

I Believe in Love: Daring Right Relationship Worship Service December 6, 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
Have juice and bread available to share in communion

PRELUDE "SOON AND VERY SOON"

OPENING PRAYER Liturgist - Jeremiah Rainville
God of timeless grace, you fill us with joyful expectation. Make us ready for the message that prepares the way, that with uprightness of heart and holy joy we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen. By: Vanderbilt Divinity Library

OPENING HYMN "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" UMH#213
(Choir)

ADVENT LIGHTING - McAvoy & McAvoy-Jensen

Reader: The emptiness of loneliness

All: The emptiness of loneliness

Reader: The wounds inflicted

All: The wounds inflicted

Reader: The fear of the "other"

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

Holy One, we thank you for the glimpses we catch of your gift of daring love. Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle— even when we cannot yet see a better day when we will act like the human family we are, ignite the flame of love within us, that we might glow with its brilliance from the inside out. Amen

"I BELIEVE"

JOYS & CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY METHODIST CHURCH

604 SEVEN MILE ROAD HOPE, RI. 02831

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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 RESPONSE "Just as I Am"

(you tube)

SCRIPTURE READINGS - Liturgist

Matthew 1: 1-25

Abraham had Isaac, Isaac had Jacob, Jacob had Judah and his brothers, Judah had Perez and Zerah (the mother was Tamar), Perez had Hezron, Hezron had Aram, Aram had Amminadab, Amminadab had Nahshon, Nahshon had Salmon, Salmon had Boaz (his mother was Rahab), Boaz had Obed (Ruth was the mother), Obed had Jesse, Jesse had David, and David became king. David had Solomon (Uriah's wife was the mother), Solomon had Rehoboam, Rehoboam had Abijah, Abijah had Asa, Asa had Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat had Joram, Joram had Uzziah, Uzziah had Jotham, Jotham had Ahaz, Ahaz had Hezekiah, Hezekiah had Manasseh, Manasseh had Amon, Amon had Josiah, Josiah had Jehoiachin and his brothers, and then the people were taken into the Babylonian exile. When the Babylonian exile ended, Jeconiah had Shealtiel, Shealtiel had Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel had Abiud, Abiud had Eliakim, Eliakim had Azor, Azor had Zadok, Zadok had Achim, Achim had Eliud, Eliud had Eleazar, Eleazar had Matthan, Matthan had Jacob, Jacob had Joseph, Mary's husband the Mary who gave birth to Jesus, the Jesus who was called Christ. There were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, another fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and yet another fourteen from the Babylonian exile to Christ. The birth of Jesus took place like this. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. Before they came to the marriage bed, Joseph discovered she was pregnant. (It was by the Holy Spirit, but he didn't know that.) Joseph, chagrined but noble, determined to take care of things quietly so Mary would not be disgraced. While he was trying to figure a way out, he had a dream. God's angel spoke in the dream:

“Joseph, son of David, don’t hesitate to get married. Mary’s pregnancy is Spirit-conceived. God’s Holy Spirit has made her pregnant. She will bring a son to birth, and when she does, you, Joseph, will name him Jesus—‘God saves’—because he will save his people from their sins.” This would bring the prophet’s embryonic sermon to full term: Watch for this—a virgin will get pregnant and bear a son; They will name him Immanuel (Hebrew for “God is with us”). Then Joseph woke up. He did exactly what God’s angel commanded in the dream: He married Mary. But he did not consummate the marriage until she had the baby. He named the baby Jesus.

Mark 1:1-8

The good news of Jesus Christ—the Message!—begins here, following to the letter the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Watch closely: I’m sending my preacher ahead of you; He’ll make the road smooth for you. Thunder in the desert! Prepare for God’s arrival! Make the road smooth and straight! John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey. As he preached he said, “The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I’m a mere stagehand, will change your life. I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out.”

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

MESSAGE

“Living in the Unexpected”

Rev. Renee Lewis

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR ADVENT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, whom you sent in the fullness of time to be a light to the nations. You scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts and have mercy on those who fear you from generation to generation. You put down the mighty from their thrones and exalt those of low degree. You fill the hungry with good things, and the rich you send empty away. Your own Son came among us as a servant to be Emmanuel, your presence with us. He humbled himself in obedience to your will and freely accepted death on a cross. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever. Amen.

Giving of Bread and Cup

Prayer after Receiving

Litany of Belief - Hannah Bell- Lombardo

Pastor: I believe that we have been taught to fear that the changes to our world are too vast however AND

All: We believe that we can change the way we live. WE can change how we use the resources that God has given us!

Pastor: I believe that our society is built on a foundation of consumerism and oppression however AND

All: We believe that we can use less “stuff”. We can fight the oppression that many of our siblings in Christ face. We can say “NO” to more for ourselves so that we can say “Yes” for those who do not have enough!

Pastor: I believe that when we are afraid we do not vision the possibilities that God has for us however AND

All: When we love our God, our neighbor, ourselves, and our Earth we can spring forth newness for “perfect love casts out all fear”!

Pastor: However, we believe, even when we are discouraged AND

All: That we are never alone! God is with us. God is guiding us. God is speaking to us. When we listen to God, REDUCE our impact so that the least of us can have enough.

(The responses were written by the Wisdom Seeker's bible study group)

CLOSING HYMN

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
(Choir)

UMH#218

BENEDICTION