

ANAHEIM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 20, 2020

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

You will be invited to light a candle in your home at the same time the candle in the sanctuary is lit. We will follow the lighting of our candles with this response:

May this light be an invitation to join the work of love and may it be our invitation to be Advent people—people who dream. Amen.

CHORAL INTROIT

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

R. Ringwald; R. Shaw

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in preparation for good news is about to be proclaimed.

We gather in expectation for love is about to explode in our midst.

We gather in celebration for we are those people who have said yes to the manger, yes to love enfleshed, yes to the one incarnate for others, yes to the wholeness of God.

With preparation and in expectation, let us celebrate!

HYMN NO.8

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates, behold, the King of glory waits; The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here!

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart From earthly use for heav'n's employ, adorned with prayer, and love, and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to Thee, here, Lord abide. Let me Thy inner presence feel; Thy grace and love in me reveal.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Good News, You say to us, "You are highly favored," but we struggle to see how that could be. You say to us, "Do not be afraid," but we are often afraid. You say to us, "Even the impossible is possible, just look at Elizabeth!" But hope slips through our hands like water. The impossible still feels impossible. So today we pray: Teach us to sing like Mary. Teach us to laugh like Elizabeth. Teach us to trust like the angels. Forgive us when we can only do one at a time, or none at all.

ANTHEM Do You Hear What I Hear

Harry Simeone

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:39-56

SERMON "Better Together"

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that this world is hard— Harder than it has to be. When the world falls apart around us, We believe in listening for the angels that say, "Do not be afraid," and in seeking out the Elizabeths in our lives— those who laugh with joy at our arrival and throw open the doors to their homes. We believe that healthy relationships can offer healing and that home found in partnership. Therefore, we believe in church families, in chosen families, and in the love that extends beyond family. We believe in friendships, in neighbors, and in leaning on each other when the going gets tough. We believe in the Triune God— Lover, Beloved, and Love itself—inherently relational, always connected, and never alone. We believe that that same belovedness exists for us. We believe that we are loved and claimed, Never alone. Thanks be to God for a love like that.

PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. Amen.

HYMN NO.36 (v. 1, 4)In The Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan, Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone. Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow. In the bleak mid-winter, long ago.

What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give Him; Give my heart.

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE What Child is This? arr. David Huntsinger

Today's Worship Leaders

Kim Skilling, Pastor
David Hughes, Director of Music Carol Hughes, Accompanist
Sam Miller and Olivia Kellett, Soloists
AFPC Intern Choir Abbott Hatch, Video and Sound
Liturgy by Karen Ware Jackson and Sarah Are