

Advent 4

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
Orinda, CA

December 19, 2021

Welcome to Worship with Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church. Amid these days of COVID-19, we welcome some of you in-person and others online (via Facebook @HSLCORinda and our webpage www.holyshepherd.org.) In whatever way you join us, may you know God's grace as we worship.

Please Note that indoor masking requirements have been reinstated in Contra Costa County and thus all in-person worshippers are required to wear face coverings while in our Sanctuary. More importantly, wearing face coverings is one way we can actively love our neighbors as ourselves!

▲ indicates that you are invited to stand as you are able

GATHERING MUSIC Arwen Chung and Marc Levine

CALL TO WORSHIP "SING NOEL"
Lyrics and Music by Tom Fettke

▲ **GATHERING SONG** "THE FIRST NOEL" / ELW #300
Lyrics and Music Traditional

**The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain: **Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.** [Refrain]

**So let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord
who once made heaven and earth of naught,
and with His blood our peace has bought.** [Refrain]

▲ OUR OPENING SENTENCES

L: Advent is a time of expectation.

P: **A time to celebrate the One true hope of the world in which we live.**

L: Advent is a time of preparation.

P: **A time to prepare ourselves for the arrival of the Prince of Peace.**

L: Advent is a time to remember ancient words.

P: **A time to recall that those words are meant for us.**

L: That the days are surely coming when righteousness and justice will abound.

P: **That the days are surely coming when God's Word will be written on our hearts.**

L: That the days are surely coming when the lion will lie down with the lamb.

P: **That the days are surely coming when God will make all things new.**

L: So let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ, we are a selfish people. Our peace depends on Your coming. We are a sinful people. Our pardon depends on Your coming. We are a broken people. Our lives depend on your grace. And so we pray those ancient words: "Maran atha." – "Lord, come soon."

P: **Maran atha. Lord, come soon.**

L: In the Advent of the Christ, the dawn from on high does break upon us. In the Advent of the Christ, God looks upon you with peace, and pardon and grace. In the Advent of the Christ, God forgives you all your sins.

P: **Amen!**

A SONG OF EXPECTATION

"WE WAIT"

Lyrics and Music by Ruth Elaine Schram

THE LESSON

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

A SONG OF CELEBRATION

"WHO WOULD SEND A BABY?"

Lyrics and Music by Mary Kay Beall

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE / KIDTALK

A CANDLE-LIGHTING SONG "A CANDLE IS BURNING"
Lyrics by Sandra Dean / set to "Away in a Manger"

*A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright,
A candle of hope in the winter's long night.
While angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky
Our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.*

*A candle is burning a candle of peace;
A candle to signal that conflict must cease;
For Jesus is coming to show us the way;
A message of peace humbly laid in the hay.*

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

*A candle is burning, a candle of love
A candle to point us to heaven above
A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth,
For Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth.*

A MUSICAL REFLECTION "JOY TO THE WORLD, NOEL!"
Lyrics and Music by Tom Fettke

▲ WORDS TO LIVE BY based on Philippians 2

As people of God, we find our hope and salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE OFFERTORY "SOME CHILDREN SEE HIM"
Lyrics and Music by Wihla Hutson and Alfred Burt

THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*(Utilizing the prayer refrain "God, in your mercy **Hear our prayer**" and 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A SONG OF JOY "WHO'S THE LITTLE BABY?"
Words & Music by Matt Limbaugh / Arranged by Mary McDonald

▲ THE BENEDICTION

▲ OUR SENDING SONG "HE CAME DOWN"
Traditional Cameroonian Carol / ELW #253

*He came down that we may have love;
He came down that we may have love;
He came down that we may have love,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have peace;
He came down that we may have peace;
He came down that we may have peace,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have joy;
He came down that we may have joy;
He came down that we may have joy,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have hope;
He came down that we may have hope;
He came down that we may have hope,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have life;
He came down that we may have life;
He came down that we may have life,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

▲ THE CHARGE

Go, in peace, to love God by serving your neighbor!
Thanks be to God!

SENDING MUSIC "HE CAME DOWN" (Reprise)

Thank you to this week's Worship Team, including:

Bethany Valentine – Vocalist and Creative Co- Director
Tom Henry – Vocalist, Guitarist and Creative Co-Director
Diana Riveness Young – Vocalist
Gretchen Koellermeier Stenson – Vocalist
Sharon Tissue – Vocalist
Elizabeth Humphrey – Vocalist
Joe Zingale – Vocalist
Steve Swanback – Vocalist
Pastor John Valentine – Vocalist
Julie Hamre – Organist and Pianist
Marc Levine – Pianist and Percussionist
Arwen Chung – Pianist

On Christmas Eve (December 24th), you're invited to join us for candlelight services at both 4p and 6p.