THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 17, 2023
9:00 AM

New Song

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2050 Oak Street
Sarasota, FL 34237
(941) 955-8119
www.firstpressarasota.org

WELCOME AND INVITATION Tim Boggess

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES Kay Dunn and Barbara Chase

When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief,
Isaiah proclaimed,

"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 brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

We come today as people
who are also surrounded by suffering and grief.
And yet, the Spirit hovers among us,
tending and anointing, inspiring freedom
where there is captivity, declaring blessing
in places the world has cursed,
and igniting fierce joy where
mourning and heartache prevail.

**We wait as people who experience hardship and pain,
yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy
that sustains our life as God's people.**

We light these candles as signs of
our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy.
May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy
of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait
and work for the coming of God's kin-dom
on earth as it is in heaven. **Amen.**

SONGS OF PRAISE *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*
Mary Did You Know

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Faithful God,
we know that you are always there to guide us,
yet we often make plans without listening to you
and discover that our agendas can drown out
our ability to hear your will for us.
We repent of these faults and turn to you in love.
Forgive our shortcomings, strengthen our spirits,
and guide our steps so that we might follow
in the way of Jesus Christ.**

(a moment for silent reflection)

(over)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS		
PASSING THE PEACE		
TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES		
LIFE OF THE CHURCH		
SONG OF PREPARATION	*Emmanuel, God With Us*	Judy Knudtson
SCRIPTURE READING	Luke 1:1-38	
MESSAGE	*Can You Hear Me Now?*	Tim Boggess
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE		
OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD		
PRAYER OF DEDICATION		
SENDING SONG	*Go Tell it On the Mountain*	
BLESSING		

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