



**Seventh & James Baptist Church
December 15, 2024 · 11:00 a.m.
The Third Sunday of Advent**

Seventh & James Baptist Church
December 15, 2024 · 11:00 a.m.
The Third Sunday of Advent

Chiming of the Hour

Meditation

“Carol of the Bells”
ADULT HANDBELL CHOIR

arr Cathy Moglebust

Lighting the Candle of Joy

Joy Summar-Smith and Bernie Smith
Chloe Smith, Edward Smith

Touching a flame to the wick of joy, we bring all of our celebrations and the Ebenezers of glad moments into this sacred space. Birthday candles, anniversary candles, wedding cake toppers and romantic dinners inform the light of this morning. We remember with grief those moments that cannot repeat and light the candle of joy to honor that pain and celebrate the wonder of shared life. This light holds them all in mesmerizing flickers of healing as the distance between sorry and joy shrinks to the width of the flame. We give thanks not for the absence of pain, but for the fullness of real joy large enough to hold it all.

— *Sacred Seasons*,
Seeds of Hope Publishers, Advent/Christmastide 2023

Welcome and Call to Worship

Erin Conaway

One: Beloved child of God, you are welcome here....

Many: We give thanks to God for bringing us into this moment of worship.

One: For no matter who you are or where you've been, you matter to God and to us.

Many: Our hearts rejoice and give thanks for all those who have come before us and made a place for us to worship, pray, sing, wonder, doubt, believe, and just be.

One: May the love of God through Christ our Lord convince you of your worth and invitation into this body of believers as we worship together in thanksgiving and hope.

Choral Summons

“Hydom, Hydom” (A Czech Carol)

arr. Tam Mitchell

CHORISTERS

Long ago a boy was born, Gift of God on Christmas morn.
Shepherds watched their sheep that night, under starry sky so bright.

Hydom, hydrom, tidlidom. Hydom, hydrom, tidlidom.

Angels sang, “Good News to all, born this day a child so small.”

“Go,” the angels said to them, “Hurry now to Bethlehem.”

Hydom, hydrom, tidlidom. Hydom, hydrom, tidlidom.

“There you’ll find the holy child, Baby Jesus, meek and mild.

See him sleeping on the hay, Hope for all the world today.”

Hydom, hydrom, tidlidom. Hydom, hydrom, tidlidom.

Processional Hymn, No. 125

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Litany of Joy

Zoe McKeever

One: Joy to the world! The Lord is come and is coming. On this Sunday when we light the candle of joy, we take a moment to breathe in the joy all around us.

Many: Counting our blessings of family and friends, we give you thanks O God.

One: For the way our hearts are warmed as we hear the voices of our children praising you in song, for the way we gasp for breath when we see the motley wonder of the trees in their colorful splendor, and for the way our noses delight as we take in the mints and cinnamon and chocolates of the season, O God, we give you thanks.

Many: Guide our hearts to the beauty all around and within as we wait for your return.

One: Joy to the earth! The Lord is come and is coming. Turn our hearts toward the preservation and restoration of creation as we learn to better care for our air, our water, our land, and our resources.

All: Open our eyes to the joy in our lives and help us to celebrate together the way you are working and moving in our hearts and through our hands.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Kent McKeever

Meditation “Away in a Manger” arr David Angerman
ADULT HANDBELL CHOIR

Old Testament Reading *Zephaniah 3:14-20* Mathis McKeever

Choral Response “Welcome, Lord Jesus” Cindy Berry
CHORISTERS

Child of peace, child of hope, in a manger stall,
You have come to offer salvation to all.
We rejoice that you came down from heav’n above.
Welcome, Lord Jesus, God’s special gift of love.
Angels sang to the shepherds that holy night,
And the star o’er the stable shone with glorious light.
Let us lift our voices and praises sing
To worship the baby, this tiny infant King.
Angels sang, praises rang as prophecy was fulfilled.
Holy One, God’s only Son, Immanuel, God with us.
Child of peace, child of hope, in a manger stall,
You have come to offer salvation to all.
We rejoice that you came down from heav’n above.
Welcome, Lord Jesus, God’s special gift of love.

Epistle Reading *Philippians 4:4-7* CJ McKeever

Hymn, No. 139 “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Gospel Reading *Luke 3:7-18* Scott Turner

One: This is the Word of the Lord.
Many: Thanks be to God.

Prayers of God’s People Scott Turner

Offertory “Joy to the World” arr Kevin McChesney
YOUTH HANDBELL CHOIR

*During the offertory, we invite you to prayerfully consider your stewardship
of all the resources God is entrusting to you. The work of God at Seventh & James*

is dependent on the financial generosity and volunteer service of its members and friends. Offering plates are available at the doors of the sanctuary as you leave worship. Join us as you respond to God's call.

Doxology

(Sung to Veni Emmanuel, tune of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel")

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God, above ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Children's Sermon

Leslie Rosencrans

*All children are invited to come forward for the Children's Sermon.
Preschoolers [ages 4-kindergarten] may then go to Extended Session.*

Anthem

"Rejoice! Christ Is Born!"

arr. Joseph Martin

YOUTH CHOIR

Christmas people, gather near and put away all doubt and fear.
Shout and sing, be of good cheer, rejoice, for Christ is born!
*Sing unto the Lord with joyful noise! Bring unto the Lord a tuneful voice!
Ring the news, let the world rejoice! Rejoice, for Christ is born!*
Shepherds, go and see the One. Delight at all that love has done;
For God has given us a son. Rejoice, for Christ is born!
Hodie! Christus natus est! (Today! Christ is born!)
Come rejoicing, sing for Christ is born!
People, come and gather 'round and join as one with joyful sound.
Come with me to David's town. Rejoice, for Christ is born!
Glory be to God on high. Let all creation now reply.
Lift your voices to the sky. Rejoice, for Christ is born!

Sermon

"In Our Midst..."
(Zephaniah 3:14-20)

Erin Conaway

Silent Reflection

God came to us because he wanted to join us on the road, and to help us realize that we are not walking in circles but moving towards the house of peace and joy. This is the great mystery of Christmas that continues to give us comfort and consolation: we are not alone on our journey.

— Henri Nouwen, *Gracias: A Latin American Journal*

Hymn of Commitment, No. 90

“People, Look East”

*If you would like to make a public profession of your faith in Christ
or request membership in this congregation, our ministers
will greet you at the front of the sanctuary.*

Congregational Response

In response to your decision, we pledge ourselves to be the family of God for you in this place; we offer you our love, our care, our kinship, and our hopes; we hope to learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, by God’s grace. Amen.

Pastoral Blessing

Erin Conaway

Choral Benediction

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

arr. Craig Curry

YOUTH CHOIR

Postlude

“Toccata on GLORIA”

Page C. Long

Today at Seventh

Adult Handbell Choir

Rosalie Beck
Sonia Belew
Linda Hynan

Pat Hynan
Bryce Shelton
Ann Sims

Carolien Tantra
Patricia Wilson

Choristers

Dillan Damping
Sefton Farris
Eri Hatakeyama
Jun Hatakeyama

Liam Land
Robin Land
Camden McAllister
Comfort Michael

Edward Smith
Wesley Zuniga

Youth Choir & Youth Handbell Choir

Sam Conaway
Ava Farris
Yuri Hatakeyama
Ivy Hynan

Audrey Ludwig
CJ McKeever
Mathis McKeever
Atticus Ryden

Eli Ryden
Chloe Smith

Our Pianist today is Jim Williams.

The Sanctuary Flowers are given by Tammie Hartgroves in celebration of Advent and all the beautiful music we experience at Seventh.

The Artwork on the Cover is by Sally Lynn Askins.

Hearing devices are available at the sound booth for any who need assistance.

Permission to print music obtained from CCLI, license #1450684. Permission to record and stream worship services from CCLI, license #22321029.