



## **SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP** *with UCC Westerly*

**December 13, 2020 @ 9:45am\***  
**Broadcast live from our sanctuary**

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### **Gathering Music – “God Has Been Good to Me”**

[WORDS & MUSIC: Doug Brummund, ©2020 B.R. Music. All rights reserved.  
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### **PASTOR’S WELCOME**

### **Prelude – “There’s a Song in the Air”**

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### **DEACON’S GREETING**

### **INVITATION TO WORSHIP – *Lighting the Advent Wreath Candle of Joy***

[<https://www.saltproject.org/progressive-christian-blog/advent-candle-lighting-litanies>]

**Reader One:** When I look around, I see shadows of sadness, families in homeless shelters, people in prison, people who become invisible and forgotten ...

**Reader Two:** When I look around, I see shadows of grief and loss, people dreading the holidays because they’ve lost a loved one, because they’re recently divorced, because they don’t want to spend another Christmas alone ... (*Light the unlit pink candle*)

**Reader One:** May the light from this candle overwhelm the world.

**Reader Two:** May the light from this candle say to all that God’s joy is coming on earth as it already is in heaven.

**Both:** Brothers and sisters in Christ, be not afraid! God’s joy is at hand!

### **OPENING SONG – “Joy to the World”**

[WORDS: Issac Watts & MUSIC: Arr. from G.F.Handel, 1741, by Lowell Mason, 1848 ©Public Domain]

1. *Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.*
2. *Joy to the world, the savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy!*
3. *No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.*
4. *He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,  
And wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.*

## UNISON PRAYER OF REFLECTION

[adapted from *Touch Holiness*, Duck & Tirabassi, ©1990, The Pilgrim Press, p. 8]

**O God, most Wonderful and Merciful, in your Son Jesus we find salvation coming to all who need. Our past has been made new, our futures restored, the earth rejoices with your spiral of beauty. Grant, we pray, that our lives will be fulfilled in this your unimaginable and priceless gift to us, Jesus Christ whose birth we await with joyful anticipation. Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Morning Message**

*“... Far as the Curse is Found”*

**Luke 1:39-56**

Rev. Ruth

**Musical Meditation** – *“Blessed Be the God of Israel”*

[MUSIC: Hal Hopson, ©1983, Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONE LICENSE#A-734569]

## A TIME OF PRAYER

Pastoral Prayer & Silent Prayers

The Lord’s Prayer in whatever words are most comfortable for you.

## OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

Acknowledgement of Gifts & Offerings\*

Anthem by the Tone Chimes Choir – *“Lo, How a Rose e’er Blooming”* [© Public Domain]

\*Doxology *“Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ all creatures here below; Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter; One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.”*

[©Public Domain]

## CLOSING SONG -- *“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”*

[[WORDS & MUSIC: Kathleen Thomerson, ©1970,1975, Celebration. As appearing in the United Methodist Hymnal, 1989. All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONE LICENSE#A-734569]

- 1. I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world. The light of my life is Jesus.  
Refrain: In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the City of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*
- 2. I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus.  
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path,  
and show me the way to the Father.  
Refrain.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### A PRAYER OF BENEDICTION

[adapted from *Touch Holiness*, Duck & Tirabassi, ©1990, The Pilgrim Press, p. 243]

Go out and follow your dreams, and if your dreams go up on smoke, build new dreams and follow them. Grab hold of your future and change your world as Christ has changed your lives. Be everything God created you to be. Be at peace with your neighbor and with God. Search for joy and savor it whenever you encounter it because it is always a gift from God. Amen.

## PASSING OF THE PEACE

### Postlude – “Divine Power”

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### Points for Reflection

Welcome to my Advent Sermon Series on hymns and how they inform and deepen our faith and understanding of Christmas. Each week you are invited to read through the week’s focus scripture and reflect on some questions to guide your thoughts on the text, and to consider how the biblical text connects with the hymn’s verses.

This week’s text: Luke 1:39-56

- This beautiful text appears in Luke just after Mary’s encounter with the Angel Gabriel and before she leaves to visit her cousin Elizabeth. This text is known as *The Magnificat*. Read through it to see if you can figure out why.
- Unlike the text we read last week, these verses are almost always a part of our Advent and Christmas celebrations. What do they tell us about the baby Mary is to bear?
- What does this text say about joy? Who is joyful in this text? Why?
- Which line of the hymn do you think captures the essence of this biblical text?

*If you would like a copy of my sermon for this week, kindly contact me or Carol in the office and we will send you a copy with next week’s Weekly Update.*

### **Luke 1:39-56**

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 leapt 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 leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment 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 for about three months and then returned to her home.