

Calvary Church

A Reconciling Congregation



*"... according to the promise God
made to our ancestors ..."*

- Luke 1:55a

December 22, 2024

4th Sunday of Advent

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

GATHERING

Gathering Song: "Joy to the World" (*tune: G.F. Handel, arr. by Lowell Mason / lyrics: Isaac Watts / perf. by Aretha Franklin, et al*)

Welcome & Announcements

- **Advent & Christmas at Calvary:** allmeansall.org/advent
- **Healing Racism Within – A Course for White-Identified Leaders**
 - sagelycreative.com/healing-racism-sign-up
- **Previous sermons:** allmeansall.org/sermons
- **Previous bulletins:** allmeansall.org/bulletins

Calendar

Today, Dec 22, 8-9 pm: Spiritual Reflection Group (*weekly, through Jan 26 – except Dec 29*)

- allmeansall.org/spiritual-reflection-group

Tuesday, Dec 24

- **12-1 pm:** Midweek Prayer (*virtual / weekly*)
 - allmeansall.org/midweek-prayer
- **7 pm:** Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols (*hybrid*)
 - allmeansall.org/christmas

Saturday, Dec 28, 1 pm: Meditation (*weekly*)

- Calvary (Board Room, upstairs on Baltimore Ave side)
– please use 48th St entrance
- witnessandintegrate@gmail.com

Sunday, Dec 29, 11 am-12 pm: Virtual Worship (*1st Sunday after Christmas*)

- PLEASE NOTE: there will be no in-person option!

Thursday, Jan 2, 8-9ish pm: Spirituality on Tap (*monthly – 1st Thursdays*)

- Carbon Copy / 701 S. 50th St
- allmeansall.org/spirituality-on-tap

Sunday, Jan 5, 11 am-12:30 pm: Hybrid Worship
(Communion / Epiphany Sunday)

Tuesday, Jan 7, 7 pm: Church Council (rescheduled)

Sunday, Jan 12

- **11 am-12:30 pm:** Hybrid Worship
- **12:45-2 pm:** 2nd Sunday Potluck (monthly)
 - allmeansall.org/2nd-sunday-potluck

Monday, Jan 13, 6:30-7:30 pm: Beginner Yoga (weekly)

- Chapel – please use 48th St entrance
- allmeansall.org/yoga

Wednesday, Jan 15, 10-11 am: Beginner Yoga (weekly)

- Chapel – please use 48th St entrance
- allmeansall.org/yoga

Visiting With Us?

We're glad you're here, for whatever reason you chose to join us! We strive to make our worship space (in-person and virtual) as welcoming and accommodating of different needs as possible. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact Pastor Tim.

CENTERING & CONNECTING

Breathing Our Way In

Singing Our Way In: "Drawing Nearer" (Christopher Grundy)

Even in the midst of all of this,
trouble on the news, no peace within,
still there is a light in the distance,
drawing nearer, drawing nearer.

So, open up our eyes to see your light.
Open up our arms, they're clenched so tightly.
Come in like a thief and steal our hearts
like a baby, like a baby.

Even in the midst of all of this ...

Call to Worship / Lighting the Advent Candle (*Jon Humphries, Susan Wickham – adapted*)

One: God of hope, peace, joy and love, we wait. We remember. We ready ourselves. We pray.

ALL (sung): O come, o come, Emmanuel ...

One: We have prayed for hope, peace, joy. As we light this candle, we pray love. Love for others. Love for self. Love for family. Love for friends. Love for neighbors.

ALL (sung): O come, o come, Emmanuel ...

One: Love for strangers. Love for enemies. Love for the lonely. Love for the lost. Love for the sick. Love for those left out.

ALL (sung): O come, o come, Emmanuel ...

One: Love for the world. Love for Creation. Love for all. Love for life. Love for you.

ALL (sung): Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.

One: Alleluia!

ALL: Alleluia!

Opening Song: "Christmas Come Close" (*tune: Lim Swee Hong / lyrics: Shirley Erena Murray*)

Christmas come close in a child's crumpled face,
to the ragged and raw in a harsh birthing place,
in a surging of joy, in a bundle held tight,
in a breath, in a cry through the dark of the night.

Christmas come close to the place where we are,
in our longing for peace, for a sign, for a star,
for a certainty born in uncertainty's space,
for a mystery grasped that our blindness can trace.

Christmas come close to the world that is bleak,
giving hope a new home, making prophecy speak:
so the angels will sing, and the wise will be heard,
and the powers will take heed of this child and his word.

Christmas come close into focus and frame,
to humanity's heart for the child to make claim:
for the poor to be served, for the rich to kneel low,
for Magnificat now in the Christmas we know.

Stewardship Moment

Offering Ourselves & Our Gifts / Passing the Peace

*"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not
regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

– 2 Corinthians 9:7

One: The peace of God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

GROUNDING

Community Prayer *(Ted Loder – adapted)*

Wondrous Worker of Wonders, we praise you, not alone
for what has been or for what is, but for what is yet to be,
for you are gracious beyond all telling of it.

We praise you, that out of the turbulence of our lives a
kindom is coming, is being shaped even now out of our
slivers of loving, our bits of trusting, our sprigs of hoping,
our tootles of laughing, our drips of crying, our smidgens
of worshipping; that out of our songs and struggles, out of
our griefs and triumphs, we are gathered up and saved,
for you are gracious beyond all telling of it.

We praise you that you turn us loose to go with you to the
edge of now and maybe, to welcome the new, to see
our possibilities, to accept our limits, and yet begin living
to the limit of passion and compassion until, released by
joy, we uncurl to other people and to your kindom
coming, for you are gracious beyond all telling of it.
Amen.

Silent Prayer

Special Music

Scripture Lesson: Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, **40** where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. **41** When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit **42** and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. **43** And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my God comes to me? **44** For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. **45** And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the HOLY ONE."

Choral Alleluia (UMH #186, Jerry Sinclair)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Scripture Lesson: Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the HOLY ONE, **47** and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, **48** for God has looked with favor on the lowly state of God's servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, **49** for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God's name; **50** indeed, God's mercy is for those who fear God from generation to generation. **51** God has shown strength with God's arm; God has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. **52** God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; **53** God has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. **54** God has come to the aid of God's child Israel, in remembrance of God's mercy, **55** according to the promise God made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to God's descendants forever."

One: The word of God for the people of God.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Choral Alleluia

Sing alleluia, sing alleluia, sing alleluia, alleluia. *(repeat)*

Sermon: "Promise and Possibility"

Song: "God, Make Us Agents of Joyful Rebellion" *(tune: Benjamin Brody / lyrics: David Bjorlin)*

God, make us agents of joyful rebellion
called to resist sullen empires of fear.
Fueled not by hatred but love for all people,
we stand united, assured you are love.

Some will be Marys who sing down injustice.
Others like Moses will speak truth to power.
Few, like brave midwives, will shield life from evil.
All must be prophets awake for this hour.

Laughing in answer to snarling derision,
we dance to counter oppression and pain.
Feasting together despite our divisions,
we pledge ourselves to Christ's upside-down reign.

God, make us agents of joyful rebellion
called to sing out till our faith is made sight.
Fueled by the stories of saintly subversives,
we stand united, your justice our light.

SHARING

Prayers of the People / Joys & Concerns

Sung Response *(tune: UMH #294, Hugh Wilson / lyrics: John Pritchard)*

O coming Christ, to you we pray,
to you hearts open wide.
Your justice bring, to wounds healing;
in joy let all abide.

ENGAGING

Closing Song: "Siyahamba / We Are Marching" (TFWS #2235-b, trad. South African – adapted)

Si – ya – hamb' e – ku – kha – nyen' kwen – khos',
si – ya – hamb' e – ku – kha – nyen' kwen – khos. (repeat)
Si – ya – hamba, hamba, si – ya – hamba, hamba,
si – ya – hamb' e – ku – kha – nyen' kwen – khos. (repeat)

We are marching in the light of God,
we are marching in the light of God. (repeat)
We are marching, marching, we are marching,
marching, we are marching in the light of God. (repeat)

We are dancing in the light of God ...

We are praying in the light of God ...

We are living in the light of God ...

Benediction

Singing Our Way Out: Selected Carols (UMH #217-254)

Calvary United Methodist Church

at the intersection of 48th & Baltimore / spirituality & justice

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Norris Person (accompanist): music@allmeansall.org