



Mary of Magdala, ECC

December 21, 2025

Celebrating the 4th Sunday of Advent and Winter Solstice

“Being a Community of Light” -- Mother Rosean Amaral

Presiding

Welcome and Announcements

Lector Lynne Barnes

Social Justice Reflection

Tom Moos

Entrance Song

Ready The Way. (R; V1; R; V2; R)

Lighting of the 4th Candle As we light the 4th candle which represents love, let us pray together:

All: God of love, as we light this 4th Advent candle, help us embody the love your Son brought into the world. Teach us to love one another as you have loved us, to be patient, kind, and to share your boundless love with all. May our lives be a testament to the greatest gift of all. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Greeting

Let us continue as one expression of God's people in the name of our Creator God, the Eternal Son, and the Holy Spirit. **All: Amen.**



May the love of God, the peace of our brother Jesus, and the communion and friendship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Welcome, and good afternoon! Thanks for coming out to worship. We are blessed by your presence among us.

Advent is truly a busy liturgical season as well as all the busyness of the holiday season in our own personal lives. So perhaps it is good that tonight is the longest night of the year, winter solstice, because we could all use some rest!

So, holding all these sacred days, symbols and themes in our hearts, and all the thoughts of how much still has to be done in preparation for Christmas, let us take a moment of silence as we sit in the presence of our God. Let us find true rest in the arms of the One who promises to soothe our souls...

As we come back to this space, please take a deep breath in, breathing in the love of God, and then breathe out, breathing the love of God back into the world.

Let us remember our eternal connectedness to God...

Penitential Rite



God of love, You chose us long before we ever knew You. Nothing can ever separate us from your love.

All: Nothing, absolutely nothing!

Brother Jesus, you became human to suffer along with us. Nothing can separate us from your compassion.

All: Nothing, absolutely nothing!

Holy Spirit, you come to us and we become members of the Body of Christ. Nothing can separate us from being precious children of God.

All: Nothing, absolutely nothing!

God of Love, help us to know in our hearts and souls that there is nothing in all creation that can ever separate us from Your love, renew us by your nurture and blessing, and bring us to life everlasting. **All:**

Amen

Opening Prayer

Let us pray...

Merciful God,

We gather together to offer You our praise and thanksgiving for the unfailing love You have shown toward us, generation after generation,



and for the compassion You shower upon us,
day after day.

You alone are our God. We are Your people.

We pray that Your Holy Spirit would move among us as we worship.

Open our hearts and our minds to see You at work among us,
encouraging, challenging, uplifting, and inspiring,
as each one has need.

May our worship bring honor and glory to You.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. (By Christine Longhurst)

All: Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Let us listen to the Word of God and God's people in our midst.

First Reading:

Lector Lynne Barnes

Aflame, by Steven Charleston, from **Spirit Wheel, Meditations From
An Indigenous Elder.**

The candles where I pray flicker to life one by one

Each a small universe of hope in itself

Bravely aflame with the desire to be fulfilled



Glowing against the dark as if saying I am here.

I am here, let me live. I am here, let me dream

Let me grow, let me become.

I light my candles because they embody

Not only the prayers but the person.

They are the spark of life within each of us

Flickering within the air of the Spirit

Shining into the cold expanse of space

Repeating the ancient message: I am here.

Words Inspired by God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: We are the Light *(R; V1; R; V2; R; V3; R)*

Second Reading Titus 3: 4-8 *Lector Linda Joyce*

When the kindness and love of God appeared in Jesus the Christ,

we were made whole, not because of righteous things we had



done, but because of divine compassion. Through the waters of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, God claims us as God's own. The Holy Spirit was richly poured out on us through Jesus the Christ, our Healer. Having known the holy power of inclusion, forgiveness, and grace, we become heirs of God, receiving the hope of life everlasting. That is true and trustworthy.

Listen to the Spirit speaking to God's people.

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: *St Mary of Magdala Mass. (V3)*

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-17 (summary) + 1:18b, 22-23

May the love of our God live within you. **And also within you.**

A Proclamation of the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to You, O God.

The genealogical book of Jesus Christ...

In the 42 generations from Abraham and Sarah concluding with Jacob, father of Joseph, four women are named: Tamar, Rahab,



Ruth, and the wife of Uriah, whom we know as Bathsheba.

Joseph became the husband of Mary, from whom was born

Jesus, the one called the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed.

When Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit...

This happened to fulfill what God said through the prophet:

“The young woman will be with child, and will give birth, and the child will be named ‘Immanuel’”

which means God with us.

The Good News of Jesus our Christ.

All: Praise to you, Jesus our Christ.

Homily: Mother Rosean

Prayers of the People

Let us bring forth our prayers for all of Creation...

Lector Linda Joyce

Prayers written and adapted by Valerie Allen from Abbey of the Arts.



Our response is: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

The prayers today will include actions from you.

First please place your hands on your hearts. Holy One, you planted your image deep in our hearts. You gaze upon our divine beauty with eyes of love. But despite this holding, voices rise up within us causing us to question our worth and doubt our desirability. Open our hearts to practice inner hospitality and to welcome the wonder of who we are, your beloved.

Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

Now *reach your hands out in front of you.* Welcoming One, you set a place at your table for the outcast and stranger. Create a space within us and fill it with compassion for those in our communities who are marginalised or excluded. Open our ears to listen to their experiences and guide our actions as together we set a table at which everyone may feast.

Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

Now *reach your hands out to the side.* Encircling One, you envelop all peoples in love, and desire for us peace and wholeness. Hear our cries



for the men, women and children whose reality is different, for those fleeing their countries and homes in search of safety. Yet even in our powerlessness, we turn to you and trust your call to do justice and love kindness. Open our imaginations as we seek ways to welcome with love the refugee, asylum seeker, and those who have experienced violence. May our hospitality be grounded in a mutual sharing of gifts and wisdom.

Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

Now hold your fingers next to your eyes. Divine Mystery, you have created a world of beauty and bounty for us to enjoy. As the winter solstice brings the longest night of the year, may we rest in your love of creation's seasons and cycles. As the light begins to grow longer each day let us remember that dark and light are kin, they both offer welcome to those who seek you.

Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

You can relax your arms. The prayers from the sanctuary are....we pray,

Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

Are there prayers from our members on zoom? **Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.**



And for all the people on our prayer lists and the prayers we hold sacred in our hearts, we pray, **Response: O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.**

God of Love, we pray, knowing that our prayers will be heard and blessed with a response. In Jesus' name we pray. **All: Amen**

Peace

Celebrating God's endless faithfulness, may the peace of Christ be with you always. **All: And also with you.**

Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace, first with our siblings at home and then here in the sanctuary.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

As we prepare our tables, offering food and drink here and in our homes, we are reminded that our offerings of time, talent, and treasure sustain the mission of God's church. Please continue to give as you are able.

Let us sing together... (during **Procession of the Gifts**)



Offertory Song Let It Be Done (V1; V2; R; V3; R)

Preparation of the Gifts (During Offertory Song)

Blessed are You, Loving God of all Creation, through Your goodness we have this bread to place on Your table. Work of earth and human hands. May it become our spiritual food. **All: Blessed be God forever.**

Blessed are You, Loving God of all Creation, through Your goodness we have this wine to place on Your table. Work of earth and human hands.

May it become our spiritual drink. **All: Blessed be God forever.**

By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

Wash away my iniquity, cleanse me of my sin.

Prayer over the Gifts

Pray my siblings in Christ, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, our Mother and Father.

All: May God accept the sacrifice at our hands for the praise and glory of God's name for our good and the good of all God's creation.

Eucharistic Prayer (AI generated and adapted)



May the love of our God live within you. **And also within you.**

Let us open up our hearts. **All: We open them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to our loving God. **All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is our duty and our joy, always and everywhere, to give thanks to you, God, Creator of the cosmos, Source of all light and life.

At this time, when the earth tilts away from the sun, we acknowledge the deep mystery of creation. We bless you for the stillness of this longest night, for the bare branches that rest in expectation, and for the silent pause in the natural world.

In the midst of the cold and the dark, you promise us the returning light. You sustain the cycle of seasons, ensuring that even in moments of deep shadow, hope remains.

And so we join our voices with the heavenly hosts and all the company of heaven, who forever sing the hymn of your praise:

Holy, holy, holy *Mass of St. Mary of Magdala*

Holy are you, O God of truth and grace. When the world languished in darkness, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to be the true Light that enlightens everyone coming into the world. He shared our human



nature, experienced our cold nights and deep shadows, that he might bring us the warmth of your divine love.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us gathered here, and upon these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the + Body and Blood of Christ, that we might be for the world a people reflecting your light.

On the night before he gave himself up for us, he gathered with his disciples. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to all, saying:

All: Take this all of you, and eat it: This is My Body, which will be given up for you.

When supper was over, he took the cup, again gave thanks to you, and gave it to all to drink, saying:

All: Take this, all of you, and drink from it: This is the cup of My Blood, the Blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of Me.

Let us proclaim the mystery faith.

Memorial Acclamation *St Mary of Magdala*



In this season of turning, warm our chilled hearts. Help us to share the stillness, to find strength in rest, and to radiate the light of Christ to those who are still waiting in the dark.

Together now, we say...

All: Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are Yours, self-emptying, life-giving God, forever and ever.

Great Amen *St. Mary of Magdala*

The Prayer of Jesus

Let us turn to the camera and join with our siblings to pray the words that Jesus taught us:

All: Amma/Abba God who are in heaven, holy is Your name. Your kin-dom come, Your will be done on earth as it is 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory are Yours now and forever. Amen



The Shared Table

Lamb of God (sung)

St. Mary of Magdala

This is the Living God, the Body and Blood of Christ. This is the One whose LOVE transforms the world. Happy are we who are called to this meal.

All: Jesus, I am ready to receive You and by Your invitation I am here.

Invitation to Communion

As we partake of the sustenance laid before us, let us affirm together:

All: In this we are a Eucharistic people, the body of Christ Incarnate the blood of Christ poured out for the life of the world.

An open invitation awaits all of you at this table where Jesus Christ is the host. An invitation to be fed and to be loved without measure. Each one of you is a precious child of God. All are welcome, no exceptions. (gluten free hosts in center. Both red wine and white grape juice are available in the metal cups)

Communion Song Holy Is God's Name. (V1; R; V2; R)



Prayer after Communion

Let us pray...

Thank You, Brother Jesus, for this meal of remembrance that deepens our connection to you.

Holy One, be the light in our darkness tonight, that we might reflect your light into the dark corners of our world.

For Jesus' sake,

All: Amen.

Concluding Rite and Dismissal

The Love of God be with you. **All: And also with you.**

Let us open our hearts to receive God's blessing...

May you have the power to grasp how wide, how long, how high, and how deep is the love of God for each of you. And may you experience this love that surpasses all knowledge, so that you may be filled to the very measure of the fullness of God. We ask for this blessing now in the name of Amma/Abba God, our brother Jesus, and the Holy Spirit Sophia.



All: Amen

Dismissal: We are the Body of Christ, so let us go from here with courage and hope, to love and serve God and God's people.

All: Thanks be to God.

Closing Song **Come Emmanuel** (*V1; R; V2; R; V3; R*)