



PRELUDE Mary Did You Know
- Dan Woodworth, soloist

WELCOME

LIGHTING THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

Its light reminds us of Jesus, the light of the world. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (John 1:4-5)

Today we relight the first three candles of the Advent Wreath -- the candles of HOPE, JOY and PEACE.

Now we light the fourth candle of Advent. This is the candle of LOVE.

Jesus demonstrated self-giving love during his life on earth. Advent is a time for kindness, thinking of others, and sharing with others. It is a time to love as God loved us by giving us his most precious gift. As God is love, let us also be love.

In the Psalms we find these words:
"Your steadfast love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds."

-- Psalm 36:5
From the Gospel of John we hear:
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."
-- John 3:16

Let us pray:
Teach us to love, O Lord. May we always know your love and show it to others. As we prepare for our celebration of Jesus' birth, fill our hearts with love for the world, that all may know your love and the one whom you have sent, your son, our Savior. Amen.

CAROL #105 *People, Look East*

PRAYER OF PRAISE

Loving God who dwells within us, we praise you for your presence of love in the vulnerability of a human baby. We celebrate this greatest of gifts with wonder and good will toward others and we delight in your Spirit. We praise you for your faithfulness in the ending of this year and trust in your provision for the one to come. Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

RESPONSE #111 *From Heaven Above*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

Lord, we confess that we are both overwhelmed by the needs around us and insulated from them. In a world that needs our example of love we find it too easy to withdraw and close our ears to the cries for help. In knowing that we can't solve all of it, we are tempted to shut out all of it. We become critics of imperfect attempts to show love and also despair that we can make any difference. Open our hearts to the gentle guidance of your spirit as we learn to love as you do.

(silent prayer and reflection)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Creator God, we thank you for the confidence of Mary who calls out to us through the ages. We trust in your goodness and mercy as she reminds us to rejoice in your favor, to proclaim your mercy and anticipate your justice. We claim your love for all peoples and for ourselves.

Thanks be to God!

PASSING THE PEACE

CAROL #114 *Away in a Manger*

SPECIAL MUSIC Mathematics, by Alyssa Morris
- Charlotte Appel, bassoon

SCRIPTURE READINGS Isaiah 58:6-11
Luke 1:39-56

MESSAGE Revolutionary Love
- Rev. Heidi Greider

HYMN #110 *Love Has Come*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your 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 yours is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory
now and forever. Amen.*

HYMN #93 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Still, Still, Still*
- Ian Alvarez & Mackenzie Alvarez

