



An Order of Worship for the Lord's Day  
 Stone Presbyterian Church  
 A Welcoming and Affirming Congregation  
 December 15, 2024 ~ The Third Sunday of Advent



**We Gather to Worship the One Who Is Coming**

PRELUDE "Creator of the Stars of Night" David N. Johnson  
*(Please listen quietly to the prelude as the community prepares for worship)*

INTROIT AND POURING OF BAPTISMAL WATER

CALL TO WORSHIP (see insert)

+ HYMN (see insert) "Jesus Comes with Clouds Descending"  
*(+Those who are able may stand.)*

WELCOME

THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ADVENT CANDLE – GIFT OF JOY  
 Judy LaGasse and Gerry Gogel



UNISON PRAYER:

Dear God, help us to get ready for your arrival. Show us the path that leads to you, so that healing and wholeness can come into our lives and into our world. We offer you our lives in joyous thanksgiving for the grace, the peace, and the strength that you offer to us every moment of day. Amen

+THE ADVENT GIVING – 

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(first together then in silent reflection)*

Lord Jesus Christ, true Messiah, whose ways are grace and truth, we confess that we do not trust in you and that we often look for another. We are satisfied with superficial pleasures, and we treasure counterfeit values. We are easily led astray by the messiah-pretenders of our age, who offer the quick fix instead of the way of the cross, who speak a message tailored to what is popular rather than to what is true, who proclaim a shallow spirituality that cannot hold the depth of your mystery.



Turn us from the wrong that we habitually choose. Help us turn toward you, follow where you lead, receive your truth, and enjoy the mercy and peace of your healing grace.  
 Be persistent in your mercy, Lord. Overwhelm us with your grace.  
 Drown our sin in your abundant forgiveness.  
 Make us right to live in joy; in your name and for your sake we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

+A DOXOLOGY (to the tune GLORIA)  
 To the God of hope we sing, To the Son let praises ring,  
 And the Holy Spirit praise, As this song of hope we raise:  
*Glo—ria in excelsis Deo! Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!*

+THE PEACE OF CHRIST

**We Listen for the Word of God**

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING  
 (You are invited to say the concluding "amen" aloud.)

LESSONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

*Zephaniah 3:14-20 – The Lord will restore the fortunes of Zion.*  
 The Word of the Lord. / Thanks be to God

ANTHEM "Hark! The Glad Sound" David Thorne

*Philippians 4:4-7 – Rejoice in the Lord always!*  
 The Word of the Lord. / Thanks be to God Told by Michelle Dolan

*Luke 3:7-18 – John's call to repentance*  
 The Word of the Lord. / Thanks be to God

SERMON "Joy Can Be Our Wheelhouse" Michelle Dolan

**We Respond in Faith with Thanksgiving**

+ HYMN #430 "Come Sing, O Church, in Joy" DARWELL'S 148th



+ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (based on the Prologue to the Gospel 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.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH AND JOYS & CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

"debts/debtors"

(Traditional, *Hymnal*, p. 16)

CHORAL RESPONSE

OFFERTORY

"Darwell's 148th"

Betty Roe

+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 in Peace**

+ HYMN #15

"Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers"

to LLANGLOFFAN

+CHARGE & BENEDICTION

+CHORAL RESPONSE

+POSTLUDE

# STONE CHURCH WELCOMES YOU TO WORSHIP

December 15, 2024 ~ Third Sunday of 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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**CALL TO WORSHIP** (Isaiah 12:2-6, “The First Song of Isaiah”)

LEADER: Surely it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.

**PEOPLE:**

Sure-ly it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be a-fraid. For the Lord is my strong-hold and my sure — de-fense, and he will be my — Sav-ior.

[Sing the Faith, #2030]

LEADER: Therefore, you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation. And on that day, you shall say, “Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name.”

**PEOPLE:**

Sure-ly it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be a-fraid. For the Lord is my strong-hold and my sure — de-fense, and he will be my — Sav-ior.

LEADER: Make his deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that his Name is exalted. Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, and this is known in all the world.

**PEOPLE:**

Sure-ly it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be a-fraid. For the Lord is my strong-hold and my sure — de-fense, and he will be my — Sav-ior.

LEADER: Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

**+ HYMN** “**Jesus Comes with Clouds Descending**” to ODE TO JOY  
Charles Wesley, 1758 ~ Adapted by Dennis Dewey, 2008

**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 gracious throne;  
Crowns and rulers bow before you, worship you as Lord alone.  
Alleluia! Come, Lord Jesus, let your grace and pow’r be shown!  
Come, Lord Jesus, come to help us; come to heal and save your own!**

**We who saw you crucified and lifted up upon the tree  
Now with our own eyes behold you, robed in awesome majesty.  
There upon the clouds of heaven we our true Messiah see,  
Bringing justice, peace and mercy, joy in setting captives free!**

# Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!

430

Brian Dill, 1988

DARWALL'S 148TH 6.6.6.8.8

John Darwall, 1770

1. Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!  
 2. Long years have come and gone, And still God reigns su - preme,  
 3. Let cour-age be our friend, Let wis-dom be our guide,  
 4. Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!

For Christ the Lord has led us through the a - ges long!  
 Em - power-ing us to catch the vi - sion, dream the dream!  
 As we in mis-sion mag - ni - fy the Cru - ci - fied!  
 For Christ the Lord has tri-umphed o'er the a - ges long!

In bold ac - cord, come cel-e-brate the jour-ney now and praise the Lord!

This tune in a lower key, 150

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Sung to LANCASHIRE

Matthew 25:1-10

ADVENT

15

# Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers

LLANGLOFFAN 7.6.7.6 D

Laurentius Laurenti, 1700

Trans. Sarah Borthwick Findlater, 1854

Alt. *The Hymnal* 1982

Welsh folk melody

Evans' *Hymnau a Thonau*, 1865

As in *English Hymnal*, 1906

1. Re - rejoice! Re - rejoice, be - liev - ers, And let your lights ap - pear;  
 2. See that your lamps are burn - ing, Re - plen-ish them with oil;  
 3. Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

The eve-ning is ad - vanc - ing And dark-er night is near.  
 Look now for your sal - va - tion, The end of sin and toil.  
 A - rise, Thou sun so longed for, A - bove this sha-dowed sphere!

The Bride-groom is a - ris - ing And soon He will draw nigh;  
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing, The gates wide o - pen stand;  
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, We plead, O Lord, to see

Up, watch with ex - pec - ta - tion, At mid - night comes the cry.  
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry, The Bride-groom is at hand!  
 The day of earth's re - demp - tion, And ev - er be with Thee!