



first community

December 14, 2025

10 am SOUTH

ADVENT 3

GREETING – Mary Kate

PRELUDE – Robert, organ

*A Nativity Suite -(Oh, Come, Emmanuel,
Shepherds, and Silent Night)*
Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

CALL TO WORSHIP⁽¹⁾ – Seth

ONE: The desert rejoices and blossoms like
the crocus.

**MANY: Joy springs up where only dust once
lay.**

ONE: The fearful are strengthened; the weak
are renewed.

**MANY: The dream of God is waking, and it
sounds like laughter.**

ONE: Come, all who wait for good news; come,
all who need to sing again.

**MANY: We gather to rejoice in God's dream
made visible in Christ.**

ONE: Even now, love hums beneath our
worry, and light shimmers at the edge of
things.

**ALL: Come, dreamers of God—let joy arise
within us as we worship.**

OPENING HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**O come, O come Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Child of God appear.**

**Refrain:
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,
and order all things, far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge of show,
and help us in that way to go. (Refrain)**

**O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
(Refrain)**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife and quarrels cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
(Refrain)**

WELCOME – Seth

**LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE 3
– Matthieu, Lauren, Luka, Leo
Patris De Breuil and Chris
Casavant with Rev. Mary Kate
Buchanan**

**LEADER: We have dreamed of Hope and
Peace; today we dream of Joy.**

**R1: In the wilderness, flowers are blooming
where no flowers should grow.**

R2: The blind see, the lame leap, and those who sorrow find their voices again.

LEADER: Joy is the echo of God's dream within us— a song stronger than fear and sweeter than sorrow.

(Pause as the third candle is lit.)

R1: We light this candle to remind us that God's joy is born in ordinary places— in hands that serve, in songs we hum without thinking, in hope we cannot explain.

R2: May its flame brighten our waiting and warm our witness.

All: Holy One, kindle in us the light of Joy. Let it rise like a song at dawn and carry your dream into the world.

LEADER: Come, Lord Jesus — our Joy and our Song. Amen

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT – Mary
Kate**

ANTHEM- Whitechapel Ringers

I Wonder As I Wander

Appalachian Folk Tune/arr. Cathy Mocklebust

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER – Mary Kate

OFFERTORY

Invitation to Dream – Seth

Receiving the People's Gifts

Anthem – Whitechapel Ringers

Angels We Have Heard on High

arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

**Presentation of Gifts and Prayer of
Dedication⁽²⁾– Seth**

ONE: As the gifts are presented, will all rise in
body or spirit?

**ALL: Joy-Bringing God, receive these gifts
and the gladness that moves our hearts to
give. Use them to brighten dark places and
to share your good news with those who
wait for deliverance. Amen.**

Doxology LASST UNS ERFREUEN - verse 1
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

**praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

AN INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE – Glen

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Glen

ONE: God of Joy, open our ears to the music of your Word. May its melody carry us from sorrow to singing, from silence to shouting praise. Teach us to join the song of your dream until all creation dances again. Amen.

PROPHETIC LESSON–Deacon Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus **2** it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

3 Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

God will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

God will come and save you.”

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

6 then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for
joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

7 the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

8 A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

9 No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return

and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

SERMON – Glen

“Dreaming of Joy”

HYMN OF PREPARATION

Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread

**Be known to us in breaking bread,
but do not then depart;
O Savior, stay with us and spread
your table in our heart.**

COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion – Seth

Receiving Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving – Seth

ONE: Joy-Giving God, we thank you for this meal and for the signs of your dream stirring within us—for blossoms in barren places, for courage in fearful hearts, for hope that begins to sing again. As we rise from this table, strengthen us to walk your Holy Way and to carry joy into the dry and weary places of our world.

Let your streams of grace flow through us
until all creation rejoices. In the name of Jesus,
our Joy, Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

All Who Love and Serve Your City

**All who love and serve your city,
all who bear its daily stress,
all who cry for peace and justice,
all who curse and all who bless:**

**In your day of loss and sorrow,
in your day of helpless strife,
honor, peace, and love retreating,
seek the Lord, who is your life.**

**In your day of wealth and plenty,
wasted work and wasted play,
call to mind the word of Jesus,
"Work ye yet while it is day."**

BENEDICTION –Mary Kate

ONE: Go forth with music in your heart and
light in your eyes. Dream with Jesus until
every valley rings with joy.

POSTLUDE – Robert, organ

*Chorale-Improvisation on Veni, Redemptor
genitum ("Savior of the Nations, Come")*

Paul Manz (1919-2009)