

"I Believe in God: Ode to Joy" Worship Service December 13, 2020

FELLOWSHIP TIME 9:30

WORSHIP TIME 10:00

Please put your Joys & Concerns in the zoom chat box
Have your Advent display or candle available to light

PRELUDE "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

OPENING PRAYER - Liturgist Donna Faria

Merciful God of peace, your work, spoken by the prophets, restores your people's life and hope. Fill our hearts with the joy of your saving grace, that we may hold fast to your great goodness and in our lives proclaim your justice in all the world. Amen.

By: Vanderbilt Divinity Library

OPENING HYMN "Hail to the Lord's Anointed" UMH #203
(you tube)

ADVENT LIGHTING - Sibley Family

Reader: The loneliness of fear

All: The loneliness of fear

Reader: The invisibility of the next step

All: The invisibility of the next step

Reader: The yearning for presence

All: The yearning for presence

Reader: Together as we light the candle of Joy let us pray

Holy One, we thank you for the glimpses we catch of your gift of the depths of joy. Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle— even when we are not sure of your presence, ignite the flame of joy within us,

ALL: ... that we might glow with its brilliance from the inside out.

"I BELIEVE"

JOYS & CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

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. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory now and forever. Amen.

PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY METHODIST CHURCH
604 SEVEN MILE ROAD HOPE, RI. 02831
401-821-8217
www.sovumc.org/give-now

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Lord, these gifts are not payment for services rendered. These aren't our dues necessary for us to belong to this church. We know you made us with a purpose, and so now we give ... on purpose, freely offering to you the best of who we are. Continue to work out your purpose in us. Make us your hands, outstretched, on purpose. Amen.

PRAYER CHANT

“We Resist”

(Mark Miller Choir - you tube)

SCRIPTURE READINGS - Liturgist

Isaiah 57: 14-19

Someone says: “Build, build! Make a road! Clear the way, remove the rocks from the road my people will travel.” A Message from the high and towering God, who lives in Eternity, whose name is Holy: “I live in the high and holy places, but also with the low-spirited, the spirit-crushed, And what I do is put new spirit in them, get them up and on their feet again. For I’m not going to haul people into court endlessly, I’m not going to be angry forever. Otherwise, people would lose heart. These souls I created would tire out and give up. I was angry, good and angry, because of Israel’s sins. I struck him hard and turned away in anger, while he kept at his stubborn, willful ways. When I looked again and saw what he was doing, I decided to heal him, lead him, and comfort him, creating a new language of praise for the mourners. Peace to the far-off, peace to the near-at-hand,” says God —“and yes, I will heal them. But the wicked are storm-battered seas that can’t quiet down. The waves stir up garbage and mud. There’s no peace,” God says, “for the wicked.”

Luke 1: 1-4; 26-56

So many others have tried their hand at putting together a story of the wonderful harvest of Scripture and history that took place among us, using reports handed down by the original eyewitnesses who served this Word with their very lives. Since I have investigated all the reports in close detail, starting from the story's beginning, I decided to write it all out for you, most honorable Theophilus, so you can know beyond the shadow of a doubt the reliability of what you were taught. In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to the Galilean village of Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man descended from David. His name was Joseph, and the virgin's name, Mary. Upon entering, Gabriel greeted her: Good morning! You're beautiful with God's beauty, Beautiful inside and out! God be with you. She was thoroughly shaken, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, "Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus. He will be great, be called 'Son of the Highest.' The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will rule Jacob's house forever— no end, ever, to his kingdom." Mary said to the angel, "But how? I've never slept with a man." The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Highest hover over you; Therefore, the child you bring to birth will be called Holy, Son of God. "And did you know that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son, old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and here she is six months pregnant! Nothing, you see, is impossible with God." And Mary said, Yes, I see it all now: I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve. Let it be with me just as you say. Then the angel left her. **Blessed Among Women** Mary didn't waste a minute. She got up and traveled to a town in Judah in the hill country, straight to Zachariah's house, and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb leaped. She was filled with the Holy Spirit, and sang out exuberantly, You're so blessed among women, and the babe in your womb, also blessed! And why am I so blessed that the mother of my Lord visits me? The moment the sound of your greeting entered my ears, The babe in my womb skipped like a lamb for sheer joy. Blessed woman, who believed what God said, believed every word would come true! And Mary said, I'm bursting with God-news; I'm dancing the song of my Savior God. God took one good look at me, and look what happened— I'm the most fortunate woman on earth! What God has done for me will never be forgotten, the God whose very name is holy, set apart from all others. His mercy flows in wave after wave on those who are in awe before him. He bared his arm and showed his strength, scattered the bluffing braggarts. He knocked tyrants off their high horses, pulled victims out of the mud. The starving poor sat down to a banquet; the callous rich were left out in the cold. He embraced his chosen child, Israel;

he remembered and piled on the mercies, piled them high. It's exactly what he promised, beginning with Abraham and right up to now. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months and then went back to her own home.

THE WORD OF GOD FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD THANKS BE TO GOD

MESSAGE **"Come, Magnify the Lord with Me"**
Rev. Effie McAvoy

LITANY OF BELIEF - Sue Dyl

Pastor: I believe that we have sometimes been silent in the face of injustice AND
**ALL: I BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS GIVEN US EYES TO SEE AND EARS TO HEAR
AND AS CHILDREN OF GOD WE ARE CALLED TO SPEAK OUT WHEN WE SEE
INJUSTICE BECAUSE OF HIS COMPASSION FOR US.**

Pastor: I believe that we have been afraid of feeling deeply, making our joy small And
**ALL: I BELIEVE THAT GOD HELPS US TO DISCERN BETWEEN HAPPINESS AND
JOY SO THAT EVEN IN SUFFERING OUR HEARTS ARE FULL OF LOVE THAT WE
MAY LOVE OURSELVES, OTHERS AND THE WHOLE WORLD, IF WE ALLOW OUR
JOY TO BE SMALL WE BECOME SMALL BUT IF WE ALLOW OURSELVES TO
FEEL DEEPLY WE WILL HAVE GREAT JOY.**

Pastor: I believe that sometimes we wonder if we can make a difference AND
**ALL: I BELIEVE THAT SMALL ACTS - A SMILE, A HUG, WORDS OF
ENCOURAGEMENT, A NOTE, A PHONE CALL GIVEN FREELY WILL BRIGHTEN
SOMEONE'S LIFE ON THEIR DARKEST DAY, MAKING A DIFFERENCE.**

Pastor: I believe, even when we are discouraged AND
**All: THAT OUR GOD IS THERE, NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM HIM AND
NOTHING CAN STAND AGAINST US. FOR EVEN WITH TEARS AND
DISCOURAGEMENT THE LOVE AND JOY OF GOD REMAINS.**

(response written by the WISH bible study group)

CLOSING HYMN "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" UMH# 89
(Choir)

BENEDICTION

