

**WORSHIP SERVICE**  
**December 20th, 2020**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP**

Prelude

Welcome

\* God's Greeting

\* We Greet One Another

Advent Candle Lighting: Joy

As we anticipate the birth of Jesus Christ, we light candles of hope, love, and peace as reminders of the promise that Emmanuel is our God with us and that God graciously gives us these gifts even if they sometimes come in ways that are mysterious to us. **[Light three candles.]** On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of joy. We fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. For the joy set before him, he came down to earth and took on our humanity, endured the cross with all its shame and sat down at the right hand of God in heaven. The day is coming when there will be everlasting joy to the world, for our Lord will come! Let all the earth receive her king! We light this candle of joy in anticipation of that day. **[Light fourth candle.]** Please stand as we join our voices with the heavenly voices to sing our joy.

\* Opening Song: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (Vs. 1, 3) *Lift Up Your Hearts #76*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!

Come, and behold Him, born the King of angels!

O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;

O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;

O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

\* Opening Prayer

**WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD**

Prayer of Confession

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus, come. Sometimes we have a hard time imagining that you would come down from the glorious splendor of heaven to be born in a Bethlehem stable with straw, mud, and animals all around. We cannot imagine that you willingly took on our broken human flesh with bodies that ache and suffer from illness and pain. You walked into our sadness, into wars, into violence and persecution, and you did this all for us. We confess that it is difficult to comprehend and difficult to believe. Why, Lord, would you do that for us? We call you Emmanuel, God with us, but how often do we live out this Christmas story with the truth that your incarnation was for us? Continue to enter in, Emmanuel. Enter into our darkness and give us light. Enter into our lives and change them for your good purposes. Enter into our hearts and still them with the words "Be not afraid."*

*By the power of your Spirit,*

***we will walk in the light.***

*In times of joy and gladness,*

***we will walk in the light.***

*In times of sorrow and despair,*

***we will walk in the light.***

*Called to witness to your love,*

***we will share the light.***

***Amen.***

Assurance of Pardon and Guide to Grateful Living

Congregational Prayer

**WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18–25

Message: "Be Not Afraid: The Fear of a Ruined Reputation"

**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

Prayer of Application

**WE DEPART TO SERVE**

\* Song of Response: "Hark, The Glad Sound! The Savior Comes" (Vs. 1) *Lift Up Your Hearts* #60

Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
the Savior promised long!  
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne,  
and ev'ry voice a song.

\* Blessing

\* Closing Song: "Hark, The Glad Sound! The Savior Comes" (Vs. 3) *Lift Up Your Hearts* #60

He comes the broken heart to bind,  
the wounded soul to cure,  
and with the treasures of His grace  
to enrich the humbled poor.

\* Postlude

\* Please stand if you are able

Message: Rev. Randy Raak

Musician: Andrew Friend