

# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9:30AM, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Liturgist: Gail Lingerman

Asterisk (\*) indicates standing, as able. Bold/colored type indicates text spoken in unison.

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL TO WORSHIP      Responsive

Beloved, we gather to rejoice in God who does wondrous things, who promises that someday all manner of things shall be well.

**We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

We worship with joy now, confident that God will not stop until all creation is at peace.

**We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

We lift up our voices in song and story, in prayer and praise, as we remember and rejoice in all that God has done and will do among us.

**We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

Come! Let us worship God with joy as we work with God toward the day when all of creation lives in everlasting joy.

**Come! Let us rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.**

\*HYMN                      "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"                      UMH # 206

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH                      Apostles' Creed                      UMH # 881

### OPENING PRAYER      Unison

**Holy God of Joy, We rejoice in the reality of who you are. We live within the joy of your love for us. Our contentment comes and goes. Our happiness ebbs and flows. Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry. But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children. And we give you thanks. Amen.**

## ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING RITUAL

Mark Shenise

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PARDON      Unison

**We gather together in this season of Advent anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty. (Moment of silence) God, we confess that we have often placed our hope in people and things that can't fulfill our every need. We have searched for peace in shallow places. We have mistaken joy for temporal pleasure and artificial exhilaration. We have put limits on the ways we love, excluding those who need our loving kindness the most. God, when we have lost our way, show us yours. Guide us to the hope in you that will renew our strength. Lead us to your peace that transcends all understanding. Fill us with a joy we can only experience in your presence. Remind us that you have always loved us with an everlasting love, so that we may share that love with others. Amen.**

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

In this season of desolation and uncertainty, it is good to know that God's love for us is sure - that God's commitment to us is definite - that God is guiding us as the compassionate companions that we are called to be for each other. Let us live into this gift. **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## JOYS, CONCERNS AND PASTORAL PRAYER

### SCRIPTURE READING                      Matthew 11:2-6 (NRSV)

- 2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples
- 3 and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"
- 4 Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see:
- 5 the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.
- 6 And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

