



# Celebrate Advent

December 19, 2021

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

St. John United Church of Christ - Bellevue KY

### Welcome

No matter who you are  
or where you are on life's journey  
you are welcome here!

## Gathering Music and Centering Prayer

Jennie Malone, soloist

“The Father’s Love Blooming” -arr. Ruth Elaine Schram  
Steve Milloy, piano

“A Nativity Prayer” -Phillips Brooks and William David Young

*O Holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.*

## Greeting & Prayer

Keith M. Haithcock, pastor & teacher

One: Good morning and a blessed Advent to you!

**All: A blessed Advent to you also!**

One: We are an inclusive Church that extends love and extravagant welcome.

**All: No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey you are welcome here!**

One: Holy One, we gather in this sacred place to draw near to you.

To remember to love others as we love ourselves.

To slow down during this Advent season, to wait, prepare our hearts, and ponder, as Mary did, all that you have given to us through the Christ child.

**All: Help us to take hold of Joy as we seek to follow Christ. Amen.**

## Advent Hymn

Jennie Malone, soloist

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” -Tune: VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.

That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;

To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;  
Love stir within the womb of night, and death’s own shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, Desire of Nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

## The Candles of Advent – Joy

Robert Moreland

Soon we shall celebrate the birth of Jesus. We worship God with joy in our hearts as we are reminded of the words the angel said on that first Christmas Day: “Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people.”

We light the candles to proclaim the coming of the Holy Light into the world. With the coming of this Light there is joy, joy that is ours not only at Christmas but always.

## Singing Response

“Shine On Us” *Tune: PICARDY*

Jennie Malone, soloist

Shine on us, O God of justice;  
Guide our path through gloom of night;  
Bear within us Wisdom’s glory;  
Come to us, O Christ the Light.

Glory be to God and peace on earth Christ is born! Alleluia!

## Community Prayer

Keith M. Haithcock

## Instrumental

“Carol of the Bells” -*Traditional Ukrainian Carol*

The Handbell Choir

## Luke 1.39-55 (Rise in body or spirit.)

Robert Moreland

Within a few days Mary set out and hurried to the hill country to a town of Judah, where she entered Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth.

As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why am I so favored, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me? The moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who believed that what our God said to her would be accomplished!”

Mary said:

"My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.

For you have looked with favor  
upon your lowly servant,  
and from this day forward

all generations will call me blessed.

For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me,  
and holy is your Name.

Your mercy reaches from age to age  
for those who fear you.  
You have shown strength with your arm,  
you have scattered the proud in their conceit,  
you have deposed the mighty from their thrones  
and raised the lowly to high places.  
You have filled the hungry with good things,  
while you have sent the rich away empty.  
You have come to the aid of Israel your servant,  
mindful of your mercy—  
the promise you made to our ancestors—  
to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.”

One: Here ends the reading inspired by God.  
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## **Sermon**

“TAKE HOLD OF JOY!”

Keith M. Haithcock

## **Ministry of Music**

“My Soul Magnifies the Lord” -*John Carter*

Jennie Malone, soloist

## **Ignite Moment**

Theo Baldwin

*Ignite Justice, Diversity, and Inclusion 2022*

## **Generous Giving**

Robert Moreland

God has given each of us skills, talents, and abilities. Consider the impact that you can make through the ministry of St. John Church when your giving matches the mission. Not only do we sustain ministry locally and globally, but we also experience spiritual renewal in ourselves which can bring about transformation in the church and the community beyond for the common good. As you offer your time, talents, and treasures, may God continue to bless you as you open your lives to generous giving.

As you leave today, please keep your masks on and observe distancing. Wait to greet one another until you have exited the Church house.

Offering plates, in which you may place your financial gifts, are in the worship space at the front by the door on the right, and in the back by the Fairfield Avenue door.

## Closing Song

Jennie Malone, soloist

“People, Look East”

People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the work, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

**Send Out** (Rise in body or spirit.)

Keith M. Haithcock

**Parting Music**

“Sing We Christmas” -*Ruth Elaine Schram*

Steve Milloy, piano

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## Welcome to St. John Church!

For more information about St. John Church go to: [www.StJohnChurch.net](http://www.StJohnChurch.net).

To receive *The e-Weekly* let us know at [Office@StJohnChurch.net](mailto:Office@StJohnChurch.net).

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, ext.202; email: [Pastor@StJohnChurch.net](mailto:Pastor@StJohnChurch.net).

## Contact Tracing Information

In an effort to keep everyone healthy, contact the Church office at 859.261.2066 ext. 201 or [Office@StJohnChurch.net](mailto:Office@StJohnChurch.net) if you are diagnosed with COVID after this service.

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## Reminder

There is no in-person worship service on Sunday, December 26<sup>th</sup>  
Please join us on Facebook or YouTube.