

**First Presbyterian Church of Springfield**  
**Order of Worship for the Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 20, 2020 at 11:15 a.m.**

Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Rosanna Anderson

Organist: Mike Belote

Worship Leader: Larry Dean

**Welcome**

We Approach God

**Lighting Candles in the Advent Wreath**

We light these candles as a sign of the light of Christ that shines for all. Advent means arrival. We are preparing for the arrival of the risen Lord Jesus. We are preparing ourselves for the days “when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4).

“The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6).

“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing” (Isaiah 35:1).

“The Lord will give you a sign, look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel: God is with us” (Isaiah 7:14b).

Let us walk in the light of the Lord!

**Call to Worship**

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness.

**Come into God’s presence with singing.**

For the Lord is a gracious God, whose mercy is everlasting, and whose faithfulness endures to all generations.

**Let    us    worship    God!**

**Prayer of the Day**

**God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will. Prepare our hearts for Christ's return. Keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom. We pray for the sake of Jesus Christ the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.**

**Hymn of Praise**

“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?”

*Glory to God* 104

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you a-right? Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight! O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast, to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me; your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace in love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.

You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill, to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still. In patient expectation we live for that great day when your renewed creation your glory shall display.

### **Call to Confession**

We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. But there is mercy for those who call on the name of the Lord. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel! You call us each by name and invite us to follow you. But we—like sheep—do not heed your voice; we stray from your path. Now we call on you to save us from all that ensnares our lives. You claim us for service and assure us that we have nothing to fear. But we are timid disciples who discount dreams and discredit messengers. We wonder if you can use a flock like us to help usher in your reign. By your Spirit, enfold us with love. As we await the babe of Bethlehem, give us the steadfast faith of Joseph and the expectant hope of Mary, that we, too, may come in wonder to worship the newborn king. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Hear the good news: every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain made low, and the rough places shall be made clear. The glory of the Lord is revealed, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!**

### God Speaks to Us Through God's Word

### **Prayer for Illumination**

Gracious God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Holy Spirit, prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Old Testament Lesson**                      2 Samuel 7:1 – 17

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**New Testament Lesson**                      Luke 1:57 – 80

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**                      “Love Fulfilled, Not Denied”                      The Rev. Dr. Rosanna Anderson

### We Respond to God's Word

## **Affirmation of Faith**

Adapted from the *Confession of 1967* 9.18

**God expressed love for all humankind through Israel, whom God chose to be his covenant people to serve him in love and faithfulness. When Israel was unfaithful, God disciplined the nation with judgment and maintained God's cause through prophets, priests, teachers, and true believers. These witnesses called all Israelites to a destiny in which they would serve God faithfully and become a light to the nations. The same witnesses proclaimed the coming of a new age, and a true servant of God in whom God's purpose for humankind would be realized.**

## **Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## **Invitation to the Offering**

All things in heaven and earth belong to God, who is coming in glory to reveal the new creation. Let us offer our lives to the Lord.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

**Generous God, thank you for bringing us to this season of hope, peace, joy, and love. As we look at our lives, we see the countless ways that you have provided for our needs. Let gratitude well up in our hearts and overflow in generosity to others. Draw us outward to see ways that we can joyfully share what you have given. Let our acts of kindness as a church bear good fruit in Springfield and the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### God Sends Us into the World

## **Hymn of Dedication**

“There's a Wideness in God's Mercy”

*Glory to God* 435

**There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea. There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty. There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven. There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.**

**For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind and the heart of the eternal is most wonderfully kind. If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's Word, and our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.**

## **Invitation to Discipleship and Benediction**

Dr. Anderson