



Peace

*We light this candle as a symbol of the
Prince of Peace.*

*May the visitation of your Holy Spirit, O God,
make us ready for the coming of Jesus, our hope and joy.*

O come, O come, Emmanuel.

St. Andrew Worship

Sunday, December 17, 2023 at 10:30 AM

4th Sunday of Advent

We are glad that you are worshipping online with us this morning and pray that your experience here is a blessing to you. If you are a visitor and want to know more about the church, please visit our website for more information and to contact us: www.aptospresbyterianchurch.org

Service Online

Join on Zoom:

Dial: 669 900 9128

Meeting ID: 831 688 4211

Password: 9850

Use *6 to unmute your

Live Streaming on YouTube:

@standrewpresbyterianchurch4863

Welcome and Announcement

Lighting the Advent Candle

Susan & Bill Galstan

... and we question, "How can this be? I am only..." Yet, like Mary, the "onlys" that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God's love transforms us into bearers of good news.

We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.

... May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives. Amen.

Light the four candles of the Advent wreath.

Choral Response:

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (vs. 7)

*O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*Call to Worship (Responsive)

Stop. Listen. Pay attention. Love is coming near.

We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.

The Hope Bringer, Peace Maker, Joy Sustainer grows in a womb, preparing to be born among us.

We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.

With Mary, we long for the coming of the Child who will transform the world, bringing justice where injustice reigns, fullness where hunger persists, and favor to the ones the world calls lowly.

We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.

So let us join our voices and our lives in magnifying God, our Savior!

We come to wait and to declare the coming of the Love that transforms us! Amen.

"People Look East"

*People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.*

*Make your house fair as you are able;
Trim the hearth and set the table.*

*People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Guest, is on the way.*

*Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.*

*People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Rose, is on the way.*

*Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.*

*People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Bird, is on the way.*

*Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.*

*People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Star, is on the way.*

*Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.*

*People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.*

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

We confess we are not the people you hope us to be, Advent God.

The very ones you favor, we too often ignore or ridicule.

*The ones you knock off their pedestals,
we admire and emulate.*

*We are so focused on having more and more,
we risk being sent away empty.*

*Forgive us, Mighty God,
and look with grace upon us.*

*That we would live secure in your love;
we would be the ones of peace for our world,
we would seek to do your will,
as did Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior,
in whose name we pray.*

(Silence is kept)

Assurance of Grace (Responsive)

Even now—yes, even in this very moment,

God comes to us,

bringing hope,

bringing forgiveness,

bringing grace as freely offered gifts to us.

*May we open our hearts to the God who is with us,
and receive the gifts which have been offered to us.*

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Response *Gloria Patri* (Unison)

Anthem

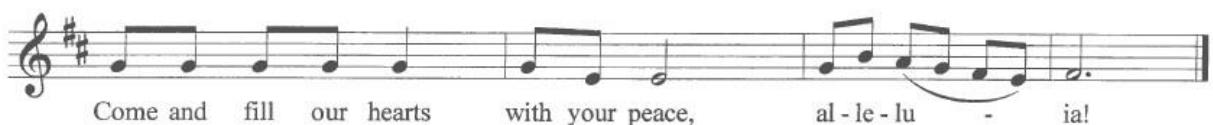
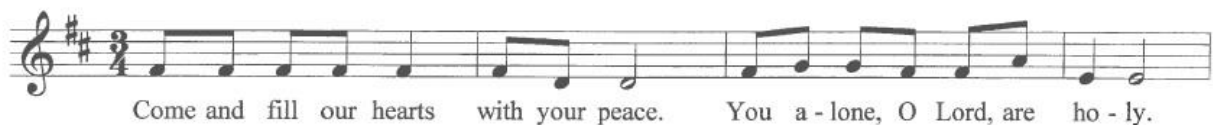
"Mary, Did You Know?"

St. Andrew Choir

Prayers of the People

(Please unmute to signal you want to share a prayer request)

Come and Fill



My soul gives glory to my God; my heart pours out its praise.

God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is God's name.

All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.

From age to age to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,

dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.

Love casts the mighty from their thrones, promotes the insecure,

leaves hungry spirits satisfied; the rich seem suddenly poor.

Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,

remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

Prayer of Illumination

Faithful God, you chose Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Sovereign and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now fill us with your grace, that with her, we may understand your ways, rejoice in your salvation, and embrace your will; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Lesson:

Luke 1:39-45

(P. 57 OT)

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

This is the word of the lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Lesson:

Luke 1:46-56

(P. 57 OT)

And Mary said, "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; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

This is the word of the lord.

Thanks be to God.

Offertory "Gesú Bambino" by Pietro A. Yon Eileen Mihm, Piano & Don Adkins, Organ

Doxology

Offering Prayer (Unison)

As we offer our gifts to you, Holy God, may we remember those who are forgotten by us too many times – the hungry, the lonely, the homeless, the vulnerable – yet are important citizens in your kingdom of grace, justice, and hope. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



All are welcome at Christ's table. Belief in Christ, not membership, offers you this loving invitation.

Invitation

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Responsive)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right for us to give thanks and praise.

...We gladly join our voices to the song of the church on earth and in heaven:

Sanctus

Don Adkins

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord: God of pow'r and might. Hea - ven and earth are
 full of your glo - ry, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bles - sed is He who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

We await Emmanuel, God with us, as we affirm the promise of God to us in Jesus Christ, the hope of our lives and the source of our salvation. To that end Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that our sharing of the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. Amen.

Words of Institution

Distribution of The Bread and The Cup

During Intinction sing: *Hymn 507

*Come to the Table of Grace
Come to the table of Peace
Come to the table of Love
Come to the table of Hope
Come to the table of Joy*

Closing Prayer

*Hymn 123

"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King":
the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world:
Above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.*

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
And we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring;
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!*

*And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:
O, rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.*

*For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.*

Benediction

Insert

Mary's Song

Luke 1:46-56

(The Magnificat)

Zechariah's Song

Luke 1:67-80