response**

*We Gather 'Round*

by Rev. Elana Keppel Levy

We gather 'round celebrating our joy  
Thanking God for the mercies You daily employ.  
We may sin and fall away – from the path we may roam,  
but you tenderly guide us and welcome us home.  
The candles glow, showing us God's light, Calling us forward, united in Christ.

## **Invitation to Confession**

Let us confess our sins the One whose mercy endures from generation to generation.

## **Prayer of Confession**

Faithful God, we know that you are always there to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening to you and discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins that our lives may magnify your holy name forever. Amen.

## **Silent Confession**

## **Assurance of Pardon**

Sisters and brothers, by the faith of Christ, our sins are forgiven. Blessed be the God of our salvation, whose mercy is everlasting. Amen.

## **Prayer of Illumination**

Astonishing God, send your Holy Spirit upon us as we await the coming of your Son. Fill us with good things that we may conceive your reign on earth and glorify you according to your Word; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

## Scripture Readings

Luke 2:22-35

*When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,*

*“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”*

*And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”*

## Sermon

“You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch”

Final in a series, “The Christmas Playlist”

## Musical Reflection

“You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch”

## **Prayers of Intercession and The Lord's Prayer**

Eternal God, we pray for the world, that our warring ways may be overturned, even now, through the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ; for nothing is impossible with you.

We pray for the mission of your church, that we may proclaim the good news of the age as we rejoice in the gift of our Savior.

We pray for all who suffer, that we may feed the hungry and lift up the lowly through the power of your holy and life-giving Spirit.

We pray for your creation, that we may safeguard its well-being from generation to generation to your honor and glory.

We remember before you those who have died and pray for those who will die today, that they may rest with you eternally in your kingdom where there is no end.

Through Christ, with Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we magnify you, almighty God, forever and ever. We join these prayers with the one prayer your Son taught us to pray, saying:

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 glory forever. Amen.

## **Benediction and Sending**

