

iucc Irvine United Congregational Church
*An Open & Affirming, Just Peace, Global Mission, Creation Justice,
Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

December 1y, 2023 • 9:30am

THIRD SUNDAY ADVENT

Prelude *What Child is This?* Yuyoung Jeong, piano
(arr. Mark Hayes)

Gathering Song *As We Gather* Congregation
by Coomes & Fay

As we gather may your Spirit work within us
As we gather may we glorify your name
Knowing well that as our hearts begin to worship
We'll be blessed because we came
(Repeat)

Welcome iucc.org/visitor Rev. Dr. Sarah Halverson-Cano

Gong

Introit *Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord* Chancel Choir
by Stephen Schwartz and *Godspell*

Call to Worship Lester Ricks

One: A birth announcement heralds the coming of a baby.
Many: A mother weeps with joy!

One: Soon her world will change forever.
Many: Soon our world will change forever.

One: Will she ever be prepared to parent the baby in her womb?
Many: Will we ever be ready to receive him?

One: Now is the time. Prepare yourselves!
Many: We wait with expectation, our hearts overjoyed!

One: God's gift to Mary, God's gift to the world will soon be with us!
Many: O come, O Come Emmanuel — God with us!

Hymn

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You
by Henry van Dyke

Congregation

Joyful, joyful, we adore You,
God of glory, God of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You,
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

All Your works with joy surround You,
Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,
Stars and angels sing around You,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Teach us what our praise should be.

You are giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blessed,
Well-spring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Loving Spirit, Father, Mother,
All who love belong to you;
Teach us how to love each other,
by that love our joy renew.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
Boundless love is reigning o'er us,
Reconciling race and clan.,
Ever singing, march we onward,
Faithful in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us onward
In the triumph song of life.

Lighting of Advent Wreath

Reader 1: When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed, 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 brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance 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. (Isaiah 61:1-3a).

Reader 2: We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

Congregation: We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.

Reader 1: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the coming of God's kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Congregational Response

A candle is burning, a candle of Joy;
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow.
As Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.

A Fresh Word

Anthem

A New Noel

by Travis L. Boyd

Chancel Choir

Reflective Singing **"Holy Spirit Come to Us"**
J. Berthier



Prayers of the Church

Rev. Dr. Terry LePage

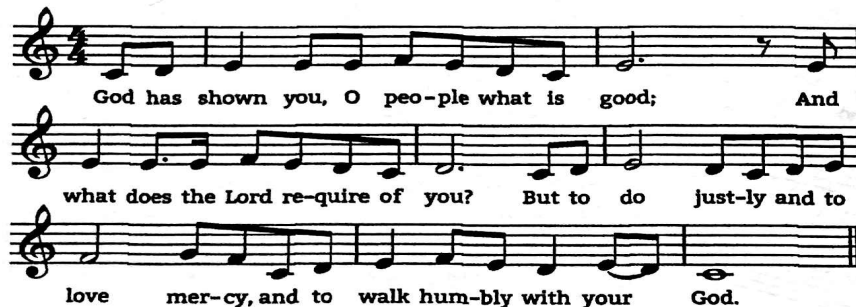
(concluding with the Lord's Prayer)
Our Creator (Father, Mother, or other name as you are comfortable),
which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Offertory Call

The Christma Fund Collection

Lester Ricks

Song of Thanksgiving • "Micah 6:8"



Prayer of Dedication**Lester Ricks****Scripture****Luke 2:1-7****Lester Ricks**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Christmas Pageant**Who is My Family?****MYP**

by Myrna Bohan

Benediction**Rev. Dr. Sarah Halverson-Cano****Response****Alleluia****Congregation**

by Jerry Sinclair

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Postlude**O Come! All Ye Faithful****Yuyoung Jeong, piano**

(arr. Mark Hayes)

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