

iucc Irvine United Congregational Church

*An Open & Affirming, Just Peace, Global Mission, Creation Justice
Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

December 17, 2023 • 11:15am

THIRD SUNDAY ADVENT

Gathering

Come, Now is the Time to Worship

By Brian Doerksen (adapted Gary Barmore)

Come, now is the time to worship;
Come, now is the time to give your heart.
Come just as you are to worship;
Come just as you are before your God.
Come.

Ev'ry day we live in the light of God's love,
Ev'ry day we walk by faith.
Now we're here to open our hearts once more,
Now we give thanks for grace.

Come, now is the time to worship;
Come, now is the time to give your heart.
Come just as you are to worship;
Come just as you are before your God.
Come.

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Come just as you are to worship;
Come just as you are before your God.
Come.

Come, come, come!

Singing

Joy to the World

by Hoyt Axton

Jeremiah was a bull frog
Was a good friend of mine
I never understood a single word he said,
But he always treated me just fine,
And he always treated me just fine.

Singin' Joy to the world
All the boys and girls,
Joy to the fishes in the deep blue sea
Joy to you and me.

If I were the king of the world,
Tell you what I'd do.
I'd throw away the cars and the bars and the wars,
And show my love to you.
(chorus)

Centering

Joy Dorko

A birth announcement heralds the coming of a baby.
A mother weeps with joy!
Soon her world will change forever.
Soon our world will change forever.
Will she ever be prepared to parent the baby in her womb?
Will we ever be ready to receive him?
Now is the time. Prepare yourselves!
We wait with expectation, our hearts overjoyed!
God's gift to Mary, God's gift to the world will soon be with us!
O come O Come Emmanuel — God with us!

Lighting

The Dennerline Family

Reader 1:

When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed, the spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit (Isaiah 61:1-3a).

Reader 2:

We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

Congregation:

We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.

Reader 1:

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the coming of God's kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Congregational Response

**A candle is burning, a candle of Joy;
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow.
As Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

Playing

Fresh Word

Praying

Craig Tyrl

Administrative Pastor IUCC

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

By Ken Medema

Lord, Listen to your children praying, Lord, Send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace
(repeat).

Offering

We Are an Offering

By Dwight Liles

We lift our voices, we lift our hands,
We lift our lives up to you, we are an offering.
God, use our voices, God, use our hands,
God, use your lives, they are yours,
We are an offering.

All that we have, all that we are,
all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.
We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you;
we are an offering, we are an offering.

Reading

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Performing

Ministry with Young People

Who is my Family?

Sending

Carry the Light

By Debby Moylan

We have all witnessed your presence,
We have received your grace.
We give you honor and glory,
For moving in this place.

Now we go out to share the good news.
Now we go out to share your love.
Now we go out to share the good news.
Now we go out to share your love:

Carry the light! Carry the light!
Carry the light to all the Earth!

Carry the light! Carry the light!
Carry the light of Jesus Christ!

Departing

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