



GATHERING PRAYER:

Begin this Sunday's worship with a time of silence. Our lives are far noisier than wind, fire, or earthquake. In a great paradox, God speaks to us in sheer silence. Use this chance to listen as you pray.

Holy God of compassion and love, you invite us to see the world as you do. Lead us to see others with your love, even our “enemies,” and transform our words and deeds to be like our Lord and Savior’s, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

PASTORAL WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY:

- ❖ God does not love us because we are valuable. We are valuable because God loves us. – *Fulton J. Sheen*
- ❖ God loves you so much that God was willing to die to save you... and God loves everyone the way that God loves you. - *unknown*

MEDITATION MUSIC FOR ADVENT: *If In Your Heart*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: Grace granted

All: Forgiveness received

One: A word spoken,

All: A voice heard,

One: A dream revealed,

All: A mission received.

One: God calls

All: Again and again.

One: God beckons us

All: To follow,

One: To love,

All: To serve,

One: To give.

All: Again and again

One: God invites us

All: To embrace the lonely,

One: To feed the hungry,

All: To tell the Good News of Jesus,

One: Light of the world, help us see all these people you love.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. - John 3:16-17

SONG: Light One Candle to Watch For Messiah, verse 4
(music at end of bulletin)

OUR CONFESSION PRAYER:

God of Light and Life, we are all born blind. We look upon the world with eyes of fear and prejudice, deceiving ourselves into believing that we can see. Help us to recognize our blindness and to ask for your healing touch. Restore our vision, that we may see the world with the compassionate eyes of Christ. Amen.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

One: God has claimed us and will not let us go. There is no one, there is no thing that can keep God from forgiving us, loving us, healing us and helping us grow.

**All: Loved, we can love the unlovable;
graced, we can be a blessing to others;
forgiven, we can forgive those who have hurt us.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

CONFESSION RESPONSE: From God's Heart (music at end of bulletin)

THE LESSONS:

I John 4:7-11, 20-21

My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love - so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God

sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about - not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God. My dear, dear friends, if God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other.

If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both.

MESSAGE: ***"Preparing Your Heart to Welcome God's Child"***

MESSAGE RESPONSE: ***There is No Child So Small***

THE PRAYERS

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.

THE SENDING OUT:

Leader: As we move toward Christmas, may we walk with a new vision, new insight, and renewed faith which will enable us to see more clearly God's presence at work in our world and in our lives together. May we see a sibling in the eyes of everyone we meet. Through Christ our Lord.

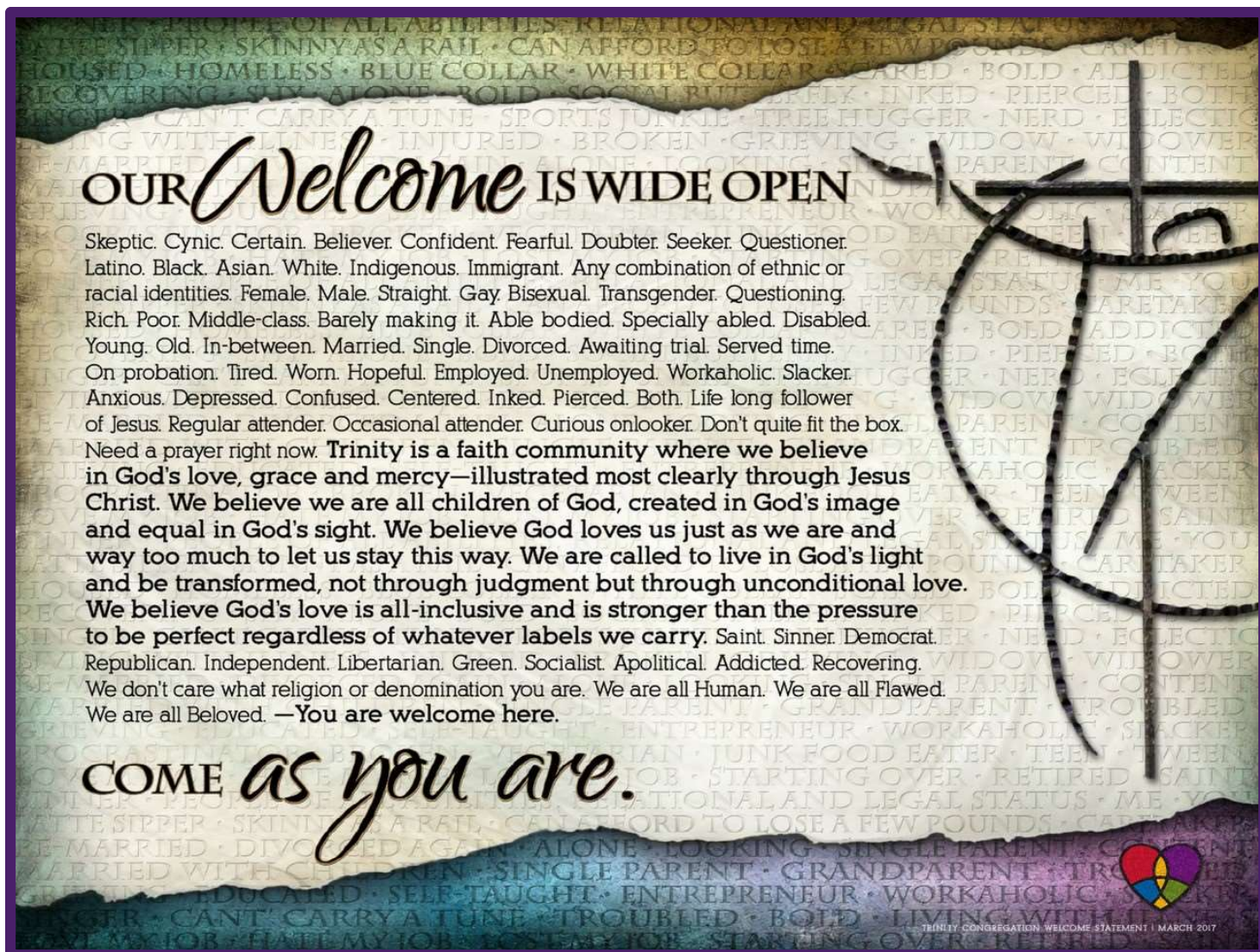
People: Amen.

THE SENDING SONG: ***All Through the Night*** (music at end of bulletin)

THE DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.



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Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah 240



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.

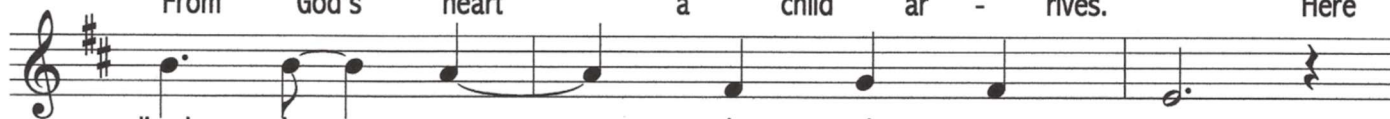


He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
 He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
 Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
 He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

From God's Heart



May our words and what we do be
 In - to re - this hun - gry vio - lent place your
 Grace re - vealed for a child ar - rives. good
 From God's heart a child ar - rives. Here



lived in grat - i - tude to you.
 word's in for ev' - ry tribe and race.
 news for for poor bounds of ev' - ry kind.
 hope a - bounds and joy a - bides.



Em - man - ue - el - love has come
 Let love in - crease, let ha - tred fall.
 The low raised up, the rich - brought low
 - God with us - in the night.



in an un - ex - pect - ed low - ly one.
 Be peace on earth, good will to all.
 so a - bun - dant life the world may know.
 Glo - ry to the One who brings the light.

All Through the Night

1. Go, my friends, and hope de - fend you all through the night.
 2. Walk the streets and bus - y high - ways all through the night.
 3. Wash the feet of friend and strang - er all through the night.

May she peace and cour - age send you all through the night.
 Trudge the dark and lone - ly by - ways all through the night.
 Shel - ter in the time of dan - ger all through the night.

May she ev - er stand be - side you, in her lov - ing
 Touch the sor - row and the sad - ness, dance with those who
 In your lives is grace a - bound - ing. Love and light the

kind - ness hide you. Through the treach - 'rous dark - ness guide you
 long for glad - ness. Be the com - fort in the mad - ness
 night con - found - ing. In your souls the song is sound - ing

all through the night.
 all through the night.
 all through the night.