THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 12, 2021
11:00 AM



CHURCH LIFE UPDATE — Steven Phillips

PRELUDE — *A Carol Medley* (Dr. Tom Andrews) — arr. Hayes / Andrews

***CALL TO WORSHIP AND DAWNING OF THE LIGHT** — Phil and Judy Kuebbeler

The prophets describe all creation's joy at the coming of God.
And so we light candles in darkest days,
remembering God's healing power.

(Three Advent candles are lit.)

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.
As the Lord has promised, in days to come
the wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

***HYMN 129** — *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* — Es Ist Ein' Ros'

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
By faithful prophets sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.

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 for us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

This flower, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness everywhere.
Enfleshed, yet very God,
From sin and death he saves us
And lightens every load.

**Those who are able are invited to stand.*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Margaret LaMotte Torrence

Holy One,
We imagine you might meet us in safe and predictable ways.
Instead, you ask us to follow a path we cannot see,
to trust you'll light the way.

As you came to David in the fields,
to Mary in her youth,
to Joseph in his dreams,
meet us in this place
that we, too, might be vessels for your desire.

In freedom, overshadow us.
In love, dwell among us.
In power, send us out
until the whole world rings with the good news of your coming.

(silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

* **SONG OF JOY (v.3)** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth,
Born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing:
Glory to the new-born king!

* **THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:26-38

SERMON *The Servant of the Lord* Margaret LaMotte Torrence

RECOGNITION OF NEW MEMBERS

*** RESPONSE OF FAITH** From *A Declaration of Faith*

We affirm that Jesus was born of woman
as is every child,
yet born of God's power
as was no other child.
In the person and work of Jesus,
God himself and a human life
are united but not confused,
distinguished but not separated.
The coming of Jesus was itself
the coming of God's promised rule.
Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,
he brings about the relationship between God and humanity
that God always intended.

Jesus is Lord!
He has been Lord from the beginning.
He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.

ANTHEM *Gaelic Blessing* Steven Phillips

Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace, deep peace of the gentle night to you;
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.
Deep peace of Christ the light of the world to you.
Deep peace of Christ,
Deep peace of Christ to you.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER Margaret LaMotte Torrence

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 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.

***HYMN 93** *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* Truro

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
Behold the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near;
The Savior of the world is here.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me thy inner presence feel;
Thy grace and love in me reveal.

***BENEDICTION** Margaret LaMotte Torrence

POSTLUDE Improvisation on *Oh Lord, How Shall I Meet You* Steven Phillips