

Countryside Community Church WORSHIP



Two Mothers by Nicolette Penaranda ~ Acrylic, ink and mixed media collage
on canvas ~ A Sanctified Art LLC ~ sanctifiedart.org ~ Luke 1:24-45

December 8, 2024
Second Sunday of Advent

† Indicates those places where those who are able are invited to stand.
Text in **bold** indicates places where the congregation is invited to join in response.

Gathering

COMMUNITY TIME (9:55)

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

PRELUDE

Peace

Horace Silver

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

†GATHERING SONG Hymn #119 (vs. 4), *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

†CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

The Reilly Family

-Lighting of the Advent candle of *Peace* -

One: In the chaos and uncertainty of life, we light this candle for Peace.

Peace that stills our restless hearts, that softens our hurried steps.

Peace that flows like a river, healing and renewing.

**Many: We come as a weary world, longing for peace amid the noise, the hate, the chaos;
and we rejoice in the joy and beauty of our shared relationships.**

One: Come, let us seek together the peace of God, present with us and within us.

Many: We rejoice, for in God's presence, we are made whole, and we rest in the promise of peace.

†PASSING THE PEACE

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

One: The Peace of God be With You

Many: And also with you.

†HYMN OF RESPONSE

Hymn #128 (vs. 2), *One Candle Is Lit*

CHILDREN'S MOMENT & DISCOVERY KIDS

(All children are invited to come forward to participate in the liturgy of baptism before being dismissed for Discovery Kids. The nursery is open for children 0-4 years)

Hearing the Word

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 40:1-11

Reader: Dave Wingert

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass; their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers; the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers; the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom and gently lead the mother sheep.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

Creation Will Be At Peace

Anna Laura Page

C4 Choir

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me in this time, when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

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 leaped 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 leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

MESSAGE*We Choose Joy*

Responding to the Word

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your 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.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

Let There Be Peace On Earth

SHARING OUR GIFTS

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

The Social Justice and Outreach Board has designated Food Bank of the Heartland for the December Box donations and Special Christmas Offering.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Holy God, In this moment of offering, we bring our gifts—longing to experience your peace—trusting that you will transform our prayers into peace-building opportunities. Just as You spoke through the angel to Mary, proclaiming the birth of one who would deliver hope to a world in despair, we offer these gifts as we prepare the way for Your kin-dom of justice, peace, and love. Amen.

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

One: Let us give thanks to the God of love.

Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise

Words of Remembrance

Please prepare to partake of the Eucharist in your seats. The communion kits include whole wheat bread and non-alcoholic grape juice. (Gluten-free is available.) Raise your hand if you need assistance with your communion elements and an usher will assist you. Communion cups may be discarded in the baskets as you leave the sanctuary.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks, gracious God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

†SENDING HYMN

Hymn #125 (vs. 1), *Come, O Long-Expected Jesus*

†BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

POSTLUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

C4 Choir: Adam Witte, director
Julia Olynyk, vocals - Matt Wallace, sax - Alex Ritter, piano and organ
Carlos Figueroa, drums - Steve Gomez, bass

2024 Contribution Deadline

Please remember to submit your final contributions for 2024 to the church before the end of the year. The IRS looks closely at charitable giving, and we want you to understand that in order for your contribution to be deductible in 2024, your contribution must be postmarked or physically received at the church office by December 31, 2024. Please note that your check date alone will not control which year your contribution applies to.

Joys & Concerns

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list, and /or be included on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones at 402-391-0350, ext. 225 or sarahrj@countrysideucc.org

Please join in praying for the following new and ongoing concerns:

In early November, **Carol Burhenne** fell at home and has since then been dealing with a spiral fracture in her femur. She had surgery when a rod was placed in her leg and then went to rehab for two weeks. Please pray for her recovery as she recuperates at home with the help of her daughter and son-in-law, along with various PT and OT wound care professionals.

Chloe (Trevor) Spanel shared the news that her grandfather, Kent Johnson, for whom we prayed a few weeks ago, passed away on November 28, surrounded by his family. Please keep Chloe and Trevor and their family in your prayers during this time of grief.

Roger (Judy) Waible will be having surgery to clear a blockage in his carotid artery next Friday, December 13. Please keep Judy and him in your prayers as they prepare for the surgery.



How does a weary world rejoice?

Advent at Countryside Worship

Join us this Advent at Countryside as we journey through *How Does a Weary World Rejoice?* Discover hope and joy as we await the light of Christmas together!

Sunday, Dec. 8, 10am *We Find Joy in Connection* Luke 1:24-45. Music: *Creation Will Be At Peace*, C4 Choir

Sunday, Dec. 8, 7pm *Lessons & Carols* C4 Choir, scripture, prose and poetry evoking the season.

Thursday, Dec. 19, 7pm *Longest Night Service* Special vocalists Emily Wadhams and Shannon Shultz-Thomas

Sunday, Dec. 22, 10am *We Sing Stories of Hope* Luke 1:46-55. *Of The Father's Love Begotten*, C4 & Handbell Choir

All-Church Events

Celebrate the season with Countryside's All-Church Advent events! Join the festive Jazz Coffeehouse, help us deck the halls at the Hanging of the Greens, and enjoy the stirring sounds of the Christmas Organ Extravaganza!

Saturday, Dec. 7, 7pm *Jazz Coffeehouse* A perennial favorite featuring the Countryside Jazz Band!

Sunday, Dec. 15, 4pm *Christmas Pipe Organ Extravaganza* Featuring Organist-in-Residence, Alex Ritter

Christmas Eve Services

Experience the wonder of Christmas Eve at Countryside! Families are invited to a joyful family-oriented service at 5. A candlelight service follows at 7 pm, featuring the C4 Choir. Join us to celebrate the light and hope of Christmas!

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 5pm

Children & Families Service

Children's Choir. The service features the Christmas Story, with Carols and Costumes.

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7pm

Candlelight Service

Music: *O Holy Night*, C4 Choir.

Countryside Christmas Offering



FOODBANK
FOR THE HEARTLAND

