

**ST. DAVID'S (SHERMAN'S) UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

December 12, 2021

8:30 AM & 10:30 AM

WORDS TO PONDER

"I bring you good tidings of great joy."

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Leader: Long ago, God spoke to the people of Israel through the prophet Zephaniah, who taught us to rejoice at God's salvation.

PEOPLE: **God's salvation is here, he said, when the oppressors are gone, and the lame and the outcast can rejoice without shame.**

LEADER: We remember Jesus who welcomed the outcasts.

PEOPLE: **We remember Jesus who made the lame walk.**

LEADER: We light this candle of joy, rejoicing in the salvation we have already received and waiting for God's coming to make it complete.

(The candle is lit)

UNISON: **O God of joy, help us to delight in Your vision for the world. Help us to be a community where the lame dance, and even those who are outcast everywhere else break bread with us and share Your joy.
AMEN**

OPENING HYMN: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" (336 Red)

Paraphraser: Gerard Moultrie (1864); Tune: PICARDY. Public Domain

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| 1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
For with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand. | 2. King of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
In the body and the blood;
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food. |
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3. Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth
From the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away.

4. At His feet the six-winged seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence,
As with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

UNISON PRAYER

Glorious God, we approach You this day with a song in our hearts and praise on our lips. You have chosen to dwell in our midst and bring us salvation. You are the wellspring of all goodness from whom we draw life-giving sustenance. Your glory is manifest throughout creation. We will proclaim to the nations how Your name is exalted.

As a warrior in battle, You attack the forces of oppression. Make us as determined to see that justice prevails. Where there is hunger, help us to feed. Help us to provide shelter for those who are homeless.

Forbid that our warmth should lull us into neglecting their misery. Make us advocates for the voiceless, and a tower of strength for the powerless. Let others see in us a force for justice and peace as we combat whatever keeps Your people in chains.

Separate the chaff from the wheat in our lives, and help us to focus on the good we can do and be to Your glory. Make us receptive to the guidance Your Spirit provides. The storehouse of our faith is cluttered with well-meaning intentions; many of the past year's resolutions lie forgotten. Remove the gap between our words and our actions as we seek consistency in faith and living. We have offered our prayer; now we commit to You our time and our efforts.

AMEN

HOLY SCRIPTURES: Zephaniah 3:14–20, Isaiah 12:2–6, Philippians 4:4–7

ZEPHANIAH 3:14–20

¹⁴ Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you

fear any harm. ¹⁶ On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. ¹⁷ The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

¹⁸ "I will remove from you all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals, which is a burden and reproach for you. ¹⁹ At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame. ²⁰ At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the LORD.

ISAIAH 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation."

³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

⁴ In that day you will say:

"Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done,
and proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things;
let this be known to all the world.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

Final Exhortations

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

SERMON: "Fear Not"

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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 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 the glory, for ever. AMEN

UNISON BENEDICTION

God is transforming us day by day, working within and among us to heal the world. The God of joy is with us. We carry our songs of praise into the world; may we let others know the glad anticipation of Advent. AMEN

CLOSING HYMN: "Hail to the Lord's Anointed" (366 Red)

James Montgomery (1821). Copyright: Public Domain

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| <p>1. Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free;
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.</p> <p>3. He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth;
And love, joy, hope, like flowers,
Spring in His path to birth:
Before Him on the mountains
Shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness, in fountains,
From hill to valley flow.</p> | <p>2. Kings shall fall down before Him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him,
His praise all people sing;
For He shall have dominion
O'er river, sea, and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion,
Or dove's light wing can soar.</p> <p>4. O'er every foe victorious
He on His throne shall rest,
From age to age more glorious,
All-blessing and all-blest.
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His Name shall stand forever,
That name to us is Love.</p> |
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