

WORSHIP HANDOUT  
Sunday December 18<sup>th</sup>  
Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Communion  
Series: From Generation to Generation



OPENING OF WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE Night of the Father's Love, by Pepper Choplin  
United Handbell Choir

ADVENT WELCOME From Generation to Generation, vs. 4

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

**\*CALL TO CONFESSION**

One of the greatest gifts and challenges of faith is that we cannot be Christian alone.

We need one another.

We need one another to grow.

We need one another to love.

And we need one another to see God more clearly.

So together, let us lift our voices in unison.

Let us lean into the ties that bind and pray to our merciful God.

**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**God of today and tomorrow,**

**When Mary was pregnant and afraid, she ran to her cousin Elizabeth's house.**

**Elizabeth threw open the door with joy and showered blessings upon her.**

**How often do we have that same opportunity?**

**How often do we leave the door locked, the curtains drawn, and the lights off?**

**How often do we shower critique or judgment instead of blessings and joy?**

**Gracious God, forgive us for our wrongs. We want to see you when we see our neighbor. Amen.**

#### **\*WORDS OF FORGIVENESS**

Friends, this is what I know—

God delights in us.

God throws open the door, just like Elizabeth, and says,

“Come on home. There is room for you here!”

And in that moment, we are blessed.

In that moment, we are forgiven.

In that moment, we are seen, healed, and welcomed home.

So rest in this good news: you are saved by grace.

Let us respond together, using the words from Mary’s song:

**“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.”**

(Luke 1:46:55 NRSV)

#### **SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION**

**SONG AS CHILDREN GATHER UMH 217 Away in a Manger, vs. 3**

#### **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

**ANTHEM Carol for Advent, by Price/Besig with Ann Droste on flute**

## UNISON PRAYER

God of all,

we are a mixed bag of distracted and forlorn, eager and anxious.

We hope that you might move through the obstacle course we build up around our hearts—made out of questions and defenses— and douse us in good news.

For at the end of the day, all we want is to know that we are not alone, that you are always near.

So knock on our door, Sweet talk the guard dog we place in front of our vulnerable hearts, and come right in.

Make yourself at home.

Pull us close and tell us your story of unbelievable good news.

We are listening.

We are grateful.

Amen.

## TIME OF PRAYER

### PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYER (MUSIC)

### 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory now and forever. Amen.

HYMN: W&S 3052 God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen vs. 1,3-5

### OFFERTORY

### \*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

**\*UNISON PRAYER**

Almighty God,  
giver of every good and perfect gift,  
teach us to give to you all that we have and all that we are,  
that we may praise you not with our words only,  
but with our whole lives.

**LESSON 1                      Luke 1:39-45; 56-58 CEB**

**<sup>39</sup> Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. <sup>40</sup> She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. <sup>43</sup> Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. <sup>45</sup> Happy is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill the promises he made to her."**

**<sup>56</sup> Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her home.**

**<sup>57</sup> When the time came for Elizabeth to have her child, she gave birth to a boy. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbors and relatives celebrated with her because they had heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy.**

**May God add a blessing to this reading.**

**\*HYMN    UMH 198 My Soul Gives Glory to My God**

**\*LESSON 2                      Luke 1:46-55    CEB**

<sup>46</sup> **Mary said,**  
**“With all my heart I glorify the Lord!**  
<sup>47</sup> **In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.**  
<sup>48</sup> **He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant.**  
**Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored**  
<sup>49</sup> **because the mighty one has done great things for me.**  
**Holy is his name.**  
<sup>50</sup> **He shows mercy to everyone,**  
**from one generation to the next,**  
**who honors him as God.**  
<sup>51</sup> **He has shown strength with his arm.**  
**He has scattered those with arrogant thoughts and proud**  
**inclinations.**  
<sup>52</sup> **He has pulled the powerful down from their thrones**  
**and lifted up the lowly.**  
<sup>53</sup> **He has filled the hungry with good things**  
**and sent the rich away empty-handed.**  
<sup>54</sup> **He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,**  
**remembering his mercy,**  
<sup>55</sup> **just as he promised to our ancestors,**  
**to Abraham and to Abraham’s descendants forever.”**

L: This is the Word of God for all people.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE                      We See God in Each Other

\*HYMN                         We Belong to One Another, by Udis-Kessler

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe that creation is inextricably linked.**

**We belong to one another in an undeniable way.**

**We are bone of bone and flesh of flesh, life breathed into dust.**

**We believe that God invites us to live into that truth—**

**to love without abandon, to see the good in one another, to trust that all belong to God.**

**We know that this life of connection is easier said than done, which is why we gather in this space, week after week, generation after generation, to be reminded:**

**We see God in each other.**

**This we believe. Amen.**

**\*AFFIRMATION RESPONSE      From Generation to Generation, vs. 4**

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**