



Sunday, December 11th, 2022
Third Advent Sunday
St. Mark's/St. James United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist Kathy Jurk, Choir Director
Scott Siekman, Reader at St. Mark's
Advent Candle Lighter Readers: Carson Russart/Colten Sommer

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship:

Hark the Glad Sound

Call to Worship:

L: Loving God, as we come to know the real meaning of Christmas and the beautiful gift that you gave us, your son Jesus; let us reflect on the blessedness of that gift to our world and to our hearts, all those years ago.

P: Let us be filled with hope and peace. Hope for a brighter tomorrow and peace to all.

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L: Peace for our world, our countries, our communities,
Peace for our congregations, far and wide,
Peace for our families, our friends,
Peace for the poor, the refugee, the homeless, the persecuted,
Peace for ourselves... and let peace begin with me.

P: Bring us even closer to your divine presence, enabling us to become inspired in our pursuit to serve you with great joy.

Opening Prayer:

Gracious God in Heaven, we thank you for this time together. We pray that your peace and joy would rest upon us, and that we would be filled to overflowing with your Holy Spirit. Thank you, that when few or many meet together to glorify you, you are right in the midst of us, and we pray that our time together would bring honor to you. *Amen.*

The Reading for and Lighting of the Advent Candles:

Reader: On this third Sunday of Advent, as we think about the coming of Jesus Christ, we light the candle of joy.

(Light the first, second and third candle.)

Reader: When Christ comes into our lives, he brings the fullness of joy. He anoints our hearts with the oil of gladness. (Isaiah 31:3)

People: When Jesus was born, the angels said that his coming was good news of great joy for all people. (Luke 2:10)

Reader: Because Christ has come to us, we can live every day in the joy of the Lord. Praise to his name!

Hymn of Praise:

(#89 *The Hymnal*)
(#153 *Worship & Rejoice*)

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus



Young at Heart:

St. Mark's Choral Anthem:

Hark, The Glad Sound

Scripture Reading:

Message:

The Gift of Purpose

Jeremiah 29:11-14a
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

Hymn of Response-St. James: (#95 The Hymnal)

On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist's Cry

Offering:

Christmas Fund Sunday: *The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.*

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

Winds Through the Olive Trees

~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

Father, we know that you are the source of every good thing, light and love come from you. You have created us, and you continue to breathe life into us through the power of Your Holy Spirit. You have given us so much and we now dedicate this offering to the work of your kingdom here on earth.

May this offering be used wisely and diligently, that your love may be known widely. Amen.

Prayer of the People 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, forever. Amen.

Hymn of Sending:

St. James (#466 Hymnal)

He Leadeth Me; O Blessed Thought

St. Mark's (#158 Worship & Rejoice)

Blessed Be the God of Israel

Benediction:

Give to us open minds, O God, minds ready to receive and to welcome such new light of knowledge as it is your will to reveal. Let not the past be ever so dear to us as to set a limit to the future. Give us the courage to change our minds when that is needed. Let us be tolerant of the thoughts of others, for we never know in what voice you will speak. We go now, to love and serve God in all that we are, all that we do, and all that we will be. *Amen.*

Postlude

Song of Triumph

Jeremiah 29:11-14a ESV

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.



Services are recorded and available on our church YouTube channel:
St. Mark's & St. James UCC

Like us on Facebook



Check out our Website: www.stmstjucc.org

Join our prayer team; contact Karen in our Church office: stmstjoffice@gmail.com