

Countryside Community Church WORSHIP



Revelation by Lisle Gwynn Garrity ~ Acrylic painting on canvas with digital drawing ~ sanctifiedarts.com

December 29, 2024

† 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

WELCOME

†GATHERING SONG Hymn #132 (vs. 1) *When God Is A Child*

†CALL TO WORSHIP (*Based on Psalm 148*)

One: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

Many: Praise God, all the angels; praise God, all you host!

One: Praise God, sun and moon; praise God, all you shining stars!

Many: Praise God, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

One: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for God commanded and they were created.

Many: God established them forever and ever; God fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

One: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for God's name alone is exalted; the glory of the Lord is above earth and heaven.

Many: God has raised up a horn for the people; praise for all the faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to the Lord. Praise the Lord!

†PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of God be With You

Many: And also with you.

†HYMN OF RESPONSE

Hymn #132 (vs. 2) *When God Is A Child*

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Children are invited to join Heather for a lesson at the chancel and then return to join your caregivers in their seats. Nursery is available for children 0-4 years.

Hearing the Word

FIRST LESSON: Galatians 5:13-26

Reader: John Kampfe

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become servants to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head

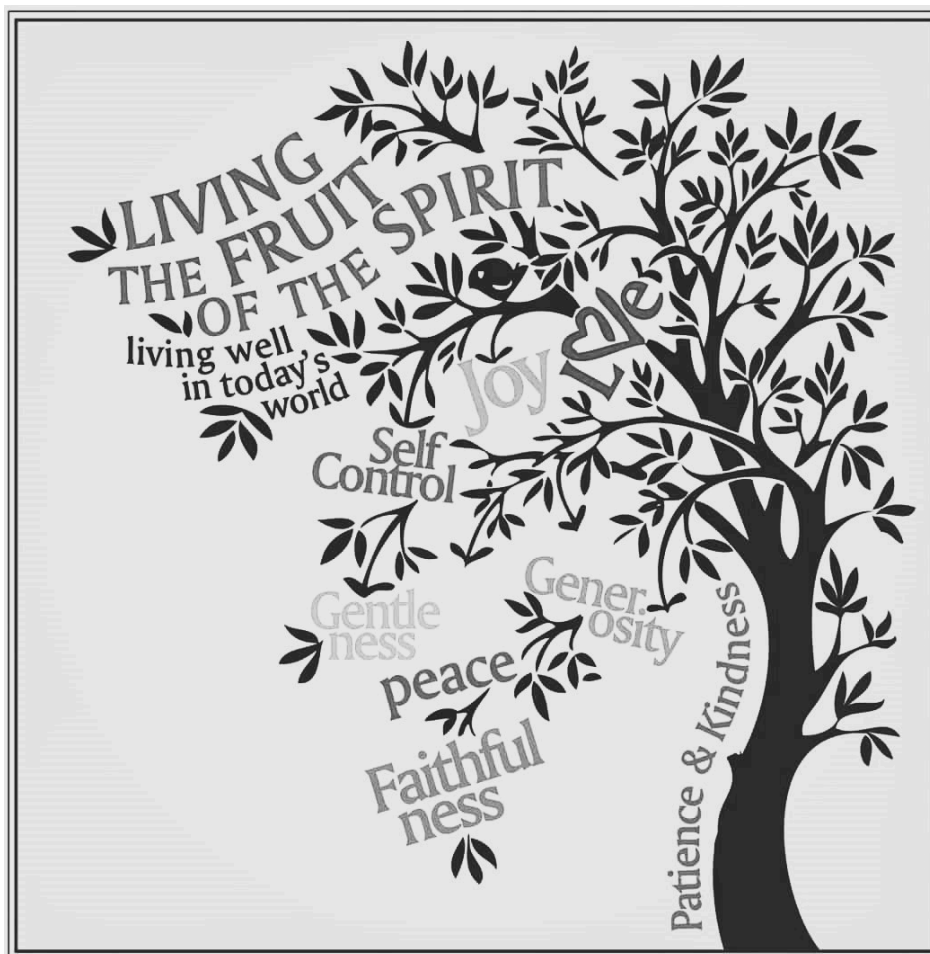
arr. Cathy & David Moglebust

Adam Witte, handbells; Alex Ritter, piano

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

MESSAGE

Beginning a New Year with the Fruits of the Spirit



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

What Child Is This?
Adam Witte, handbells; Alex Ritter, piano

arr. Cathy & David Moglebust

SHARING OUR GIFTS

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

Thank you, God of love, for the promise of this season. We are grateful for the generosity inspired in us by Christ's coming into the world. May these gifts represent a new spirit of joyous sharing among us, for the sake of all your children everywhere. 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 #132 (vs. 3-4) *When God Is A Child*

†BENEDICTION

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

POSTLUDE

Alex Ritter, organ and piano - Adam Witte, handbells

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 bulleting 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:

Molly (Mitch) Anderson shared that her sister, Margaret Riley, who was just diagnosed last week with an advanced and untreatable form of cancer, died on Thursday, December 26. Molly thanks you all for your prayers, and please continue to pray for her comfort and peace at this time.

The First Sunday after Christmas

How does a weary world rejoice?

We root ourselves in ritual

Muscle Memory

When the world falls apart around me,
when the rug is pulled,
and the house is on fire,
when all I can do
is swallow the cry in my throat,
take me to the table.
Tell me how people have fed each other.
Tell me how they've torn the bread
with wrinkled hands
and children's hands.
Tell me how they've said, *This love is for you*,
as they looked you in the eye.
Then take me to the font.
Float my hands in the pool.
Let me feel weightless.
Tell me to leave my burdens there.
Then take me to the front doors.
Remind me how we throw them open.
Take me to the creaky pews,
pews that have held the straightened spines
and silent prayers of so many.
Take me to church.
Move me through the rituals.
Tell me why it matters,
so that next time,
when someone else's world falls apart,
I will have the muscle memory to share.

Worship Notes

Countryside Christmas Offering

