

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle: The Candle of Love

Whit, Lydia, and Burke Williams; Andrea and Natalie Simo

Isaiah spoke to a people called The Chosen People, to a nation called Israel, and brought a light of hope.

Gabriel came to a town called Nazareth, to a girl named Mary, and brought a light of joy.

Mary and Joseph went to a town called Bethlehem, to a stable that became a nursery,

And God brought the light of love to the world.

As we light the fourth candle of Advent,
We rejoice with Mary that love has come in flesh and blood.

Loving God, we thank you for your gift of love shown to us perfectly in Jesus Christ our Lord. Help us prepare our hearts to receive Him. Bless our worship. Amen.

Call to Confession

In Jesus Christ, God seeks to smooth those places made rough by sin. With humility and hope, let us make our confession.

Prayer of Confession

Great God, as we behold the birth of Jesus again, we are mindful of how we have failed to receive the fullness of that gift. The story points us to your glory, yet we struggle to join in the song of praise and thanksgiving. We are distracted and confused, so focused on things that matter little that we overlook the good news of great joy that you have prepared. Tell us again that the Savior is born. Tell us again that we are forgiven. Tell us again that our lives can be abundant in faith, hope and love because of what you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of God's Forgiveness

The angel tells Joseph that the child forming in Mary's womb is to be named Jesus. "Call him Jesus," the angel says, "For he will save the people from their sins." From his birth through his resurrection, from age to age, Jesus is about salvation. This is good news!

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! **Thanks be to God!**

Now may the peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you!**

Amen

We Hear God's Word

Anthem

"Waiting for a King"

featuring clarinetist, Sarah Ross

Waiting for a King; when will He come? Waiting for a King; God's holy One.

Will the world be ready? Is His advent near? Waiting for a King; when will He appear?

Waiting for a King; when will He come? Waiting for a King; God's only Son.

Will the world receive Him? Will He stand alone? Waiting for a King to come and take His throne.

In the fullness of time the Prince of Peace will come, the promised Messiah, God's chosen One.

For those who are righteous, hope will be restored. Their eyes will be opened, eyes will be opened, eyes will be opened; they will know the Lord.

Waiting for a King, ruling in might. Waiting for a King to shine in our night.

Will the world be ready when He comes to stay? Waiting for a King; will this be the day?

A Prayer for Guidance as We Hear God's Word

Readings from God's Word

the Prophets

Isaiah 7:10-16

the Gospels

Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon

"God's Intervention"

the Reverend Chris Richardson

***An Affirmation of Faith**

Confession of 1967

Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.

***The Gloria Patri**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen!
Amen!

Hymn 150

“What Child Is This?”

Verses 1,3

Invitation to the Offering

With joy and gratitude for all we have been given, let us offer our tithes and gifts to God.

Offertory

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Sprunger

*** Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*** Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Prayers of the People and 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 and ever. Amen.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service and a Christmas Day Service of Lessons and Carols

Join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary of JJ White Memorial. The Reverend Chris Richardson will lead our worship and administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The service will include the passing of the light from the Christ Candle throughout the congregation – a lovely time together to the glory of our Savior Jesus Christ.



Also, plan to join us for Christmas Day worship on Sunday, December 25, at 10:30. We will celebrate the birth of our Savior with a service of “Lessons and Carols”.

Providing Meals for the Hungry

J.J. White is coordinating a program to provide meals to the hungry in our community. The participating churches are J.J. White Memorial, Centenary, and the Church of the Mediator. Melisa DeCoux is the director of this program. Please let her know if you can help.

Sign-up Sheet for Sanctuary Flowers

The sign-up sheet for providing flowers in our sanctuary during 2023 is available on the front pew. If you have questions please see Carol Rawlings.

MICA Needs

MICA needs spaghetti sauce and dried beans. Our regular collection is the last Sunday of each month, but you may bring items on any other Sunday as well. Thanks!