



Celebrate Christmas

January 2, 2022

Second Sunday after Christmas
THE NINTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

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!

Centering Scripture

In the beginning there was the Word;
the Word was in God's presence, and the Word was God.
The Word was present to God from the beginning.
Through the Word all things came into being,
and apart from the Word nothing came into being that has come into being.

In the Word was life,
and that life was humanity's light –
a Light that shines in the darkness,
a Light that the darkness has never overtaken.

-John 1.1-5, *The Inclusive Bible*

Gathering Music and Lighting the Candles

Adeline Palm, acolyte

“Gigue (from Suite in A)” -G. P. Telemann

Steve Milloy, piano

Greeting & Call to Worship

Jeff Draper, guest preacher

One: People of God, sing and rejoice! God has come to us in Jesus the Christ, to reconcile and make new.

All: God has entered our existence of joy and sorrow, taking on human likeness in Jesus, born of Mary.

One: Therefore, we rejoice, praising God and singing:

All: Glory be to God in the highest! And on earth, peace to those on whom God's favor rest. Alleluia!

Christmas Hymn

Steve Milloy, soloist

“Who Would Think That What Was Needed”

Who would think that what was needed to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army proud in purpose, proved in worth?

Who would think, despite derision, that a child should lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas day.

Shepherds watch and sages wonder, monarchs scorn and angels sing;
such a place as none would reckon host a holy, helpless thing;
Stabled beasts and passing strangers watch a baby laid in hay:
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas day.

Centuries of skill and science span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether with such progress we improve.

In our search and meaning, lest our hopes and humor fray,
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas day.

Community Prayer

Jeff Draper

Instrumental

Steve Milloy, piano

“Shall We Gather at the River” -Robert Lowry, arr. C. E. Walz

Jeremiah 31.7-14

Sue Jelinek

⁷ For thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
“Save, O Lord, your people,
the remnant of Israel.”

⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹ With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations[a] I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.”

¹¹ For the Lord has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the Lord.

One: Here ends the reading inspired by God.

May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation.

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon

“RESTORATION, REJUVENATION, REIGNITION”

Jeff Draper

Ministry of Music

Steve Milloy, soloist

“I Was Touched and I Believe” -Neil Lorenz & Lloyd Larson

Celebration of Holy Communion

ALL ARE WELCOME AT CHRIST’S TABLE!

(Holy Communion will receive with pre-wrapped containers. Do not open the communion container until the pastor directs you to do so. Children are welcome to partake communion with the guidance of their parents.)

Invitation to Communion

Sue Jelinek, officiant

Communion Prayer

One: God of light, in whom there is no shadow, your gifts to us are from the very beginning of time.

All: They begin with creation, when your Spirit gave form to the chaos of energy and matter, and when your Word brought forth light on the face of the earth.

One: They continued with our ancient ancestors, like Noah, whom you blessed with the colorful promise of the rainbow.

All: And like Sarah and Abraham, whom you blessed with a child whose descendants, as many as the stars of the sky, were to be a light to the nations.

One: In the desert, you gave the gifts of manna and of living water to the weary pilgrims whom you led by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

All: At last, you sent your light into the world in the form of a tiny child, fragile and vulnerable, who grew to be the very Light of Light, full of grace and truth, revealing your glory on earth. We thank you, O God, that you have sent Jesus Christ to bring light and life for all people. As we receive this bread and wine, may we open our hearts to receive your love and grace through Jesus Christ, and receive the love and support of one another. Be born among us, that we may give Christ’s love to the world, through the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

One: We recall how this sacrament began: Jesus Christ, born of Mary, on the night of his arrest, took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said to his disciples, "This is my body which is broken for you, do this in remembrance of me."

All: Christ's life is our life.

One: In the same way, Jesus took the cup after supper and said, "This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood. Whenever you drink of it, do this in remembrance of me."

All: Christ's life is our life.

One: Emmanuel, as we remember the holy night you came to us wrapped in swaddling clothes, we make room for you again in our hearts.

All: We draw near with faith to receive this sacrament.

One: Bless this bread, and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened, and we may recognize the living Christ in our midst.

All: Amen.

Sharing the Meal

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

**As a mother feeds her child with her body,
so you, O Christ, feed us with yours,
giving us the bread to eat and the cup to drink.
May these gifts of grace nourish us deeply,
that we may become your body in the world
and live as instruments of your great love. Amen.**

Generous Giving

Sue Jelinek

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 (Please rise in body or spirit.) Steve Milloy, vocal and piano
“Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos” (We Are Marching in the Light of God)

We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching, Oo, we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching, Oo, we are marching in the light of God.

Send Out (Rise in body or spirit.) Jeff Draper
Depart in peace, for you have seen God’s salvation, a light for the nations.
May the love of God guide you, the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
and the gift of the Spirit give you power, now and forever. **Amen.**

Parting Music Steve Milloy, piano
“Revive Us Again” -*John J. Husband, arr. Mark Hayes*

Welcome to St. John Church!

For more information about St. John Church go to: www.StJohnChurch.net.

To receive *The e-Weekly* let us know at Office@StJohnChurch.net.

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, ext.202; email: 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 if you are diagnosed with COVID after this service.

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