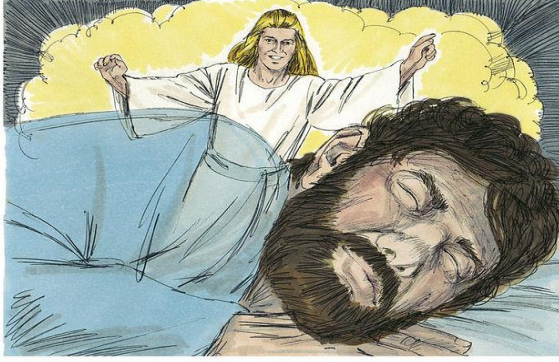


December 22, 2019 – 10:00 am
Fourth Sunday of Advent



ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

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Fairview Heights, IL Telephone 397-6323
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Rev. Rosemary Captain

- CCLI LICENSE #11164431
- PLEASE RESPOND WITH WORDS IN BOLD PRINT
- LITURGY BY CHANCE MARTINEZ – COLON M.I.D.
- SCRIPTURE TEXTS FROM THE COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE.
- *PLEASE STAND IF COMFORTABLY ABLE.
- **NCH** IS THE NEW CENTURY HYMNAL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRELUDE: “Stars Over Bethlehem” Rob Roy Perry

LIGHTING THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE:

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: Our hearts are filled with joyful anticipation,
awaiting Jesus:

MANY: God is with Us.

One: As a family we worship and praise and look for
the One who is coming:

MANY: God is with Us.

One: We hear the word of our Still Speaking God
proclaiming:

MANY: God is with Us.

One: We gather here today knowing that no matter
who we are or where we are on life’s journey:

MANY: God is with Us.

***OPENING HYMN: NCH 129**

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

***UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION:**

Present One, today we gather with hearts full of joy.

Yet this season can also bring stress and anxiety.

**Many of us are busy making plans with family and
friends while others struggle with loneliness.**

**We ask that you help all of us free our hearts and
minds of the planning, worry, stress, and anxiety that
takes our focus away from the coming of Christ. During
this time of worship let your Spirit flow through this
place. May the Holy Spirit empower us to open our
hearts and minds so that we will hear your Word and
know what you call us to do. Amen.**

***GLORIA: NCH 759**

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit,
Three- in-One; as it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

FIRST TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 7:10-16 Lay Liturgist

RESPONSIVE READING OF Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19, p. 672-3

EPISTLE READING: Romans 1:1-7 Lay Liturgist

CHOIR ANTHEM: “What is This Light?”

TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL:

***GOSPEL READING: Matthew 1:18-25**

***GOSPEL RESPONSE: Refrain NCH 125**

Glo – ri – a in excelsis Deo, Glo – ri – a in excelsis Deo!

SERMON:

***HYMN OF RESPONSE: NCH 105**

“Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear”

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Beginning with silent, personal prayer

**THE LORD’S PRAYER: Our Father in heaven, hallowed
be your name. Your kingdom come; Your 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. Amen.**

PRAYER RESPONSE: NCH 124 Verse 3

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

INVITATION TO SHARE: Everything that we have is a gift from God. One way that we show God how thankful we are is by giving back a portion of what God has given us so that we can continue the work that we have been called to do.

OFFERTORY: “Star of the East” Amanda Kennedy

***DOXOLOGY: NCH 780**

**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.**

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

**Creator God, we thank you for everything that you
have given us, especially for the hope that Emmanuel
brings to us. Help us to use these blessings in a way
that brings honor and glory to you, and brings hope to
a people that so desperately need it. We ask that you
take today’s gifts--great or small, money, time or
talent— and use them to continue the work that you
have called us to. Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN: NCH 144**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

***BENEDICTION:**

***POSTLUDE: “The Song of Bethlehem” Randolph Johnston**