



"A Community Of Many Faithing Communities Where All Belong!"

Living Waters Contemplative Life Center | Divine Intervention Ministry to the Homeless
Tippecanoe just.good.food Garden | Food Justice Site PCUSA
Arts and Science Literacy Camps for Children

Welcome To Worship

December 18, 2022

9:30 a.m.

4th Sunday of Advent

***"From Generation to Generation:
We See God in Each Other"***

Rev. Trish Eckert



Welcome to this time of being with God and each other.

✧Prelude

✧Welcome and community news

- Our Christmas Eve service begins at 5 pm with carols and cookies, and the worship will begin at 5:30 pm.
- A reminder that since Christmas Day and New Year's Day both fall on a Sunday, we will not gather for worship on Sunday morning, December 25th or January 1st. Grace Presbyterian has reached out to let us know that they will be holding a worship service on New Year's Day and welcome the Tippe community to join them. Their Sunday services begin at 10 am.
- Our first Sunday morning worship in 2023 will be a celebration of Epiphany on January 8th.

✧Readying Ourselves for Worship ~ SING:

Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!
Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!

✧Reading *Where I Saw God Last*— by Rev. Sarah Speed

The dimple in your right cheek,
the child playing peek-a-boo from his stroller,
the abuelita who spends her afternoons
in the park by 86th; the teenagers on the subway
who cannot control their laughter; Neil, my neighbor,
who always asks about you, the mother who whispers
a dozen times a day, “thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus”; the
saxophone player at 42nd street, the poets,
the artists, the garden volunteers; the metro car driver
who sticks his head out the window to make sure we're all aboard; the man who gave
up his seat on the subway, the kid in the
dinosaur pajamas who cannot be convinced they're not
school attire; the teachers, the nurses, the taxi cab drivers;
the woman at the end of the block with her yappy dogs and her
books in the window, the lovers that lay sprawled out on park blankets,
the runners, the daydreamers, the sidewalk chalk artists;
John from upstairs whose favorite flowers are yellow tulips, the Persian man at the
grocery who tells me to be safe when I leave,
my grandmother in Georgia; my neighbor, the stranger; thank you, Jesus, thank you,
Jesus, thank you, Jesus.

✧Becoming Present to God and Each Other...Our Check-in:

How Are You as You Arrive...how is it with your spirit?

✧ **Candle Lighting ~ Love**

(Four readers are invited to the front for our candle lighting liturgy)

Pastor: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, “What makes you feel connected; what makes you feel loved?” From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

One: Handwritten notes.

Two: Casseroles.

Three: Being invited in.

Four: Reading a book together.

One: The passing of the peace.

Two: Family walks.

Three: Youth group.

Four: When I see my friends at preschool.

One: Surprise phone calls.

Two: Making music with other people.

Three: Home-cooked food.

Four: Belly laughs.

One: Eye contact.

Two: Dinner parties.

Three: An inside joke.

Four: Hugs.

One: Dancing with my partner in the kitchen.

Two: Today we light the candle of love as a reminder that from the very first generation, God has surrounded us with love. May this good news—these threads of love—not only weave deeper connections between neighbors, but shape our actions and allow us to see God more clearly.

Three: In a lonely world, let this light shine bright. From generation to generation, we are held in God’s love. Thanks be to God for that good news. Amen.

~ **The Joy of Passing the Peace** ~

✧ **And the Children Will Lead the Way: Kid’s Time**



✧ **Gathering as God’s People:**

Our Advent Series ~ *From Generation to Generation*

On this fourth and final Sunday of the Advent season, we turn our attention to Love, as we continue with our worship series, “From Generation to Generation,” and focus on this week’s theme: “We See God in Each other.”

This season, through different Gospel readings from Matthew and Luke, alongside the Book of Isaiah, we are piecing together a chronological storyline that leads up to Christ's birth, providing a fuller sense of the Christmas story. Today we witness the beautiful connection between Mary and her cousin Elizabeth, both awaiting motherhood with great anticipation. We also hear Mary's powerful song and delve into the ways the Magnificat continues to speak to so many people, giving a voice to oppressed people around the world.

Like a tapestry woven throughout time, the Christmas story weaves us in – to remember how God has shown up in the past, to continue the work of collective liberation, to behold the presence of God in flesh and bone.

As we take in these stories, let's pay attention to the framework of Advent. The word, Advent, comes from the Latin, "adventus," which means, "coming" or "arrival." It is a time for preparation and reflection, an opportunity to slow down from the frenetic pace that often accompanies the Christmas season, a time of waiting and watching, of keeping awake! Let us remain alert and pay attention to the ways we are transformed and invited into further transformation, just as Mary and Elizabeth watched and waited, open to the transformative experiences unfolding within and around them.

The work of God is always unfolding—in and through us. This Advent, may we each remember that we belong—to a story etched into the wrinkles of time, to generations that have come before and will come after, to a love that won't let go.

✧ **Gathering Hymn** "We are All God's People"

Words and music by Betsy Gonwa ©2011

REFRAIN:

We are all God's people.
All we on earth are all God's people.
We are all God's people. All the people
on earth

Open your eyes. See God among you.
Deep in your soul, sense God within
you.
God's image our blueprint, we are one.
A spark of the divine, reflected in all
eyes
Everyone's included. We are one.

REFRAIN

I am complete, not separate parts, my
hands, my lips, my heart.
One body, soul and spirit, I am one.
Rather than hiding, fear and shame
denying, I choose to see myself with
eyes of love.

REFRAIN

Judgment's ways are hard and rigid,
stop God's love from flowing in.
We build walls with labels, boxes and
rules.
God has a place at the table for all of
me and each of us.
We are all connected. We are one.

✧ **Opening Ourselves to God's Grace**

One of the greatest gifts and challenges of faith is that we cannot be Christian alone.

We *need* one another.

We need one another to grow.

We need one another to love.

And we need one another to see God more clearly.

So together, let us lift our voices in unison.

Let us lean into the ties that bind and pray to our merciful God.

✧ **Sharing Our Innermost Lives with God**

**ALL: God of today and tomorrow,
When Mary was pregnant and afraid,
she ran to her cousin Elizabeth's house.
Elizabeth threw open the door with joy
and showered blessings upon her.**

How often do we have that same opportunity?

How often do we leave the door locked, the curtains drawn, and the lights off?

How often do we shower critique or judgment instead of blessings and joy?

Gracious God, forgive us for our wrongs.

We want to see you when we see our neighbor. Amen.

Pastor: Friends, this is what I know—

God delights in us.

God throws open the door, just like Elizabeth, and says,

“Come on home. There is room for you here!”

And in that moment, we are blessed.

In that moment, we are forgiven.

In that moment, we are seen, healed, and welcomed home.

So rest in this good news: you are saved by grace.

Let us respond together, using the words from Mary's song:

**ALL: “My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant, Surely, from
now on all generations will call me blessed.”**

✧ **Special Music** “Lord I Just Love You” by Howard Hagashi
Sung and played by Rosie Rain with Gary Scheffel on percussion

*Lord, I just love You.
And there's no one like You.
In the whole universe
I have no other one like You.
Lord Jesus, I love You.*

✧ **Prayer for Illumination**

God of all,
we are a mixed bag of
distracted and forlorn,
eager and anxious.
We hope that you might
move through the obstacle course
we build up
around our hearts—
made out of questions and defenses—
and douse us in good news.
For at the end of the day,
all we want is to know that we are not alone,
that you are always near.
So knock on our door,
Sweet talk the guard dog we place in front of our
vulnerable hearts,
and come right in.
Make yourself at home.
Pull us close and tell us your story of
unbelievable good news.
We are listening.
We are grateful.
Amen.



✧ Bible Wisdom Teachings

Luke 1: 39-56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

And Mary said,

'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.'

And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

One: May we hear anew the origin stories of our faith and draw from the roots of our tradition.

All: Thanks be to our God.

✧ **Message: "Love Fulfilled" Rev. Trish Eckert**



✧ **Reflection Questions**

Mary greets Elizabeth at a literal threshold (the doorway of Elizabeth's home) and goes to her at a threshold moment in her life when all is about to change.

Recall a threshold moment in your life. Who were the people who greeted you and supported you through that transition?

Mary sings about dethroning the powerful and lifting up the lowly (Luke 1:52).

How does Mary's song disrupt systems of power and generate a new world?

In what ways does the Magnificat comfort you?

In what ways does it unsettle you?

✧ **Short period of Silent Reflection**

✧ **Sharing Our Wisdom**

✧ **Affirmation of Faith**

We believe that creation is inextricably linked.

We belong to one another in an undeniable way.

We are bone of bone and flesh of flesh, life breathed into dust.

We believe that God invites us to live into that truth—

to love without abandon,

to see the good in one another,

to trust that all belong to God.

We know that this life of connection is easier said than done, which is why we gather in this space, week after week, generation after generation, to be reminded:

We see God in each other.

This we believe. Amen.

✧ **Hymn #100 "My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout"**

✧ **Community Prayers, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer**

Prayers from the Community

Pastoral Prayer:

God of yesterday and God of tomorrow,

from the very beginning, you gave us the gift of relationships.

From the very beginning, you tucked us into communities.

From the very beginning, you wired us for connection.

From the very beginning, you made our hearts capable of love.

Thank you!

This gift of relationship has led us to people who lead us to you,
and we are better for it.

So today, we want to say thank you for our Elizabeths—
for the people who have thrown open the doors for us,
who revel in our joy,
who point out your presence in our lives,
and who are quick to affirm us and call us blessed.

Those people come in many shapes and sizes.

For some of us, the Elizabeths in our lives are family members—
parents and grandparents who have cheered us on along the way.
For others, teachers and coaches, neighbors and scout leaders,
professors and counselors come to mind.

And we can't forget the way our chosen family—
friends and partners—have been like Elizabeth for us.
These people have reminded us what love looks like in a hurting world, which has
pointed us back to you.

So today, God, we ask for your help in opening our eyes even more.
We want to see you—in those who love us well and in those who don't.
We want to see you—in those whose coffee order we have memorized,
and in those we've never talked to.
We want to see you, not only in those who are family—
who look like us or think like us—
but in those who come from very different places and positions in life.

From generation to generation, you have left your fingerprints
all over creation.
Help us to be like Elizabeth—
to see and celebrate glimmers of your good news—in all walks of life.

With hope we pray, (The Lord's Prayer)

**ALL: God, heart of the world,
revealed through every aspect of creation,
understood through our awareness.
May we honor the holiness of creation and act accordingly
so that your love is reflected in the way we live.
May we always be thankful
for the food we eat and the friends we have.
May we forgive those who transgress against us
and be forgiven for our own.
In the freedom of love may we live as your heartbeat
and not be compromised by hesitation.
Through our freedom, may your justice
be seen and heard and experienced
forever and ever. Amen.**

✧ **Benediction - Becoming a Living Blessing**

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved.

From generation to generation,

God has been by our side.

From generation to generation,
we are not alone.

The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, "Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon."

May it be so. Amen.

Now that the worship has ended, may the service truly begin.

✧ **Our Response:**

Holy One, now we your servants go in peace. Your Word lives on in us.

✧ **Postlude**



Hear this service presented on TippeTalk podcast, link on our website & Facebook.

<http://www.tippechurch.org>

All prayers, worship words, and candle lighting liturgy written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.