

First United Church, Mount Pearl Pastoral Charge
Sunday, December 8th, 2024

Praise Medley: Do You Hear What I Hear, Soon and Very Soon

Greeting and Announcements

Introit: A Candle Is Burning **VU 6 vs 2**

Call to Worship:

(loud) LISTEN!

(loud) LISTEN!

(whisper) Listen!

(whisper) Listen! (Silent pause)

God comes to us from within.

God speaks to our inner being.

God's fire purifies our reception.

Tune in to God's mind in prayer.

The silence focuses our vision.

The Spirit filters out the white noise.

God, create a quiet place in us, where we can listen and hear your voice.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

READERS: (Lily Pope and Tricia Warford)

What do you do when an angel interrupts your day?

You stop.

What do *you* do when an angel speaks?

You listen.

An angel interrupted Mary's housework.

She stopped. She listened.

The angel had a message for Mary.

"You will have God's child."

But Mary wondered, "How can I be the mother of God's child?"

The angel said, "Don't be afraid. Take the risk, for God is with you."

Remembering Zechariah and Elizabeth, we light this candle of Possibility.

ALL: In the circle of God's light, all things are possible.

(Light one blue candle)

READERS:

Remembering Mary, we light this candle of Risk.

ALL: In the circle of God's light, we dare to risk.

(Light a second blue candle)

SUNG RESPONSE: Angel, from the realms of glory,

(unison)

telling Mary of God's call.

You who sang creation's story,

now proclaim Messiah's birth:

come and worship, come and worship,

worship in this Advent time.

Prayer of Approach: (unison)

Comfort of the ages, you come: so you can fill our empty places with your hope; so you can level our pride with your call to serve the vulnerable; so you can smooth our toughened hearts with your tenderness. Herald of Good News: when we hunger for exaltation, you feed us with humility; when we trip over sin, you gather us up in love; when we become satisfied with our faith, you shake us with your Messenger. Spirit of Advent: in the hectic season, give us the gift of patience; when we overflow with stress, soothe us with your serenity; when we are overwhelmed with the desire for more and more, speak to us of the needs of the outsiders. Holy God, surround us with your presence and fill us with your love as we learn your story and sing your praises in our worship today. Amen.

Hymn: Here I Am to Worship

A Time for All People (White Gift Drama performed by members of the Board)

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

We confess that whatever our fine might have been that it has been paid, God of Comfort, yet we still insist on earning our way into your heart. We confess that you are beyond patient with us, but wish you would act quickly against those who hurt us. We confess that while your word will stand forever, it is our words of pain and anger that cause long-term harm to others. Your Messenger has come crying out of your forgiveness and hope. Through Jesus Christ you speak to us; not of punishment, but of peace; not of judgement, but of justice; not

**of a sentence, but salvation. And we offer our hearts in
thanksgiving and hope. (Silent reflection)**

Assurance of Pardon:

Hear the Good News God speaks to you: I love you; I forgive you; I restore you to new life.

We will not ignore the fact that God comes: not to condemn, but to comfort us; not to scold, but to speak tenderly to us of hope, of love, of joy. Thanks be to God.

Hymn: Come, We That Love **VU 714**

Offertory Hymn: Your Work, O God Needs Many Hands **VU 537**

Offertory Prayer: (unison)

Generous God, You have given us gifts of time, talent, energy, money, and asked us to use them to build your kingdom. We bring these gifts of money and of worldly goods today as our offerings and White Gifts. Along with them, we offer ourselves: our lives, our dollars and our hours. May we use them to love and serve wherever you call. Bless all these gifts, that they may multiply in faith, hope, and love. Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Hebrew Scriptures: Malachi 3:1-4

Responsive Reading: Luke 1:68-79 **on page 900 of VU**

Epistle Lesson: Philippians 1:3-11

Gospel Lesson: Luke 3:1-6

Hymn: Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus **VU 2**

Meditation**Ministry of Music****Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer**

Prayer Response: Precious Lord, Take My Hand **VU 670**

Hymn: Shout to the North

Commission and Benediction:

By the tender mercy of our God, love has broken upon us!

Light is given where once there was darkness and hope where there was only death.

We go into this season knowing that God will guide our feet into the way of peace.