

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**



FOURTH SUNDAY
OF
ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2025

Embarking on the Journey: Nearing the Manger.

Meditation

God's compassion is described by Jesus not simply to show me how willing God is to feel for me or to forgive me my sins and offer me new life and happiness, but to invite me to become like God and to show the same compassion to other as he is showing to me.

— *Henri J.M. Nouwen*

The measure of our compassion lies not in the service of those on the margins...but in our willingness to see ourselves in kinship with them.

— *Father Greg Boyle*

The irony is that 'looking down on everybody else' is a violation of the law of love, which, according to Jesus, is the absolute essence of righteousness.

— *John Ortberg*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Melinda Veatch

PRELUDE

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

(M. Praetorius, A.D. 1609)

Karla Brown, Marge Quist, Vince Snowbarger, and Fred Quist, vocalists

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Tim Spangler

Each Sunday of Advent we light a candle signifying the light of Christ coming into the world.

This Sunday we light the first candle of hope, the second candle of peace, the third candle of joy, and the fourth candle of righteousness, knowing that Christ's light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Leader: Prepare the way: To the north and to the south, to the east and to the west. Look here is the sign!

People: A young woman shall give birth! Emmanuel, God is with us!

Leader: He will be called Jesus, for he will save us from our sins.

People: Prepare the way for Emmanuel! Let us worship the God of righteousness and deepest compassion!!

OPENING PRAYER

Tim Spangler

WELCOMING SONG*

People Look East

(Eleanor Farjeon, words; French melody)

Congregation

Hymn No. 161

Verse 1: All

Verse 2: Women

Verse 3: Men

Verse 4: All

*Indicates we stand - if it is comfortable

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, “Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.”

Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, or before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

A Moment for Reflection

A Time for Silence

We take this moment to rest, to be still in the midst of busy lives and busy minds, and to let God's peace enter.

ANTHEM

In the Bleak Midwinter

UCSJ Choir

(Gustav Holst, music; Christina G. Rossetti, words; Arr. A. C. Whitworth)

*In the bleak midwinter,
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron
Water like a stone;*

*Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow, on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.*

*Our God heav'n cannot hold him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heav'n and earth shall flee away,
When he comes to reign;*

*In the bleak midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus, Jesus Christ.*

*What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;*

*If I were a wise man,
I would do my part;
What I can I give him;
Give him my heart.*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',

which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

A TIME FOR SILENCE

We take this moment to rest, to be still in the midst of busy lives and busy minds, and to let God's peace enter.

RESPONSIVE SONG

The Lord My Shepherd, Guards Me Well

Congregation

(Carl P. Daw, Jr., words; James L. Bain, music)

Hymn No. 73

Verses 1, 2, and 4

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission

Silent Night

(Joseph Mohr, words; Franz Gruber, music)

Ron James, guitar; Katy Kristoffersen, piano

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Pastor Melinda Veatch

DOXOLOGY*

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.***

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Tim Spangler and Pastor Melinda Veatch

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not
into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

CLOSING SONG*

The King of Glory Comes
(Willard F. Jabusch, words; Israeli folk song)

Congregation

Hymn No. 159

All Verses

CLOSING PRAYER

Tim Spangler

POSTLUDE

Rocking Carol
(Traditional; arr. Alan Cutts)

UCSJ Women

*Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, not stir:
We will lend a coat of fur.
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you.
See the fur to keep you warm,
Snugly round your tiny form.*

*Mary's little baby sleep, sweetly sleep,
Sleep in comfort, slumber deep.
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you.
We will serve you all we can,
Darling, darling, little man.*

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Pastor Melinda Veatch

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OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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MUSIC

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