

**KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

**December 17th, 2023**

**Interim Minister: Rev. Dr. David Thompson**

**Music Director: Suzanne Strahan**

\* We continue to be mask friendly, but it is now a personal decision. Thank you.  
\*\* The offering can be placed in the offering plates at the back of the church in the narthex prior to it being brought forward.

**PRELUDE:**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Advent Liturgy:**

Voice 1: The prophets call and an apostle writes to announce that joy comes from God.

Voice 2: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me...and has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, ...to comfort all who mourn; ...to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning...” (Isaiah 61) “Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice.” (Philippians 4)

Voice 1: Grief, pain and loss are inevitable. But woven into life is the joy of living in a universe that reflects God’s beauty. Advent provides time to nurture joy in our lives and in the world God loves. Advent calls us to share with others the good news that comes into the world with the birth of Christ.

Voice 2: Holy are you, Source of all new life among us.

All: Jesus Christ comes as Joy to the world.

Voice 2: We join with all creation and lift our hearts in joyful praise

All: We light this candle to glow for joy.

**Verse 3 of #119 Hope is a star** (while lighting the candle of joy)

**Responsive Call to Worship:**

**God is with us in joy and in sorrow.**

In Jesus Christ, God reshapes our lives, past, present and future.

**We wait with God for something new to emerge.**

In this season, we await the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

**We wait in expectation, choosing to be joyful!**

**PRAYER OF APPROACH** *(together)*

God of Light and Love,

We rejoice in Your presence this day,

for You look kindly on us, no matter how we came to be here.

You bring order from chaos, and call for justice for the vulnerable.

You turn weeping into laughter, promising life made new.

You redeem all that appears lost, giving each one a path and purpose.

And so we come to you in joy,

trusting You to bring peace and hope into these uncertain times.

Receive our worship this day,

as we anticipate the difference Your gifts will make to us,

Amen.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION:** *(together)*

**Generous God,**

**We confess that our concerns are narrow, focused mostly on our own lives.**

**Opportunities to say thanks or to offer encouragement slip by.**

**Anxiety turns us inward and anger can make us lash out.**

**Forgive us for neglecting the Joy at the heart of the Advent season.**

**Turn our hearts back to You,**

**and inspire us with Your love made human in Jesus.**

**Assurance of Pardon:** (Minister)

In Jesus Christ, we are part of God's new creation. God's love makes all things new! Know that you are forgiven by this great love. Look inside your heart to find the courage to forgive one another in Jesus' name. Amen.

**PASSING OF THE PEACE:**

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you

*Congregation: And also with you.*

*(Please turn and greet one another)*

**Anthem**

**STORY:**

**HYMN: #153 Joy to the world Verse 1, 2 and 4.**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

**Psalm 16**

**St. Luke 2: 22-35**

**Romans 8:35-39**

**SERMON: You can find real joy!**

**OFFERTORY:**

# 661 - We give thee but thine own, verse 1

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION ((together)**

God of justice and joy, we bring our gifts to You in gratitude for your unfailing goodness to us. Bless these gifts and use them to create justice and bring joy into the world in Jesus' name. Amen.

**PRAYER of Intercession (Minister and Congregation together)**

Come, Lord Jesus, be our King,

and claim your rightful place in our hearts.

Our world is struggling to find the justice and mercy You call for.

Draw near to our leaders and all citizens working for peace and justice,

and those striving to mediate or contain conflicts.

Encourage honourable action and co-operation on all sides.

Give hope to people under oppression

and to those living with fear or hunger day by day.

Hasten the day when the world's peoples will live as neighbours  
reconciled in Your truth and freedom.

**For healing:**

We also ask for those in our congregation who need Your healing touch

We bring their names before You now in silent prayer....

**The Lord's prayer:**

We pray in the words Jesus taught us: (trespasses) Our Father...

**Hymn #138 While shepherds watched V 1, 2, 5 and 6.**

**Benediction**

**POSTLUDE:**