

Welcome to the

Setauket Presbyterian Church

of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)



Third Sunday in Advent

Order of Worship

December 17, 2023

❖ *please rise in body or in spirit; unison words are in bold.*

GATHERING MUSIC

RINGING OF THE STEEPLE BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

A: How does a weary world practice joy?

B: By dancing and throwing birthday parties.

By hanging Christmas lights and holding sleepy babies.

By singing loudly and looking for good news.

By telling the story of Jesus and showing up for our community.

A: There are a million ways to practice joy. So today we light the candle of joy as a reminder and a charge. With God's help, may we bring joy into a weary world. Amen.

❖ **HYMN no. 12 (Blue Hymnal)** *People, Look East*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of today and tomorrow, when Mary was pregnant and afraid, she ran to her cousin Elizabeth's house. Elizabeth threw open the door with joy and showered blessings upon her. How often do we have that same opportunity? How often do we leave the door locked, the curtains drawn, and the lights off? How often do we shower critique or judgment instead of blessings and joy? Gracious God, forgive us. Help us see you in our neighbor. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

Friends, this is what I know—God delights in us. God throws open the door, just like Elizabeth, and says, "Come on home. There is room for you here!" And in that moment, we are blessed. In that moment, we are forgiven. In that moment, we are seen, healed, and welcomed home. So rest in this good news: you are saved by grace. Let us respond together, using the words from Mary's song:

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed."

SUNG RESPONSE *Prepare the Way of the Lord*

*Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord,
and all people will see the salvation of our God.*

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.** *Please share a sign of Christ's peace with one another.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy One, giver of life and light, as your word is read, proclaimed, and enacted, illumine our hearts and minds, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect your love and justice. Amen.

PAGEANT

❖ **HYMN no. 29 (Blue Hymnal)** *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

❖ **DOXOLOGY no. 609**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures high and low:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

❖ **PRAYER OF DEDICATION OF SELF AND SUBSTANCE**

Holy God, you bless us with many gifts, you retrieve us from despair and fear, you visit us with surprising proclamations, and you intend for us good things. We thank you for your steadfast love and for the gift of faith. Use our gifts to bring comfort and justice to those in need, reforming the ways of our world for your sake. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

❖ **HYMN no. 13 (Blue Hymnal)** *Prepare the Way, O Zion*

❖ **CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

Rejoice always.

Pray without ceasing.

Witness to the light of Christ so that all might believe through him.

Now may the God of peace call forth your complete dedication;

may the light of Christ shine upon you;

and the Holy Spirit fill you completely, now and forever.

POSTLUDE

Portions of the liturgy adapted from A Sanctified Art, www.sanctifiedart.org

We welcome **Ann Becherer** as our Worship Assistant this morning.

Thanks to her for her service!

A special thanks to the Veronica Wilkom, Lauren Ishida and all of our Pageant participants this morning.