



Rev. Barbara J. Cairns
Andrea Rogers
and all members of West River United Church
Advent 4, December 23, 2018



A poinsettia has been placed in the sanctuary in memory of Beulah Sherren (April 29, 2011) always remembered by Ray, Alan, Gayle, Cathy, Dawn, Pam, and families.

PRE- SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME*

ONE: May the God of Love live in your hearts!

ALL: And in yours.

(Please share the peace of Christ with each other)

♪ **'There is Room for All'** MV 62 *(projected)*

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING 3 LOVE****

ONE: Come now, O God of Love.

ALL: We are your people.

ONE: Pour out your Spirit on all who long for your gift of love.

ALL: As we sing of your goodness together.

(Fourth Advent candle is lit.)

♪ **'Hope is a Star'** VU 7 *(projected)*

CALL TO WORSHIP *please stand, as you are able**

ONE: Can you feel something powerful at work in the world?

ALL: We can catch glimpses here and there.

ONE: We need to look beyond the hustle and bustle
of Christmas to see what's coming:

ALL: Faithful women giving birth to freedom;

(.../open)

a babe who will transform the world.

The birth quakes are almost here. We can feel it.

ONE: Come, let us prepare ourselves in this time of worship,
that we may be ready when our world is turned
upside down.

♪ **'O Come, O Come Emmanuel' – VU 1 vs 2 (projected)**

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER ***

ONE: God who births hope, fill us with kindness and compassion.

ALL: Fill our lives with hope!

ONE: God who births peace, fill our world with all that is green and growing.

ALL: Fill our lives with peace!

ONE: God who births joy, fill this sacred place with singing and dancing as we
serve you with joy.

ALL: Fill our lives with joy!

ONE: God who births love, fill our days with story and memory.

ALL: Fill our lives with love!

ONE: Open us once more to new beginnings and to as many possibilities as
there are stars in the sky.

ALL: Amen. As we pray together saying,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by 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
for ever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING***

ONE: Sharing our faith, our lives, our gifts, is what advent is about. Let us offer up our faith, and our peace, and ourselves as we give our offering.

PRESENTATION OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

♪ **'In the Bleak Midwinter'** – VU 55 vs 4 (*projected*)

OFFERTORY PRAYER (*in unison*) **

ALL: Loving God be present in these gifts, that others may know Your loving presence. Make them be for the world signs of Your presence, signs of Your love, signs of Christ, and signs of Christmas love. In gratitude, hope and peace, we pray. Amen

CHILDREN'S TIME

♪ **'Dream a Dream'** – MV 158 (*projected*)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*in unison*) **

ALL: Transforming God, we can get so wrapped up in Christmas the decorating, the gift buying, the parties that we miss the real event happening in our very midst. We don't want to see that everything will change. We are happy and complacent with the way things are. We resist scriptures that challenge the status quo if it means we might lose positions of privilege. We would rather focus on a meek and mild Mary and a cute baby Jesus. But Mary's prophecy turns the world upside down the first order is abandoned and a new order is in our midst even now. We are afraid of what this will mean. Help us hear your word as good news, not bad. As promises of good things to come if we will but live into those promises. Help us embrace the courage of Mary, and the faith of Elizabeth. Help us claim the promise of radical transformation brought by the Babe of Bethlehem. Help us navigate a world turned upside down. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

ONE: Rejoice in the Lord.

ALL: My spirit rejoices in God.

ONE: For hope, peace, joy, and love.

ALL: We thank you God. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

LUKE 1:45-55 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

MUSIC MINISTRY

SERMON – Rev. Barbara J. Cairns

HYMN MV 134 'There Was a Child in Galilee' (*projected*)

♪ **'How Deep the Peace'** – **MV 95** (*projected*)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN VU 25 'Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming' (*projected*)

BENEDICTION***

ONE: Go now in love this advent season.

Carry the light of love with you.

And may the presence of God uplift you,

the gentleness of Christ live in your hearts,

and the wisdom of the holy spirit guide you.

Today and always.

♪ **'Go Now in Peace'** (*projected*)

Whole People of God 2018, ** The Abingdon Worship Annual 2018, *Gathering, 2018, pg. 34, David Lander, Ibid., pg. 31. Ryan McNally. ***Ibid., pg. 36. Kim Falls.**** Alydia Smith, United Church, 2017.*