

Sunday January 2, 2022
Our YES! To Life & God's Radiance

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship *(inspired by Isaiah 9)*

Leader: We long for a light to guide us.

People: **The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has
shined.**

Leader: You have blessed all life with so many gifts and inner capacities for good
and you have increased our ability to experience joy.

People: **We long for God's joy in our lives.**

Leader: We long to be relieved of all the pressures and burdens we carry.

People: **For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.**

Leader: For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

People: **He is named Emmanuel: God with us.
In this so human child who felt the things we feel,
we find our light, our joy, our comfort.**

Opening Prayer **Unison**

**We bless you, Abba, Father, Divine Parent
for you have visited your people
in one like us and in human fragility you have revealed
the face of divinity.**

**Gather into your arms
all the peoples of the world,
so that in your embrace
we may find blessing, peace,
and the fullness of our inheritance
as your daughters and sons. Amen.**

Hymn #17: To You, O God, All Creatures Sing
(Please see separate attachment for the score)

Hymn Leader: Susan Breon

- 1) To you, O God, all creatures sing, and all creation, everything
sings your praises, alleluia!
Your burning sun with golden beam, your silver moon with softer gleam,
sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 2) Your wind that blows the tempest by, your clouds that sail across the sky
sing your praises, alleluia!
Your morning rises with a song, and lights of evening sing along,
sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 3) Your flowing waters, crystal clear, make melodies for you to year,
sing your praises, alleluia!
Your fire, ... bountiful and bright, remembering your warmth and light,
sings your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 4) To you, O God, day after day, your planet earth in every way,
sings your praises, alleluia,
As savory fruit and fragrant flower show for your glory and your power,
sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 5) Now we who are of tender heart, forgiving others, take our part,
sing your praises, alleluia!
To you we lift our pain and care, receive the burdens that we bear,
singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
- 6) In you, a kind and gentle death prepares to hush our final breath,
singing praises, alleluia!
Christ goes before us to renew the way that leads us home to you.
Hear our praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prayer of Confession Unison

Living God of light and hope, in you we need not fear any form or expression of darkness. Yet we do fear and because of this contorting fear we can become shaped and conditioned by the ways of the world that are not your ways. Allow us here to pause and truly be grasped by the Good News. Pick us up as we are thrown off balance by so many reverberations of heated words and bent behaviors energized by fear. Help us be the people of faith, hope, joy, and love in our times.

Moments for Reflection and Silence

Assurance of Pardon

God hears our prayers shared from the depths of our hearts. We are blessed beyond measure. Pause and be still people of God. Feel the freshness of God's unfathomable love. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you
People: **And also with you!**

Reading

Carol Bellamy

Jeremiah 31: excerpts (NIV)

31:8 See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.

31:9 With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

31:12 They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

31:13 Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

Special Music

Susan Breon

Gospel Reading

John 1:1-9 (NIV)

1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

1:3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being

1:4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

1:7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

1:8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

1:9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Musical Interlude

Sermon: Our YES! To Life & God's Radiance

Music for Meditation

Prayers of the People

Hymn #119 My Soul Gives Glory to My God (verses 1, 3 and 5)

**1) My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.**

**3) From age to age, to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.**

**5) Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,
remembering past promises with present faithfulness.**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer **Unison**

Offering Invitation

These gifts flow from our hearts opened by the grace of your abundant love. As we present our gifts, we are also blessing this faith community serving the world.

Offering and Dedication **Unison**

How much can I give to you oh God? Teach us how wide and far is your reach of love. With our lives expanded within your presence, redeemed by your truth, and refreshed by your word, we trust that these gifts we present today will bless others in wider circles. Thanks for the opportunity. Amen.

Service of Holy Communion

Invitation

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

Communion Prayer **Unison**

As we eat this meal together and as we drink this juice of life in each other's presence grant unto us an emerging, fulfilling, and redeeming sense of life calling. In this holy meal of communion, we feel the allure and enticement of fellowship enriching us and making us more able to serve you and your ends in life. With eternal gratitude we give you thanks. Amen.

Benediction **Unison**

Jesus came to us to bear witness to the light of redemption. In this we are made whole and empowered to live with courage into the realm God is preparing for all. We will go in peace expectantly and resourcefully so that this light can shine forth.