

## God Provides; We Feast

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right for us to give thanks and praise.**

The Institution: 1 Corinthians 11

Memorial Acclamation

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Prayer of Consecration, concluding with 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

The Invitation

*We invite you to come down the center aisle to the communion table. You may partake at the table or take it back to your seats. Gluten-free bread is available on the table.*

Communion Song: "Christ, Be Our Light"

LUYH 908

"Eat This Bread"

LUYH 818

\*Prayer of Thanksgiving

## God Sends; We Go Rejoicing

\*Benediction

\*Closing Song: "Joy to the World"

LUYH 92:1-3

### Worship Participants

Pastor: Dr. Joel Kok ♦ Organ/Piano: Donna Brue ♦ Guitar: Laremy DeVries ♦ Violin: Erika Ver Steeg

Worship Leader: Rebecca DeVries ♦ Readers: Daniel & Erika Ver Steeg

Sound: Nick Breems ♦ Video: Jason Wyenberg ♦ CCLI #493458 ♦ OneLicense #A-721171

### Hearing Assistance

A telecoil hearing-loop system sends a signal into the sanctuary. If your hearing aid is t-coil equipped, try switching to the t-coil receiver. An FM hearing assistance system is also available for ears without hearing aids. Consult the sound operator for assistance.



# First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023



How does a  
weary world  
rejoice? *We acknowledge  
our weariness*

### Psalm 80:19

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

How does a weary world rejoice? As this season of Advent begins, we start by acknowledging the weariness, grief, rage, and hopelessness we carry—and we also affirm that we are made for joy.

† From the artist statement on the cover art: "Two people—one radiating joy and the other wading into weariness—hold the world together."

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

## We Gather; God Welcomes

Welcome

\*Call to Worship

In God's house, we can be joyful.

**We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.**

In God's house we can be weary.

**We can be anxious. We can be grieving.**

In God's house, we can be honest—

**Inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful,**

**connected or curious, and everything in between.**

This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

\*Song: "Come Light Our Hearts"

*Chorus: For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.*

*For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.*

*Truly our hope is in You, truly our hope is in You.*

*1. O Lord of life, our only hope,  
your radiance shines on all who look to you in the dark.  
Emmanuel come, come light our hearts. (to chorus)*

*2. O Joy above all other loves, in you we find more than enough.  
We come as we are, O heal and restore. Come light our hearts. (to chorus)*

Words & Music: Sandra McCracken ©2014 Drink Your Tea, [ASCAP], Admin by Music Services

\*God Greets Us, We Greet One Another

\*Song: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

LUYH 61:1,2,6,7

## We Seek Jesus; God Forgives

Lighting the Advent Candle

New Testament Reading: Luke 1:1-24

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Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we are weary. For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

**Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.**

**Remind us that you have created us for Sabbath rest.**

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:

**Forgive us for creating so many distractions.**

**Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.**

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:

**Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.**

**Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.**

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope, we pray:

**Forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.**

**Remind us that your good news knows no bounds.**

With the Psalmist we pray, restore us, O God;

make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

**Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Family of faith,

no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin,

no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions,

no matter how many times we ask ourselves, "How can this be?"

God's love keeps showing up for us.

**We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven.**

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Invitation to Giving

*Offering our gifts is an important part of our response to God—connecting our worship with a life of discipleship—and is a way to participate in the ministry of Covenant CRC here in this building and around the world. Offering boxes are located at the entrances to the sanctuary, or check your bulletin announcements for more ways to give.*

Prayers for the Church and World

## God Speaks; We Listen

Children's Blessing: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LUYH 61 (*refrain*)

*Children ages 3 years old through kindergarten are invited to go downstairs to the Multi-Purpose Room for a time of worship designed especially for young children. Our young guests are welcome to participate in this service.*

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 64

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Message: "God Comes Down"

Pastor Joel Kok

\*Song of Response: "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

LUYH 56