

## LIGHTING OUR ADVENT CANDLE OF JOY

And Mary said, I'm bursting with good news;  
I'm dancing the song of my savior God.  
God took one good look at me, and look what happened—  
I'm the most fortunate woman on earth!  
What God has done for me will never be forgotten,  
the God whose very name is holy, set apart from all others.  
His mercy flows in wave after wave,  
on those who are in awe before him.  
He bared his arm and showed his strength,  
scattered the bluffing braggarts.  
He knocked tyrants off their high horses,  
pulled victims out of the mud.  
The starving poor sat down to a banquet;  
the callow rich were left out in the cold.  
He embraced his child, Israel;  
he remembered and piled on mercies, piled them high.  
It's exactly what he promised,  
beginning with Abraham and right up to now.

### \*SINGING LIKE ANGELS

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.  
Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild;  
new life, new *joy*, the Child will bring.  
Listen to the angels sing,  
“Glory, glory, glory,” let the heavens ring!

## PRAYING FOR OURSELVES, ONE ANOTHER, AND THE WORLD

### REFLECTING SILENTLY UPON OUR LIVES

### SHARING FROM THE DEPTHS OF OUR LIVES

### OPENING OURSELVES IN PRAYER

### PRAYING AS JESUS PRAYED

(debts and debtors)

### RECEIVING OUR CHOIR'S GIFT *My Soul Cries Out* arr. Hayes

## READING AND REFLECTING

### READING FROM THE BIBLE

Isaiah 65: 17-25 and Luke 1: 46-55

### REFLECTING

Songs are thoughts which are sung out with the breath when people let themselves be moved by a great force, and ordinary speech no longer suffices...We will hesitate before using words. But it will happen that the words we need will come of themselves. When the words that we need shoot up of themselves—we have a new song. Orpingalik

God of joy, thank you for the gift of a good laugh.  
Like music and love, it speaks all languages  
and has a healing power all its own.

Help us to remember  
there is nothing life-giving about being gloomy.  
Let our belief in you and our trust in your care  
be so complete  
that our joy will be the sure sign of your presence  
in this world that needs you so much.

Pat Corrick Hinton

## OFFERING OURSELVES THROUGH OUR GENEROSITY

### OFFERING OUR LIVES AND GIFTS IN SERVICE TO GOD

Trio *En Belén Tocan a Fuego* Castilian Carol adapted by Conrad Susa

### \*PRAISING GOD

tune *Old Hundreth*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God for all that love has done. Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

### \*DEDICATING OUR LIVES AND POSSESSIONS TO GOD

## DEPARTING TO PRACTICE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

\*SINGING A HYMN *With Joy Draw Water*

Black Hymnal 109

### \*OFFERING WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

### \*TAKING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

\*SENDING SONG *Dona Nobis Pacem*

Insert

\*PARTING WITH A SONG *My Heart Sings Out*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

In response to the rise of Islamophobia in our nation, our church is participating in the **Interfaith Action for Human Rights** banner project by hanging a banner that says, "We Stand With Our Muslim Neighbors."

The **rainbow stole** on the pulpit is in support of the struggle of all **LGBTQ** people for equity and justice, and for a life that is free from prejudice, intimidation, and violence.

The **Sunday Morning Adult Christian Ed. Group** is reading and reflecting on one of the preeminent justice issues in our nation: race and mass incarceration. All are welcome to participate.

Our **Annual Christmas Candlelight Service and Party** will be held tonight, 7 pm, at church. The party following the service is potluck, so bring your favorite Christmas cookies, cheeseball, frosted delight, whipped topping, or delectable treat. If you can't bring something, come anyway(!). If you can, add it to the spread.

We will once again celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with our **Christmas Open Door Dinner on Christmas day**. A brief service at 12:00 noon will be followed by a full-course Christmas dinner at 12:30.

The **Vision Team** will be hosting a **meeting after church** on **Sunday, January 7**, to offer an **interim report** on the results from the house meetings on spirituality and mission. The house meetings for the third round of the process, dealing with our church's resources for ministry, will be held January 16-21.

On **January 14, after worship**, the Deacons will host an **orientation** for people who're new to our church. This is a good way to learn more about our church and denomination, and to get to know folks a bit better.

If you would like to do **Read from the Bible** during worship, please sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall or contact Tom at [revtomv@swbell.net](mailto:revtomv@swbell.net). And if you would like to submit a **liturgy or prayer** for use during worship, please contact Tom.

## UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

Deacons, Tue, Jan 2, 7:15pm, Joy Penticuff's  
Trustees, Wed, Jan 3, 7:15 pm, Gail Christeson's  
Coord Council, Tue, Jan 9, 6:30 pm, John Goff's

## PARTICIPATING TODAY

Ushers Don and Sharon Brown  
Scripture Reader Whit Bodman  
Fellowship Hosts Board of Deacons

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The **Adult Christian Education Group** meets Sundays at 10:00 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

**Middle School and High School Students** remain in the service the first Sunday of each month; other Sundays their Sunday School begins after the Choral Anthem.

**Elementary Sunday School** is held during the 11:00 am service, immediately following "Time with Children." The children will be escorted from the Sanctuary to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Christian Education room, and can be picked up from there after the service.

**Infant and Toddler Care** is available throughout the service in the Nursery. Child care begins at 9:15 am for the parents of children attending choir practice or the Adult Christian Education Group.

Children's bulletins and crayons are available on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.

## THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN, UCC

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Rev. Thomas J VandeStadt	Pastor
Nodie Murphy	Music Director
Rev. Van Herd	Adult Christian Education
Rev. Amelia Fulbright	Labyrinth Student Ministry
Jonathan Geer	Piano
Amy Harris	Violin
Tony Rogers	Cello
Amy Rivera	Sunday School Teacher
Sam Clubb	Nursery Attendant
Kathy Whatley	Interim Office Emerita
Victor Cardenas	Custodian

## THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN

an Open and Affirming Church  
of The United Church of Christ

**December 17, 2017**

**Third Sunday of Advent: Joy**



## GATHERING

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,  
come forth from deep within me  
with Christmas luminous beauty.  
For my heart has become the sacred crib,  
the birthing place of God-among-us.

Peace on earth and justice for all  
will only become manifest in our lives  
when enough of your sons and daughters  
awaken to your divine design  
that has made each of us  
an emerging Emmanuel.

Edward Hays

## WELCOMING ONE ANOTHER AND SHARING OUR ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ACCEPTING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Trio *The Shepherd's Farewell to the Holy Family*

Berlioz

**\*GATHERING WITH SONG** *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah* Insert

### \*GATHERING AS CHRIST'S DISCIPLES

Sisters and brothers in Christ,  
sons and daughters of God,  
may we awaken to the luminous beauty  
within each of us, within one another.

*May our hearts be sacred spaces  
from which we give birth to lives  
that embody hope and peace,  
joy and love.*

**\*SINGING A HYMN** *Isaiah the Prophet*

Black Hymnal 108