Emmanuel United Church of Christ
A Congregation of the United Church of Christ
We Welcome You on this
Third Sunday of Advent
Service of the Word – December 12, 2021
9:30 AM

Ringing of the Church Tower Bell
Our Life Together
The Solemn Declaration
Prelude
Call to Worship
Sung Response

Joy waits for us at Advent
Joy waits for us to sing.
Joy waits for our Amazement
At the grace in everything.
In this time of preparation
For the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
where wonder is restored.
Joy is born in us again!

Lighting of the Candle of Joy
Sung Response

Joy waits for us at Advent
Joy waits for us to sing.
Joy waits for our Amazement
At the grace in everything.
In this time of preparation
For the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
where wonder is restored.
Joy is born in us again!

*The Peace
Leader: The Joy of Christ be with you!
All: And also with you!

(As we rise in body or spirit for our opening hymn, we invite you to pass a
“wave” of peace to the people around you!)

*Opening Hymn “Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates” #117 (NCH)

Call to Confession

Unison Prayer of Confession
You witness the sorts of lives we lead, Approaching God. Asked to share the
gospel of hope, we place it on our to-do list instead. Given the chance to cry
out for justice for others, we fall strangely silent. Invited to pray with joy
in every moment, we prefer to grumble about every insignificant thing in our
lives. Have mercy on us, God of grace, and prepare our hearts for Your
forgiveness to have its way in them. Fill us with Your hope so we might
lighten the shadows of others. Help us to join the choirs of children in singing
of Your joy. Transform us with that tender mercy who is our Lord and Savior,
Jesus Christ.

(Silence is kept for personal reflection and prayer)

Assurance of Pardon
Leader: God is our witness. We have spoken of our lives and been forgiven of
every mistake we have made, every hurt we have caused.

All: We are held in God’s heart, not only on this day, but all the days of
our lives. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

*Choral Response “Gloria Patri” #759 (NCH)
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.

Listening for the Word

A Time with the Children

Hymn of Preparation “Spirit of the Living God” #283(NCH)
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh
on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh
on me.

First Reading Isaiah 12: 2-6
Second Reading Luke 3: 7-18
Sermon “What Brings You Joy?” Jim Cope
Prayers of the People

“Make of My Heart a Stable”
(The refrain is played through once, then the people sing. Please join in the response when indicated by the pastor praying.)

Choral Response

Make of my (heart, life, church) a stable,
A house for the holy,
A warm and sturdy place
For joy to live and grow.

The Prayer of Jesus (debts and debtors)

Call to Offering

Offertory

“Offertory Response”

Take whatever I can offer, gifts that I have yet to find,
Skills that I am slow to sharpen,
talents of the hand and mind,
things made beautiful for others in the place where I must be:
take my gifts and let me love you,
God who first of all loved me.

*Prayer of Dedication

See, you come in this holy season with the simple gift of life itself. See,
you invite us to share from the abundance of our lives, so others might be filled with life, with hope, with love, and with grace. Bless these gifts we offer to You, so they may be used to share the gospel of wholeness and welcome for all. Amen.

Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn of Mission

“What Child Is This”

(additional verse)

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through;
The cross be borne for me. For you
Hail, hail, the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary.”

*Benediction

*Postlude

*Indicates that all who are able. Please stand. Bold print indicates unison reading.

Notice Someone Missing? If so, give them a call and let them know they are missed.