



An Order of Worship for the Lord's Day
Stone Presbyterian Church
A Welcoming and Affirming Congregation
December 17, 2023 ~ 3rd Sunday of Advent



We Gather in Joy

PRELUDE

“Sleepers, Wake”

(Please listen quietly to the prelude as the community prepares for worship)

J. G. Walther

CHORAL INTROIT AND POURING OF THE BAPTISMAL WATER

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 126)

The Lord has done great things, and we are glad indeed.

When the Lord brought the captives home to Zion, we were like those who dream.

Our mouths were filled with laughter, and on our lips were songs of joy.

It was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”

The Lord has done great things, and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord. May those who sow in tears reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

The Lord has done great things, and we are glad indeed.

For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever.

All: Let us worship God.



+HYMN #2

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

HYFRYDOL

WELCOME

THE 3RD ADVENT CANDLE: Joy

Judy LaGasse and Ceil Gilbert



UNISON PRAYER

God of Joy, help us to let the joy of Jesus Christ be in us, that our joy might be complete. May we be filled with the joy of believing, with the joy of the good news, and with the joy of serving, as we anticipate that day when all the world will sing, “Joy to the world, the Lord is come!” Amen.



+THE ADVENT GIVING - THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

You are invited to bring forward your offering for the PC (USA) Christmas Joy offering

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(responsively)*

...This we confess.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

+A DOXOLOGY (to the tune GLORIA)

**To the God of joy we sing,
 To the Son let praises ring,
 And the Holy Spirit praise,
 As this song of joy we raise:
 Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!
 Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!**



+THE PEACE OF CHRIST

We Listen for the Word of the Lord

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

(You are invited to say the “amen” aloud.)

LESSONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11 (ESV, adapted)

The Word of the Lord. / Thanks be to God.

This is the year of God's favor.



I Thessalonians 5:16–24 Rejoice always and pray constantly.
The Word of the Lord. / Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM “An Advent Alleluia” Douglas E. Wagner

Luke 1:46b–55 Mary sings a joyful song.
The Word of the Lord. / Thanks be to God. Told by Donna Goodfriend

MESSAGE “Christmas Stories”

We Respond in Joyful Faith with Thanksgiving

HYMN #16 “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came” GABRIEL’S MESSAGE

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Adapted from The Prologue of John)
(see insert)

LIFE OF THE CHURCH, JOYS & CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD’S PRAYER
“debts/debtors” (Traditional, *Hymnal*, p. 16)

OFFERTORY “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” J. W. Walther

+A DOXOLOGY ADESTE FIDELES

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O Come, let us adore him, O Come let us adore him,
O Come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

+PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We Go Out to Serve in the Name of Christ

+HYMN (insert) “Jesus Comes with Clouds Descending” to ODE TO JOY

+CHARGE & BLESSING

+CHORAL RESPONSE

+POSTLUDE

STONE CHURCH WELCOMES YOU TO WORSHIP

December 17, 2023 ~ 3rd Sunday in Advent ~ 10:30 a.m.



The purpose of Stone Church is to be an inviting, spiritual community of Christ, engaging in worship that inspires and challenges us to learn and grow as we reach out in caring and service, trusting in the love of God.

All the People, Ministers

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+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Adapted from The Prologue of John)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made.

What was made in him was life, and the life was the light of humankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not been able to overcome it.

The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own home, and his own people did not receive him. But to those who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory, glory as from the only Son of the Father.

ADVENT

2 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Come, Thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy
2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;
yet a King, Born to reign in us for - ev - er,

Let us find our rest in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -
Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear de - sire of
Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone; By Thine all - suf -

ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

Alternate tune: STUTTGART, 1

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came 16

GABRIEL'S MESSAGE 10.10.12.10

Para. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924) Arr. by Edgar Pettman and John Wickham Basque carol

1. The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came, His
 2. "For know a bless - ed moth - er you shall be, All
 3. Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head, "To
 4. Of her, Em-man - u - el, the Christ, was born In

-wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame; "All
 gen - er - a - tions praise con - tin - ual - ly, Your
 me be as it pleas - es God," she said, "My
 Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn, And

hail," said he, "O low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,"
 Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told." Most
 soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 Chris - tian folk through-out the world will ev - er say:

high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!

"Jesus Comes with Clouds Descending"

ODE TO JOY

Charles Wesley, 1758 – Adapted/Revised, Dennis Dewey 2017

**Jesus comes with clouds descending, Lamb of God for sinners slain!
 Thousands of the saints attending join to sing the glad refrain:
 Alleluia! Alleluia to the Lord who comes again!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign!**

**Yes! Amen! Let all adore you, seated on the throne of grace;
 Peoples of the earth rejoice as they behold you face-to-face!
 Alleluia! Come, Lord Jesus, let your grace and love be shown!
 Come, Lord Jesus, come to help us; come to heal and save your own!**

**We who saw you crucified and lifted high upon the cross
 Now are filled with joy to see you, joy that overcomes all loss!
 There upon the clouds of heaven we our true Messiah see,
 Bringing justice, peace and mercy, joy in setting captives free!**