

Calvary Church

A Reconciling Congregation



*“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.
In all things give thanks ...”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a*

December 3, 2023

1st Sunday of Advent

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

Nurturing Resilience, Practicing Active Hope

GATHERING

Gathering Song: "Resilience" (*Rising Appalachia*)

Welcome & Announcements

(also available at allmeansall.org/announcements)

- **Advent 2023:** Dec 3: Coming from Gratitude / Dec 10: Honoring Our Pain for the World / Dec 17: Seeing with New Eyes / Dec 24: Going Forth
- **Hiring part-time accompanist:** allmeansall.org/music
- **Spring Retreat:** June 7-8/9, 2024
- **New Sanctuary Movement:** collecting new and gently used sweatshirts (S/M/L) and tennis shoes/sneakers (women's 5-9 / men's 7-11)
- **Previous sermons:** allmeansall.org/sermons
- **Previous bulletins:** allmeansall.org/bulletins

Calendar

Today, Dec 3: 1st Sunday of Advent

- **4-6 pm:** Confirmation Class
- **8-9 pm:** Online Advent Retreat – Spiritual Reflection Group (*virtual*)
 - allmeansall.org/spiritual-reflection-group

Monday, Dec 4

- **10 am:** Press Conference – ICE Out of Courts (*New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia et al*)
 - Center for Criminal Justice / 1301 Filbert St
- **7 pm:** Calvary Center for Culture and Community Board and Transition Team

Tuesday, Dec 5

- **12-1 pm:** Midweek Prayer (*virtual*)
 - allmeansall.org/midweek-prayer
- **6:30 pm:** Community Care Team

Wednesday, Dec 6, 7:30-8:30ish pm: Spirituality on Tap

- Gojjo / 4540 Baltimore Ave
- allmeansall.org/spirituality-on-tap

Sunday, Dec 10: 2nd Sunday of Advent

- **11:15 am-12:45 pm:** Hybrid Worship
- **1-2:30 pm:** 2nd Sunday Potluck – Christmas Edition
 - allmeansall.org/potlucks
- **8-9 pm:** Online Advent Retreat – Spiritual Reflection Group (virtual)

Sunday, Dec 17: 3rd Sunday of Advent

- **11:15 am-12:45 pm:** Hybrid Worship
- **4-6 pm:** Confirmation Class
- **8-9 pm:** Online Advent Retreat – Spiritual Reflection Group (virtual)

Thursday, Dec 21, 7 pm: Blue Christmas Service (*hybrid*)

- allmeansall.org/blue

Sunday, Dec 24: 4th Sunday of Advent / Christmas Eve

- **11:15 am-12:45 pm:** Hybrid Worship
- **7 pm:** Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols (*hybrid*)
 - allmeansall.org/Christmas
 - joint service with West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship

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.

Calvary Email List

If you're not on the Calvary email list and want to be, or think you are but aren't seeing emails from us, please contact the church office or sign up online. Our **Calvary Connections e-newsletter** goes out every Thursday night.

CENTERING & CONNECTING

Breathing Our Way In / Breath Prayer

Singing Our Way In: “Maranatha” (*Louise Skibsted – adapted*)

Maranatha, maranatha,
come (dear) Jesus come (*repeat*)

Hanging the Greens / Decorating the Tree

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: As we light this candle to begin our Advent journey, we pray hope. Active hope. Hope for the hopeless. Hope for the hopeful. Hope for all.

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

One: Hope for healing. Hope for meaning. Hope for peace.

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

One: Hope for now. Hope for the future. Hope forever.

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

One: Alleluia!

ALL: Alleluia!

Opening Song: “Advent Begins in the Darkness of Night”

(*tune: Benjamin Brody / lyrics: David Bjorlin*)

Advent begins in the darkness of night,
waiting and watching for signs of a light,
walking in faith that a path will appear,
daring to follow in spite of our fear.

Advent begins with our dreams yet deferred.
Love sounds ridiculous; prayer seems absurd.
But in the midst of life’s centerless maze,
we lift together our protest of praise.

Advent begins in oppression's domain,
marked by the cries of confusion and pain.
Yet hope is kindled where justice is done,
mercy is nurtured and peace is begun.

Advent goes on till the promised dawn breaks,
tyrants are toppled, and God's dream awakes.
Hope is perfected and faith is made sight.
Love is our center and Christ is our light.

Offering Ourselves & Our Gifts / Passing the Peace

One: The peace of God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

GROUNDING

Community Prayer *(John Pritchard – adapted)*

In this season of making ready, O God, making ready for Christmas celebrations, for gatherings of families and friends, for, here, newness to come, in this season of making ready, we ask you to make us ready. Clear a space in us where we may wait expectantly for what you are birthing. Loosen the grip of old ways on us, that we may be fertile ground for the coming of new life. Open us to receive, with perpetual gratitude, and make us pliable to be shaped by the love that reaches for us in Bethlehem.

Make us ready, O God, to become more fully yours, the flesh of your presence, the community of your love, the champions of your justice and peace, the midwives of your kingdom to come. Make us ready, we pray. Amen.

Silent Prayer

Special Music

Scripture Lesson: Psalm 85:8-13

Let me hear what God the HOLY ONE will speak, for God

will speak peace to God's people, to God's faithful, to those who turn to God in their hearts. **9** Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear God, that God's glory may dwell in our land. **10** Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. **11** Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. **12** The HOLY ONE will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. **13** Righteousness will go before God, and will make a path for God's steps.

Choral Alleluia

Scripture Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (*A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church, Wilda C. Gafney*)

Rejoice always. **17** Pray without ceasing. **18** In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you all. **19** Quench not the Spirit. **20** Do not despise the words of women or men who prophesy, **21** rather examine everything. To what is good, hold fast. **22** Avoid every appearance of evil. **23** May the very God of peace sanctify you all wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Redeemer Jesus Christ. **24** The one who calls you is faithful and will do this.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Choral Alleluia

Sermon: "Coming from Gratitude"

Song: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (*UMH #89, tune: Ludwig van Beethoven / lyrics: Henry Van Dyke – adapted*)

Joyful, joyful, we adore (you),
God of glory, (source) of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before (you),
opening to the sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the storms of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.

All (your) works with joy surround (you),
earth and heaven reflect (your) rays,
stars and angels sing around (you),
center of unbroken praise.

Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain
(teach us what our praise should be).

(You) are giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living,
ocean depth of happy rest!
(God Creator, Christ our brother,
all who love belong to you);
teach us how to love each other,
(by that love our joy renew).

Mortals, join the mighty chorus
which the morning stars began;
love divine is reigning o'er us,
binding all within its span.
Ever singing, march we onward,
victors in the midst of strife,
joyful music leads us sunward
in the triumph song of life.

SHARING

Prayers of the People / Joys & Concerns

"Thanks be to God" or "God, hear our prayer"

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.

Communion / The Great Thanksgiving (Steve Garnaas-Holmes – adapted)

One: God is with you.

ALL: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to the Faithful One, our God.

ALL: It is good and beautiful to give God our praise.

One: God of Active Hope, we thank you, for out of the chaos you breathed Creation; out of the shadows of slavery you brought freedom; out of the tomb you raised Jesus and raise us all to new life. And now in the darkness we gather your light, we see your power at work, and we know you are near. Entering into the brokenness of our world, you transform and bring forth life. By many signs you awaken us to your coming.

Therefore we join with all those who long for new life, whose eyes are eagerly on the door of your grace: together with them, with the whole company of the heavens and with all of Creation, we rejoice at the promise of your coming, we sing your praise, and we join the unending hymn:

ALL SING (TFWS #2257-b, tune: Mark Miller / lyrics: UM Hymnal - adapted):

Holy, holy, holy (One); God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

Blest is the one who comes in the name of (our God).

Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

One: Blessed are all who come in your name, and blessed is Jesus, your Christ, the flesh of your presence and the light of your coming. Jesus loved the neglected and healed the broken, gathered the outcast and gave hope to the despairing. Jesus walked mile after mile in our shoes to show us another way, to bring heaven and earth together in love.

On the night ... And so as we break the bread and drink from the cup, we remember the love in and for which they were shared, the love in and for which Jesus came, the love in and for which Jesus always comes. We taste the same Spirit, we feast on the same promise and renew our commitment to follow the same path, as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

ALL SING (TFWS #2257-c, tune: Mark Miller / lyrics: UM Hymnal):
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.
Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

One: Stir up your Spirit now as we again join in this sacred meal. Awaken your Spirit in these gifts of bread and cup, tangible symbols of a love which not even death can deny. By your Spirit, make us to be your Body, your hands and feet and hearts in the world – transformed by your grace, grateful in your blessing, resilient in your hope, and confident in your coming. To your eternal glory and praise:

ALL SING (TFWS #2257-d, tune: Mark Miller / lyrics: UM Hymnal):
Amen. Amen. Amen.
Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

Sung Response: "Eat This Bread" (UMH #628, tune: Robert Batastini & Taizé Community / lyrics: Jacques Berthier)

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst.

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 marching in the light of God ...

Benediction

Singing Our Way Out: "Go Now in Peace" (UMH #665, Natalie Sleeth)

Go now in peace, go now in peace,
may the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere, you may go.

Calvary United Methodist Church

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