

Worship Service - “Dare To Rejoice”

3rd Sunday in Advent, Year B,

17th December, 2023

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 NRSV / 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NRSV

Prelude

played by church musician Annie Center,

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Opening Music (video) [Center of My Joy](#)

Pastor Patrinell Wright and the Total Gospel Choir

Center of My Joy Pastor Patrinell Wright and the Total Gospel Choir, written by Gloria Gaither, Richard Smallwood, William J. Gaither, CCLI SONG # 165937, 1987 Century Oak Publishing Group (Admin. by Conexion Media Group, Inc.) Richwood Music (Admin. by Conexion Media Group, Inc.) William J. Gaither, Inc. (Admin. by Gaither Copyright Management)

Welcome / Announcements

Pass the Peace

Opening Hymn

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus - 178

Call To Worship

One: Rejoice! The spirit of God is sending us:

All: to bring good news to the oppressed, to comfort the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the year of favor among God’s people.

One: Rejoice! The work of the Spirit is calling us.

All: To rebuild ancient relationships ruined by injustice, To repair the cities as places of hope, To restore land devastated across generations. to proclaim the year of favor among God’s people.

All: Come, let us worship in Joy!

Advent Candle Lighting

O Holy One, we light this third candle, And delight in the sparkle of its outrageous reminder to “rejoice”! Let its flame cast light into shadowy places and show where work is to be done. Let a community of builders be formed in The Light of Joy. Let Joy find home in our hearts, And make space for your presence there, As we work for justice and peace in the service of Love.

Invocation

Come, Christ Jesus, be our guest, and may our lives by you be blest. Come, God-with-us, and free us from the false claims of the empires of this world. We are lonely for you and your peace.

Come, Emmanuel, and dwell with us, make us your people indeed, the people through whom you bring love and justice to the world.

Come, Jesus, and reign; claim your rightful place in our hearts and in the midst of our community. Plant the seeds of hope among us. Establish God’s reign on earth.

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 NSRV

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 justice and reckoning 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.

A Time of Prayer

Sharing Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Mighty and merciful God, may Your kindness be known to all.

Hear the prayers of all who cry to You; open the eyes of those who never pray for themselves; have mercy on those who are in misery; deal gently with those who sit in darkness; increase the number of those who love and serve You daily.

Preserve our land from all things hurtful, preserve our Church from all dangerous error, preserve our people from forgetting that you are their Lord and Saviour.

Be gracious to those countries that are made desolate by war, famine, disease, or persecution, and grant that the course of the world may be so ordered in obedience to Your will that the people may live in security and freedom from want, and their children grow up to be makers of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn ***Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee - 71***

Joyful Guessing! ***Which Carol is it?***

Epistle reading **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NSRV**

Rejoice always,
pray without ceasing,
give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Message ***Dare To Rejoice*** *Guest Pastor Dan Stern*

Call to Serve

As we listen to this interlude by Annie, contemplate all the ways we can provide a time and a place to show compassion and support to our community, and all the ways we can give tangible comfort to those in need. We ask that you give prayerful consideration as to how you may support our efforts.

A Time for Reflection

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Oh generous God,

As we warm our hearts by the light of a pink advent candle, may we also gladden and strengthen those around us, so your divine Joy-light shines beams of hope and anticipation as we await the birth of Mary's son.

For he has exalted the humble and scattered the proud.

Let us join with God's people by filling the hungry with good things

For the Lord has done great things for us and we rejoice always.

Prayer by Harriet Koscho

Hymn Joy to the World - 318

Benediction Dan Stern

Postlude