

SERMON

"WHAT ABOUT JOHN?"

Rev. Michele R. Goff

DESCRIPTION OF PRAISE

— *Response* —

***HYMN #101**

"NO WIND AT THE WINDOW"

Bell, 1992

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Adapted from the Confession of 1967, 9.19

Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gathered here, in the house of the Lord, let us pray for the coming of Christ's realm. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

LORD'S PRAYER - UNISON

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; 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 kingdom and the power and the glory, forever, Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

***DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God whom we adore. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION - UNISON**

Eternal God, as we wait for the fulfillment of your reign, use these gifts and the gifts of our lives to bring justice to those who are oppressed, to set free those who are in prison, to lift up those who are bowed down, and to uphold those who are vulnerable. Amen.

— *Sending* —

***HYMN #93**

"LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, YE MIGHTY GATES"

Weissel, 1642

***BLESSING AND CHARGE**

***CLOSING RESPONSE #95**

"PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD"

Taize

***POSTLUDE**



(*) Please rise in body or in spirit.
Bold italic letters indicate congregational responses.

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2019

Service for the Lord's Day

— Gathering —

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Incarnate Word, Amid life's many distractions, keep our hearts and minds focused on You. Amen.

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT

"READY THE WAY"

Chancel Choir

*CALL TO WORSHIP - RESPONSIVE

Liturgist - Kathy Porter

Say to those of a fearful heart:

Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.

Behold! The glory of the Lord shines upon us!

Say to those with weak hands and feeble knees:

Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.

Behold! In splendor the Lord dwells among us!

The barren lands burst into bloom; the desert erupts with delight.

We join creation's song:

With joy in our hearts, let us worship God!

*HYMN #105

"PEOPLE, LOOK EAST"

Farjeon, 1928

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."

The world says, "Worry," and we say, "Rejoice."

The news says, "Fear," and we say, "Rejoice."

The world says, "Be happy," and the church says, "Be faithful."

As we light our third Advent candle, ***We pray for hope, peace, and joy.***

Come now, O child of Mary. ***Come now, O Prince of Joy.***

HYMN #89 "FOR YOU, O LORD, MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS" (vs.3,4) Haugen, 1982

CONFESSION

From generation to generation, divine mercy extends to those who love and revere the Lord. Trusting in this promise, we come before the One who is our help and our hope. Let us confess the ways we have fallen short, first in silence, then responsively.

SILENT REFLECTION

(A time of silence for personal reflection.)

Advent God, you enter into our weary world to lift up the lowly and fill the hungry, to establish equity throughout the earth.

Yet, like perplexed prophets and doubting disciples, we scarcely believe that you can right the world.

We see suffering and sorrow and sin and wonder if creation is beyond repair.

But you hold out healing, wholeness, and hope.

You promise to drive out despair and free us from debilitating fear.

Broaden our imaginations, that we might conceive of communities where all people thrive and embody your vision of *shalom*.

Expand our hearts, that we might see the extraordinary in our midst and embrace the everlasting joy you bring.

Make us prophets of the world you are bringing to birth,

that we might prepare a way before you and welcome you with gladness!

LORD HAVE MERCY

"Lord, have mercy upon us, Christ, have mercy upon us, Lord, have mercy upon us."

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rejoice, for in Jesus Christ we are forgiven! ***Thanks be to God.***

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all. ***And also with you.***

*GLORIA PATRI

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.***

— Word —

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Our younger Christians are invited to come forward for their special time.

After, they are welcome to stay in the sanctuary, or may choose to go to our supervised playroom.

ANTHEM

"REAL"

Chancel Choir

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

HEBREW SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 35: 1-10

Bibles: p.623/LG p.811

GOSPEL SCRIPTURE

LUKE 1: 46-55

Bibles: p.53/LG p.69

Heaven and earth will pass away but the word of the Lord stands forever.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN #102

"SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME"

Luther, 1523

GOSPEL SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 11: 2-11

Bibles: p.10/LG p.13

This is the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation. ***Thanks be to God.***