



THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 13, 2020



PRELUDE

Marcus St. Julien



GREETING

Jay Hogewood

*Advent invites wonder -
to marvel at the return of Jesus, our Savior;
to keep not just our eyes open to the work of God,
but our hearts open and our lives open.
How might we prepare
for something great to happen in our lives this day?
What if we decide to trust God's reign of justice will come...?*



CALL TO WORSHIP

Marissa Teauseau Horvath

*Come! Rejoice in our God.
Let us give thanks, whatever life brings.
May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
Let us prepare our hearts and our world for the
Prince of Peace, who is coming.
May all who weep come home with songs of gladness.
Prepare the way of the Lord
and make clear the path for God's arrival.
**In prayer, song, and service,
let us prepare for the in-breaking of love.***



THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Eva Silvestre with Gabriel

*We want everything to look nice: the decorations of the season, our homes
with their lights and tinsel, wreaths and ribbons. We want to lighten the
darkness around us, bring beauty to the ugliness that wears us down.
We decorate, because it is tradition. Because it lifts our hearts.
Because it makes us feel like children again.
We deck our halls because company is coming.
The prophet Isaiah smiled when he said, "God will give a garland instead
of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a mantle of praise instead
of a faint spirit." No matter how far we feel from the spirit of the season,
God promises to decorate us with love and with joy.
We light these candles as a sign of our joy in the beautiful things of this
season - not just the things that glitter and flash, but the deeper things,
the beauty of the heart and the soul, the beauty of love shared in service
and hospitality. We light this candle of joy because company is coming.
And together we share the promise of God's gift of salvation,
as we praise God together by saying:
Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free.*



BLESSED BE THE GOD OF ISRAEL # 209

Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free,
who visits and redeems us, and grants us liberty.

The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill the promise to bring our people peace.

Now from the house of David a child of grace is given;
a Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven.
Before him goes the herald, forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation, the harbinger of day.

On prisoners of darkness the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner's eyes,
to guide the feet of pilgrims along the paths of peace;
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease!



PRAYER

The joy of our Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray together:

**Spirit of God, we give you thanks for drawing near,
for entering the world in the Messiah's birth.**

**Help us draw near to you, as we prepare our hearts
and our world for the justice and peace you bring.**

**Guide our preparations for your return,
as we share the good news with those who suffer,
and as we offer our friendship to those who are
lonely, anxious, or ashamed.**

**Move within our hearts,
as we make a way for your entrance,
by forgiving others as we have been forgiven.**

**Come, Spirit of God; be born in us anew
that we may live in your mercy and your grace.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER



THE SACREMENT OF BAPTISM

Mary Catherine Battle

and

Taylor Trumbower



My Prayers, My Presence, My Gifts, My Service, and My Witness



THE RED STEPS

A Moment for Children





OFFERING

soloist, Rebecca Sullivant

The Holly and The Ivy

arranged by Benjamin Britten

*The holly and the ivy are trees that's both well known;
of all the trees that are in the woods,
the holly bears the crown.*

***The rising of the sun, the running of the deer,
the playing of the merry harp, sweet singing in the choir.***

*The holly bears a blossom as what as any flower;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our sweet savior.
The holly bears a color as green as any tree;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to set poor sinners free.
The holly bears a berry as red as any blood,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to do poor sinners good.*

You may give your offering this morning by
TEXTING: giverayne TO: 73256 or at www.raynenola.org/contribute

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JOHN 1: 6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might
believe through him. He himself was not the light,
but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests
and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"
He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the
Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"
He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No."
Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer
for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"
He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.
Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him,
"Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah,
nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize
with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know,
the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie
the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across
the Jordan where John was baptizing.



HOMILY

Testify to The Light



John The Baptist



RESPONSE

duet, Allison and Randy Bunnell

In the Bleak Midwinter

Gustav Holst, arranged by Tom Shelton.

In the bleak midwinter frosty wind made moan;
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim worship night and day,
a breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom Angels fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and Archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but only His Mother in her maiden bliss
Worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a Shepherd I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

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INVITATION



We joyfully welcome all who
 wish to become members of
 Rayne
 and encourage you to call
 Pastor Jay at
225-772-3550
 or email him at
jay@raynenola.org
 to explore joining our
 community of faith.



I WANT TO WALK AS A CHILD OF THE LIGHT

#206

I want to walk as a child of the light.
 I want to follow Jesus.
 God sent the stars to give light to the world.
 The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain

**In Him there is no darkness at all.
 The night and the day are both alike.
 The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
 Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.**

I want to see the brightness of God.
 I want to look at Jesus.
**Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path,
 and show me the way to the Father.** *Refrain*

I'm looking for the coming of Christ.
 I want to be with Jesus.
**When we have run with patience the race,
 we shall know the joy of Jesus.** *Refrain*

BENEDICTION

Go in Peace,
**Stand firm in your faith.
 Be Strong.
 Be Brave.
 Let everything you do
 Be done in love.**

POSTLUDE

