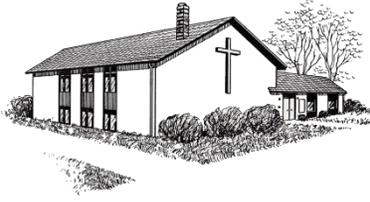


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Caretaker: *Heinz Goetz*

*Our Mission...*

*to be an accepting Christian community dedicated to living, sharing and teaching the Word of God.*

*We respect all aspects of people including race, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, religion, mental wellness, and ability.*

The Third Sunday of Advent  
December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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***Bold print*** indicates a congregational response.

## **WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY**

### **WELCOME and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND**

*We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Metis nation. We are thankful for these first inhabitants and we commit to working together towards justice, truth and reconciliation.*

### **THE LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE**

*The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end.  
It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.*

**Isaiah the prophet calls us to prepare for the coming of Jesus  
by making straight all that is crooked.**

*A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

**Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."**

*Let us prepare for Jesus, the Christ,  
who is anointed by God to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners.*

**For as a garden causes seeds to grow,  
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.**

### **PRELUDE Solo by Diane McDonald – "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"**

*~arr. Hopson*

*~Accompaniment by Joan Shaw*

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Father in heaven,  
our hearts desire the warmth of your love,  
and our minds are searching for the light of your Word.  
Increase our longing for Christ, our Saviour,  
and give us the strength to grow in love,  
that the dawn of his coming  
may find us rejoicing in his presence  
and welcoming the light of his truth.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS: *Dennis Deley*

### The Hebrew Scripture

**Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11**

*The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to provide for those who mourn in Zion — to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.  
They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.  
For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,  
and their offspring among the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.  
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.*

## The Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.*

*May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.*

RESPONSE: *This is the word of God.*

**Thanks be to God**

## The Gospel

John 1: 6-8, 19-28

~Rev. Don Johnson

*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.*

*This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord" ', as the prophet Isaiah said.*

*Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.*

GOSPEL RESPONSE: *The Gospel of Christ.*

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "A Man Named John"

~Rev. Don Johnson (see the attached sermon)

## **WE RESPOND TO THE WORD**

### A CONFESSION OF FAITH

*A New Creed*

**We are not alone; we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God: who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,**

**to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others**

**by the Spirit. We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone.**

**Thanks be to God.**

## PRAYERS & 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, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## THE DOXOLOGY

*(based on Ephesians 3:20-21)*

**Glory to God**

**whose power, working in us,**

**can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.**

**Glory to God from generation to generation,**

**in the Church and in Christ Jesus, forever and ever. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING

*God's blessing be yours, and well may it befall you;*

*Christ's blessing be yours, and well may you be treated;*

*the Spirit's blessing be yours, and well may you spend your lives,*

*each day that you rise up, each night that you lie down. Amen.*

## POSTLUDE *by Joan Shaw* – #44 VU **"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"**

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- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold,  
'Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all-gracious King!  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.**