

Worship Bulletin - Bethel Congregational Church UCC

December 15, 2024 – 3rd Sunday of Advent



Centering Words (Zephaniah 3, Isaiah 12)

Rejoice and be glad! God is at work while we wait and hope and pray for God's peace to come upon the earth.



www.betheluccontario.org

536 N Euclid Ave Ontario CA 91762

In Person & Live Streaming Sundays at 10am

Facebook, YouTube, Twitch;

Also available On Demand on Vimeo, Roku and Amazon Fire TV

Bethel Congregational Church, UCC
Sunday – December 15, 2024

Prelude

Musicians

Responsive Call to Worship

One: Let all who love God rejoice.

**Many: Let all who thirst for justice
draw water from the well of God's salvation.**

One: Let all who long for Christ sing for joy.

**Many: Let all who hunger for righteousness return
home to the living God.**

One: Let all who seek the Spirit shout aloud.

**Many: Let all who yearn for mercy
fall on their knees before the throne of grace.**

Unison Opening Prayer (*Philippians 4*)

God of love and joy, thank you for your presence
in our lives.

During this time of worship,
draw us closer to you and to one another.

May we grow in our love for you and for our neighbor.

May we lay aside our worries,
trusting that you hear what lies in our hearts.

May we dwell in your peace
and be guided by the one who is to come,
your Son, Jesus Christ.

In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

***Gathering Hymn** *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

1 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;

REFRAIN: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

2 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;

O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest; [*REFRAIN*]

3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,

Jesus, to thee be all glory given.

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: [*REFRAIN*]

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O Come, All Ye Faithful

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-4) has chords G, Am/G, D/F#, G, D/F#, G, C, G/D, D, Em. The second staff (measures 5-8) has chords A⁷/E, D, A, D, G/B, D/F#, G, D/A, A⁷, D. The third staff (measures 9-12) has chords G/B, Am, G, D⁷/A, G, D/F#, G, Em, Am/C, D. The fourth staff (measures 13-16) has chords G, D, G, D⁷, G, D, G, D⁷, G, D. The fifth staff (measures 17-20) has chords G, D⁷/A, G, D/F#, A⁷/E, D, G/B, C, G/D, D, G.

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
 2 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 3 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,
 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove;
 Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;
 come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
 glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;
Refrain
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord.

Passing the Peace

Lighting the Advent Candle

ADVENT III – Joy (Luke 3:7-18)

Lighting the Advent Candles

One: This morning, hear anew the Baptizer's prophetic announcement of the coming of the Messiah and interpret it wisely.

All: We need not shrink from the challenge of repentance because when we've been truly rearranged on the inside, we will bear good fruit on the outside.

One: During these troubling times in our nation and around the world, the question from the crowds still persists, "What then should we do?"

All: Once again we humbly dedicate ourselves to kindness, to justice, and to fairness.

One: On this third Sunday of Advent, we light a candle of joy, as a visible symbol of these "fruits worthy of repentance."

All: Come let us be baptized with winds of the Spirit and refined by the fire of God's word.

Three candles of Hope, Peace, and Joy are lit.

One: Let us, though many, pray in one voice.

All: Gracious and loving God, as we await the coming of the One whom you sent, grant that our waiting might be the active kind. Give us the courage to meet the challenge of altering our thoughts and feelings about the world around us so that our actions might also be changed. Help us to keep our priorities straight, our passions properly pointed, and our eyes fixed upon the prize of joy. Remind us that you lovingly require evidence of our repentance – kindness, justice and fairness. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Announcements/Regular and Special Events:

- **Sundays** – Worship! (Bethel 10am Sanctuary/Parlor; FCCO 11:30am upstairs)
- **Mondays** – Southland Jazz Orchestra Rehearsals 7-9:30 (per calendar)
- **Tuesdays** – SSO Chorus Rehearsals 7:30 – 9pm
- **Wednesdays** – NA meeting 7:30-9 pm (parlor). Cub Scouts 6pm (basement)
- **Thursdays at 10am** - Qi-Gong
- **Fridays** – evenings SWE Rehearsals (sanctuary/parlor)
- **Saturdays** – Mornings SSO Rehearsals / FCCO Korean Fellowship 10-2 (upstairs).
- **CONCERTS:** Dec 21 4pm SWE; Dec 24 – Candlelight Christmas Eve; January 5, 2025 4pm “Amahl and the Night Visitors”.

Children’s Time

Video

Saddleback Kids

(used with permission)

*Gloria

Glory to the Creator,

The Christ, the Holy Spirit three in one;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

World without end. Amen, Amen.

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems of music. Each system includes a treble clef staff with a vocal line and a bass clef staff with a guitar accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the treble staff.

System 1: Chords: C, G/D, C, G/B, G, C, G/B, Am/C. Lyrics: "Glo-ry to the Cre-a-tor, the Christ the Ho-ly Spi-rit".

System 2: Chords: G/D, D⁷, G, C, G⁷, G⁷. Lyrics: "three in one; as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and ev-er".

System 3: Chords: C, G, G/F, C/E, C/G, G⁷, C. Lyrics: "shall be, world with-out end. A-men. A-men.".

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

Philippians 4:4-7

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

Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?"

In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Prayer of Yearning

Creator of the universe,
we stand amazed at your power and glory.
We are eager to worship you and offer our praise,
but we are often reluctant to answer
when we hear you calling our name.
We sing our songs of tribute in the sanctuary,
but shy away from the river,
lest we be baptized
with the fire of the Holy Spirit.
Forgive us when we forget your promise
to be with us always, O God.
Renew us with the power of your ever-present love,
and strengthen us to proclaim your justice
throughout the world. Amen.

Words of Assurance (Pastor)

The blessedness of God's grace will fill our hearts with a peace-filled joy
as we move about this season and follow the light ahead.

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns

The 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 and ever. Amen**

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Offering - Invitation to Generosity (Pastor)

Please remember to send your offerings in so that we can continue our ministries. (If you want a portion of your offering to be designated as something specific, just write that in the message area.) If you forget to write a note with the offering – just email us (info@BethelUCCOntario.org) or message us through Facebook.

Giving Options: In person – We are not yet “passing the plate”. You may leave your offering in one of the offering plates (front of the sanctuary, or usher’s table in the rear).



Give online at www.bethelucontario.org,

To use a credit or debit card, use the yellow “Donate” button (processed by PayPal – no PP account required), or green Tithe.ly button (Processed by Tithe.ly)



Use **ZELLE** (through your bank website or via the stand alone app) to transfer your offering to us directly from your bank. When you use Zelle, we are “Bethel Congregational Church” Our verified Zelle email is info@bethelucontario.org



MAIL - Just mail your check to Bethel Congregational Church
536 N Euclid Ave, Ontario CA 91762.



QR Code – Scan the code to send your offering to us through PayPal

Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving

God of Holy Darkness and Returning Light,

We give of our full hearts, knowing that you will bless this world with love. We give of our full minds, knowing that you will bless this world with peace. We give of our full souls, knowing that you will bless this world with hope. May the joy of your gifts encourage us to share the best we have, creating your Realm here on earth. Amen.

Singing into Mission *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice NCH 129

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now give heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ was born today;
Ox and ass before him bow,
asleep within the manger now.
Christ is born today,
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
now you know of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
God has opened heaven's door,
and you are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this,
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
now you need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save,
Christ was born to save!

Descant

3 Good Chris - tian friends, re-joyce with heart and soul and voice;

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;

now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

now give heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now you know of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
 now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -

Ox and ass be - fore him bow, a - sleep with - in the
 God has o - pened heav - en's door, and you are blessed for -
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -

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last - ing hall. Christ was born, Christ was born to save!

man-ger now. Christ is born to - day, Christ is born to - day!
 ev - er-more. Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!
 last-ing hall. Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

Benediction - Unison

Go with the joy of the Lord on your lips. Go with the peace of Christ in your hearts.

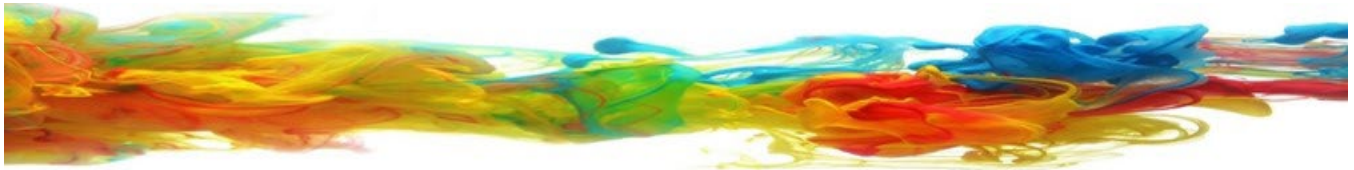
Go with the strength of the Holy Spirit in every step you take.

Go with God.

Amen. Go in Peace

Postlude

Carillon



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Live Stream Sundays at 10am on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitch](#) - (Videos remain available for access any time)*All music licensed and used by permission (CCLI, One License, Artist Permission, PD)

God sends us to serve, but God does not send us alone. The Spirit is with us in the world guiding our steps and protecting our paths. Christ yearns for us to be one in ministry and service, and one in community and faith – a unity that we discover through the Spirit’s miraculous power in our lives. Sent to serve, we are sent not only with the power of the Spirit, but also with the power of unity with one another. Embracing this unity with both the Holy Spirit and one another opens a path to the “Complete joy” that Christ prays we may one day know.