



**LOVE FIRST.
SERVE FIRST.**

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF MONTCLAIR & VERONA**



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**WE WELCOME YOU ALL TO OUR SUNDAY SERVICE
AND APPRECIATE YOUR VIRTUAL PRESENCE AND PARTICIPATION.**

December 13, 2020 + The Third Sunday of Advent + 10:00 AM

Bolded text - said in unison by all

UMH - *United Methodist Hymnal*

TFWS – *The Faith We Sing*

** If able, please stand where indicated.*

CALLED TO PRAISE AND PRAY

Prelude

"Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending" – Thomas Chesterton

Welcome and Announcements

***Call to Worship**

Leader: Unclog your ears; listen for the voice breaking through the winds of the wilderness [crying out], "Make straight the way of the Lord!"

All: Watch for the light!

Leader: Adjust your eyes; the true light is coming to illumine us too.

All: Witness to the light!

Leader: When the world questions, neglects, and denies this light, unlock your mouths!

All: Speak the truth of this light!

Leader: Look alive, take notice; One who is greater is coming.

All: We celebrate and bear witness to the gift of the true light. Amen.

***Opening Hymn**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

UMH 196

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

Opening Prayer

Pastor: To the one with the best, hot-off-the-press, news: we worship you. For when the world publishes a message that destroys, tearing down cities, dividing the peoples, and keeping the oppressed down, down, down, in their place - we trust that you are a lover of justice. Mourners and despairers will delight in the goodness found in you. God, remind us that as your beloved, we reap from the righteousness and justice that springs forth in the light of your promise. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

All: God of the prophets, we give thanks for the voices that cry out and demand our attention. They call us to put our trust and hope in you. Forgive us when we close our eyes to your vision, and when we stop our ears to your promise. Heal our weakness when we give up on ourselves, on one another, and on you. Free us from hopeless living, that we may joyfully love and serve others in your holy name. Amen. (Pausing for Silent Prayer...)

Leader: Know that we are forgiven in Christ's name. May love live in us and through us, that all may know God's peace.

All: We are forgiven in Christ's name. Thanks be to God. Amen!

Reader One: We want everything to look nice: the decorations of the season, our homes with their lights and tinsel, wreaths and ribbons. We want to lighten the darkness around us, bring beauty to the ugliness that wears us down. We decorate, because it is tradition. Because it lifts our hearts. Because it makes us feel like children again. We deck our halls because company is coming.

Reader Two: The prophet Isaiah smiled when he said, "God will give a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit." No matter how far we feel from the spirit of the season, God promises to decorate us with love and with joy.

Reader One: We light these candles as a sign of our joy in the beautiful things of this season – not just the things that glitter and flash, but the deeper things, the beauty of the heart and the soul, the beauty of love shared in service and hospitality. We light this candle of joy because company is coming.

Reader Two: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Sharing Our Joys & Concerns

Please share your joys and concerns in any of the following ways:

- Share it in the church's WhatsApp group (First UMC of Montclair).
- Write it as a comment on the wall of the Facebook Livestream.
- Send a text to Pastor Kim

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Children's Message

Dr. Leslie Lester

Responsive Hymn

Shout to the Lord

TFWS 2074

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing power and majesty, praise to the King.
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar at the sound of your name.
I sing for joy at the work of your hands, forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.
Nothing compares to the promise I have in you.

CALLED TO THE WORD

Psalter Reading

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

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

Hymn of Illumination

Jesus, We Are Here

TFWS 2273

Jesus, we are here; Jesus, we are here; Jesus, we are here; we are here for you.

***Gospel Lesson**

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Robert Kelly

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Sermon

" In Spite Of... "

Rev. Myungim Kim

***Passing the Peace of Christ**

CALLED TO SHARE

Offering

***Doxology**

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise God, all creatures here below:

Praise him above ye heavenly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

CALLED TO WITNESS IN THE WORLD

***Closing Hymn**

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

UMH 206

1. I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus
God sent the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus
2. I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus
Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path, and show me the way to the Father

3. I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus
When we have run with patience the race, we shall know the joy of Jesus

***Sending Forth**

Rev. Myungim Kim

***Circle of Blessing**

Shalom to You

UMH 666

Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends. May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving, Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.

Postlude

"Rejoice, Rejoice Believer!" – Loni Smith

Please continue to pray for all those affected by the pandemic.