

December 17, 2023
Third Sunday of Advent

Prelude and Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

***Lighting the Advent Candle** (focus: John 1:6–8, 8–11)

Leader: We light two purple candles and the pink candle, the third candle of Advent.

(lighting of the candles)

People: We look to John, the one you sent, to point us to your light. The light will come into our world and enlighten everyone.

Leader: God sent John the Baptizer to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus Christ, the true Light of the World. John called for people to repent of their sins and to live faithfully. He baptized with a cleansing water and proclaimed the new life that Christ, the one who would follow him, would bring. This Advent, we ask for God's mercy and a joyful new beginning.

People: Merciful God, we give thanks that you send messengers like John to call us to greater faith. We ask that in these days we prepare for you in prayer and acts of holy compassion. Forgive us and lead us to your light. Amen.

***Hymn #145:** "Once In Royal David's City"

***Passing of the Peace**

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-7 Carol Bellamy

Anthem: A Christmas Blessing by John Purifoy

Time With Young Disciples

***Unison Prayer**

In your Christ, O God, we discover salvation coming to all who need. Our past has been made new, our futures restored, the earth rejoices with your spiral of beauty – grant, we pray, that our lives be fulfilled in this your fulfillment for us; through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Sermon: "Children, Go Where I Send Thee"

Special Music: "Children, Go Where I Send Thee"

The Community at Prayer (*Joys and Concerns, Prayers for the People, Lord's Prayer*)

If you are watching online, type any prayer requests in the chat by the end of the sermon and we can voice them and get the names on the prayer list.

Prayer Response

Invitation to the Offering

(Opportunities to give for the ministries of this church are available through an offering plate during service, by mailing your gift to the church office, or by signing up for electronic giving through our website.)

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Holy One, whose heart abounds with gifts, receive this offering as a sign of our intention to live surrounded by your mercy, inspired by your Spirit, open to the joy of your presence, hospitable to one another, and generous toward your world.

***Hymn #133: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

***Commissioning and Blessing**

***Choral Response**

***Postlude**