



December 22, 2024

"What Does  
Love  
Make Possible?"

Fourth Sunday  
in Advent

### **Welcome!**

We encourage wearing name tags.

Restrooms: main level (exit front left), lower level (at foot of entry stair/elevator)

### **The Love of God Gathers Us**

#### **Gathering Music**

*We gently settle into sacred time and space*

#### **Ring the Bell**

#### **Prelude & Candle Lighting "Do You Hear What I Hear?"**

*Regney/Shayne*

*We acknowledge the light of Christ among us*

#### **Words of Welcome and Announcements**

#### **Opening Words from a Neighbor**

#### **Opening Hymn (NCH #106) "My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise" all verses**

SPP = Sing! Prayer and Praise

\* = Sitting or standing

NCH = New Century Hymnal

## **Advent Candle Liturgy** *(responsive)*

In this Advent season... We light the candle of Love as we once again meet angels, babies, caregivers and wanderers who bring a light into our lives that we must share with the world. Let us pray:

**Emmanuel, we celebrate your Advent in Jesus. And we light an Advent of new hope, peace, joy, and love for all the seasons of your children. Amen.**

### **Sung Response**

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

**O come, Desire of Nations, bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease;  
fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.  
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel  
is come to birth where all God’s children dwell.**

### **Acknowledging Our Need for God’s Grace**

### **Centering Ourselves**

*...as the singing bowl invites us into stillness*

### **Prayer of Confession and Longing** *(responsive)*

Holy Spirit, our very waiting in Advent is itself a confession:

**If waiting for Emmanuel, we have not yet recognized your presence with us.**

If waiting for a Savior, then the proud are still powerful, the mighty exalted, the cries of the oppressed unheard.

**If waiting for your incarnation, then we have not known and loved you in our siblings, not served you in our neighbors.**

In the gentle stillness of Advent joy and light, hear our deepest confession.

**Heal and renew us through the good tidings of your presence with us. Amen.**

### **Musical Interlude**

*...to accompany our quiet prayers*

### **Assurance of Grace**

*[we’ll share signs of peace at the end of the service]*

## A Nativity Moment

**Musical Interlude** ...as the choir and young people assemble

**Choral Anthem** “A Christmas Lullaby” Donald Moore

**Blessing One Another** ...with arms wide open

Young Ones: God be with you **All: And also with you**

**Sung Affirmation** ...as young people depart or return to families

**Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine...**

**Children's Activity** | Children (age 3 - gr. 4) go downstairs with Cindy and Kathy

**Youth Group** | Youth (gr. 5-12) go with Telae to their main-level meeting space

**Nursery** | Families with infants & toddlers are welcome to utilize the downstairs nursery  
(the worship service can be heard in the nursery)

We welcome the sounds and movements of children who stay in worship!

## Proclaiming God's Love

**A Reading from the Prophets** | NRSV (New Testament, p. 198) Micah 5:2-5a

**A Reading from the Gospels** | NRSV (New Testament, p. 56) Luke 1:26-45

**A Song from the Gospels** | “The Annunciation” & “The Magnificat”  
From Holden Evening Prayer Service, by Marty Haugen

### **Congregation joins in at verse 2.**

*An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary...*

*...And Mary said, “I am the servant of my God. I live to do your will.”*

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you.  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.

Great and mighty are you, O Holy One, strong is your kindness evermore.  
How you favor the weak and lowly one, humbling the proud of heart!

*(cont'd on next page...)*

Vs. 2 - You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,  
and uplifted the humble of heart.

You have filled the hungry with wondrous things, and left the wealthy no part.  
Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One, strong is your justice, strong your  
love, as you promised to Sarah and Abraham, kindness forevermore.

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you.  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.

Here ends the readings. May God speak to us through these sacred words.

**Morning Message**      **"What Does Love Make Possible?"**

### Responding To God's Love

**Prayer Song (SPP #187)** "Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary"  
**all verses**

### **Prayers of the People**

*We share aloud prayers for ourselves, others, and parts of the world  
Please tell Pastor Clare if you prefer yours not be added to our printed Prayer Corner*

...God, in your love      **Hear our prayer**

### **Prayer of Jesus** (*unison*)

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother,  
Holy and blessed is your true name.  
We pray for your reign of peace to come,  
We pray that your good will be done,  
Let heaven and Earth become one.  
Give us this day the bread we need,  
Give it to those who have none.  
Let forgiveness flow like a river between us,  
From each one to each one.  
Lead us to holy innocence  
Beyond the evil of our days —  
Come swiftly Mother, Father, come.  
For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy:  
Forever your name is All in One. Amen.

## Invitation to the Offering

We give by cash, check or electronically (scanning the QR code)  
*Blue electronic giving cards* represent gifts made electronically.



### Offertory

“Dona Nobis”

German tune

### \*Offertory Response (NCH #128) “In the Bleak Midwinter”

**What can I offer, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise one, I would do my part;  
but what can I offer: all my heart.**

### \*Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

**Eternal God of time and space, we respond to you with love. Your generous provision for our needs prompts us to be generous in return. We pray that we will share your love through these gifts and in our lives. Amen.**

### Going Forth to Share God’s Love

### \*Closing Hymn (insert) “Canticle of the Turning” **all verses**

### \*Benediction

### \*Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

*...to those with us online and onsite: smiles, peace signs, handshakes*

### \*Postlude

*...as we pass the peace*

### **Today** Following Worship:

**10:30am** | All are welcome downstairs for refreshments and good company!

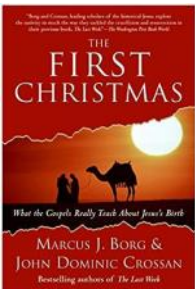
**11am** | Adult Faith Conversations, “*Jesus Redux*”

## PRAYER CORNER

- \*For Sarah Thorson's best friend, **Kristie**, being treated for skin cancer.
- \*For Therese Thorson's youngest sister, **Loretta**, who has advanced adrenal carcinoma (has been in treatment for two years).
- \*For Nan Oswald's grandchildren, **Brayden and Hailey Johnson**, as they recover from pneumonia.
- \*For Cindy Siegel's friend, **Sarah**, may healing energy surround her as she continues cancer treatments.
- \*For **Irene Horak**, safe travels to India and blessings on her experience there.
- \*Prayers of gratitude for the life of **Linda Tossey**, and the beautiful service last weekend, led by **Naomi Kirstein**.
- \*For Cindy Parson and Bob Dickie's daughter, **Erin**, embarking on a new job and adventure in Colorado.

## Adult Faith Conversations—Advent

**Sundays at 11 am**



We continue to explore the stories of Jesus' birth and the emotional power of Christmas. The Gospel stories are both personal and political, pointing to another way of seeing and living. We will be guided by the writing of two theologians who were part of the Jesus Redux series.

## The Food Pantry Could Use Your Help...

A reminder that our 2 free pantries offer food 365 days a year.

When school is out, the need for food is even greater. And, during the holidays it is great to provide special treats and snacks.

We really appreciate your support and we wish you peace and joy now and in the upcoming year.

--The Local Outreach Team



The Food Pantries  
could use:

**Individually wrapped  
snacks & treats!**

# Christmas Solstice & Christmas Eve Services

## Christmas Solstice *A Contemplative Service*

Dec. 20, 7 pm

*Acknowledging both  
difficult & nurturing darkness,  
we honor what is and what may be...  
God with us in both.*

Early Christmas Eve | 3 pm

Late Christmas Eve | 10 pm

*carols, candlelight,  
readings, special music*

**Volunteers are  
needed!**

Liturgists

Greeters

Reception Hosts

Youth Greeters

Acolytes

Check out the  
sign-up in the  
Fellowship Hall  
or email Megan  
if you can help!

## Holiday Office Hours

Monday, Dec. 23 | 8 am - 12 pm

Tuesday, Dec. 24 | 8 am - 12 pm

**Wednesday, Dec. 25 | Office Closed**

Thursday, Dec. 26 | 10 am - 4 pm

*(There will be no Midweek News the week of  
Christmas.)*

*(Midweek deadline is Monday, Dec. 30th)*

Tuesday, Dec. 31 | 8:30 - 3:30 pm

**Wednesday, Jan. 1 | Office Closed**

Thursday, Jan. 2 | 8:30 am - 3:30 pm







### Week at a Glance:

Office Hours | **Dec. 23, 8 am—12 pm**

Gentle Tai Chi | **Dec. 23, 7 pm** | @ Church

Office Hours | **Dec. 24, 8 am—12 pm**

Christmas Eve Service—Early | **Dec. 24, 3 pm** | @ Church & Livestream

Christmas Eve Service—Late | **Dec. 24, 7 pm** | @ Church & Livestream

Christmas Day | **Office Closed**

Office Hours | **Dec. 26, 11 am—4 pm**

**Mark your calendar... Our Annual Meeting will be Feb. 2nd!**

*Annual reports due January 19th.*

Thank you to today's partners: Telae (Youth and Outreach Director), Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Lori Mildon (flute & Fellowship), Carol Dusbabek (greeter), Mary Maren Bjork (liturgist), St. Croix United Choir, Cindy Baker & Kathy Iverson (age 3 - gr 4), Jane Hanson (youth group), Paul Spilseth, Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Andi Favilla & Sharri Kinkead (altar decor)




### St. Croix United Church

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## My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise

106

Ruth Duck, 1985

Luke 1:46-55

A D A/E E7 A

1 My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to God who rais - es me,  
 2 The arm of God is strong and just to scat - ter all the proud.  
 3 The prom - ise made in a - ges past at last has come to be,

A D A/E E7 A

Who came to me when I was low and changed my des - ti - ny.  
 The ty - rants tum - ble from their thrones and van - ish like a cloud.  
 for God has come in power to save, to set all peo - ple free.

E A D E7 A E

The Ho - ly One, the Liv - ing God, is al - ways full of grace  
 The hun - gry all are sat - is - fied; the rich are sent a - way.  
 Re - mem - bering those who wait to see sal - va - tion's dawn - ing day,

A D A/E E7 A

To those who seek their Mak - er's will in ev - ery time and place.  
 The poor of earth who suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.  
 Our Sav - ior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

The "Magnificat," a traditional text for evening prayer as well as Advent, is paraphrased here by Ruth Duck. She developed it to make the ancient rite of evening prayer available to her own worshipping communities.

Tune: MARIAS LOVSÅNG C.M.D.  
 Swedish folk melody

Alternate tunes: ELLACOMBE, TALLIS' THIRD

RESPOND

# 187 Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary

$\text{♩} = 60$

D/A Em/A D A

1. Lord pre - pare me to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, pure and  
- pow'r me to be a wit - ness for you, act - ing

G Em<sup>7</sup> D/A A A<sup>7</sup>

ho - ly, tried and true; with thanks -  
bold - ly, in your name; seek - ing

D A

-giv - ing, I'll be a liv - ing sanc - tu -  
jus - tice, where there is hurt - ing off - 'ring

G Em<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup> D D/A Em/A D

- ar - y for you. 2. God em -  
hope where there is pain.

Words (verse 1) and Music: John W. Thompson and Randy Scruggs

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Words (verse 2): Scott A. Ressman, Copyright ©2009. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

# Canticle of the Turning



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the  
2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .  
3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a  
4 Though the na - tions rage from . . . age to age, we re -



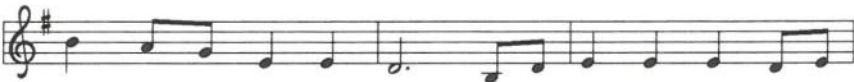
God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the  
work great . . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the  
stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your  
mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.  
liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my  
Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to  
The hun - gry poor shall . . . weep no more, for the  
This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my  
those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the  
food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry  
prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?  
strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



*Refrain*

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.