

Durham Mennonite Church

December 17, 2023



Welcome to Durham Mennonite Church

Third Sunday of Advent!

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH & CALL TO WORSHIP (*Isaiah 61:10-11*)

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments
of salvation,
he has covered me
with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her
jewels.

**For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it
to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness
and praise to spring up before all the
nations.**

VT #223 - Bless'd Be the God of Israel

**1 Bless'd be the God of Israel,
who comes to set us free,
who visits and redeems us,
and grants us liberty!
The prophets spoke of mercy,
of freedom and release,
God shall fulfill the promise
to bring our people peace.**

**2 Now from the house of David
a child of grace is giv'n,
a Savior comes among us
to raise us up to heav'n.
Before him goes the herald,
forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation,
the harbinger of day.**

**3 On all by death imprisoned
the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness
upon the sinner's eyes,
to guide the feet of pilgrims
along the paths of peace.
Oh, bless our God and Savior
with songs that never cease!**

Sing the Journey #13, My Soul is Filled

**1. My soul is filled with joy
as I sing to God my savior:
you have looked upon your servant,
you have visited your people.
And holy is your name
through all generations!
Everlasting is your mercy
to the people you have chosen,
and holy is your name.**

**2. I am lowly as a child,
but I know from this day forward
that my name will be remembered,
for all will call me blessed.
And holy is your name
through all generations!
Everlasting is your mercy**

**to the people you have chosen,
and holy is your name.**

**3.I proclaim the pow'r of God,
you do marvels for your servants;
though you scatter the proud hearted
and destroy the might of princes.
And holy is your name
through all generations!
Everlasting is your mercy
to the people you have chosen,
and holy is your name.**

**4.To the hungry you give food,
send the rich away empty.
In your mercy you are mindful
of the people you have chosen.
And holy is your name**

**through all generations!
Everlasting is your mercy
to the people you have chosen,
and holy is your name.**

**5. In your love you now fulfill
what you promised to your people.
I will praise you, Lord, my savior,
everlasting is your mercy.
And holy is your name
through all generations!
Everlasting is your mercy
to the people you have chosen,
and holy is your name.**

**Confession of Sin & Assurance of
Grace**

Gracious God, hear our confession.

**Our faith has been uncertain,
our forgiveness slow, our conviction
weak, our compassion dim and
wavering.**

**We have exalted the proud and
powerful,
put down the weak,
and justified the mighty.**

**We have saturated the prosperous
with good things, neglected the poor,
and sent the hungry away empty-
handed.**

We are practiced at helping ourselves.

**We pray, God our Savior, remember
your mercy. Show us your mercy.**

**Help us show mercy, through your Son
Jesus. Amen.**

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. The Lord frees the captives, and to those bearing shame, God brings everlasting joy.

Hymn - VT# 216, Lo How a Rose

**1 Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem has sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as saints of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.**

2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind.
With Mary we behold it,
the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

3 Flower, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
dispel in glorious splendor
gloom and grief ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God,
from sin and death he saves us,
and lightens ev'ry load.

Scripture

Isaiah 61:1-9

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news
to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,

the devastations of many generations.

⁵ Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
foreigners shall till your land
and dress your vines;

⁶ but you shall be called priests of the Lord,
you shall be named ministers of our God;
you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations,
and in their riches you shall glory.

⁷ Because their shame was double,
and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot,
therefore they shall possess a double portion;
everlasting joy shall be theirs.

⁸ For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant
with them.

⁹ Their descendants shall be known
among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;

all who see them shall acknowledge that they
are

a people whom the Lord has blessed.

Psalm 126

¹ When the Lord restored the fortunes of
Zion,

we were like those who dream.

² Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;

then it was said among the nations,

‘The Lord has done great things for them.’

³ The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

⁵ May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.

⁶ Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,

shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Luke 1:46-55

46 And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor

on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations

will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things
for me,

and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts
of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful

from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Luke 4:16-22

16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.'

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, 'Is not this Joseph's son?'

Sermon

Jonathan Robie

Congregational Response

Sharing Praises and Prayer Concerns

Prayers of God's People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name;
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn, VT#217 - Hark, the Glad Sound!
(Tune, "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear")

1 Hark! the glad sound! The Savior comes!

The Savior promised long!

**Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne,
and ev'ry voice a song.**

**On him the Spirit largely poured
exerts its sacred fire,
wisdom and might, and zeal and love,
his holy breast inspire.**

**2 He comes the pris'ners to release,
in Satan's bondage held.**

**The gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.**

He comes the broken heart to bind,

**the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.**

**3 His silver trumpets publish loud
the day of jubilee.**

**Our debts are all remitted now,
he sets the people free.**

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
thy welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches ring
with thy beloved name.**

SENDING (from Romans 16:25-27)

Now to God who is able to strengthen you
according to the proclamation of Jesus
Christ, according to the revelation of the

mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.