

Outline Dec. 13 2020, Woodstock Presbyterian Church

Those Who Dream... sow joy

Advent is traditionally a time for the Church to prepare and re-center itself, but also to get lost in the Dream of a Messiah. The Word of scripture and our liturgical tradition bring us together in anticipation Christ's arrival and indwelling – both as a child and as the Savior of the world. This gathering has often taken the form of physical togetherness, but always has been, more importantly, spiritual. Together, we share the common threads of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Out of Love, our Advent experiences will likely remain at a distance this year, but nothing can separate us from our collective anticipation. As we worship together in Spirit, we join the Dream. We dare to dream fierce, brave new dreams for God's world. +Pastor Kate



“Contours of Mary’s Dream”, by Lauren Wright Pittman

Time for Reflection

“Those who Dream”, The Many

*There’s so much sorrow here. So much shame and hurt and fear. And there’s grief.
Feels like the ache is never ending...*

The night is long. Can’t find sleep. Where has peace gone. It’s so hard to breathe.

*It’s time to have fierce dreams, like Mary did. Brave dreams like Joseph did. New
dreams, like Jesus did. ‘Cause those who dream change everything.*

Those who dream change everything.

Don’t have the words to pray. There’s no comfort, no joy today. Where is love?

We long to see a new beginning.

The night is long. Can’t find sleep. Where has peace gone. It’s so hard to breathe.

*It’s time to have fierce dreams, like Mary did. Brave dreams like Joseph did. New
dreams, like Jesus did. ‘Cause those who dream change everything.*

Those who dream change everything.

*Seeds grow in the dark. Oh Hope’s born in the dark. Oh. Dreams start in the dark. So
don’t give up. Don’t give up. It’s time to have fierce dreams, like Mary did. Brave
dreams like Joseph did. New dreams, like Jesus did. ‘Cause those who dream change
everything. Those who dream change everything.*

Welcome

One Candle Liturgy – Joy

Light a candle in your worship space a read out loud:

Light one candle for joy.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,
but our joy cannot be contained.

Like a toddler, toppling the thrones of power with a gleeful swipe,
Joy pierces our silence with song
interrupts our sighing with laughter
unshackles our fumbling feet to dance.

“My soul magnifies the Lord,” she whispers,
“and my Spirit rejoices in God my savior.”

So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
Christ with us.

Children's Moment

Hymn

Reading – Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;^[a]
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,

so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Prayer of Confession

**O Great Writer,
With a sky full of stars and a world full of flowers, there should be no end to
my joy. And yet, instead of decorating my very being with joy, I let it slip
away like loose change. Instead of singing like Mary, or dancing like David,
I pass by remarkable beauty and love most days, unfazed.**

Forgive me.

**Teach me the ways of children, who laugh and dance and sing as if joy is the
very thing that keeps them alive. Maybe they have joy figured out.
Gratefully we pray, amen.**

Reading – Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶ And Mary^[a] said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his 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 his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Message

Offering

Friends, let us dedicate what we have to God's Dream...

Let us pray:

Lord, We give you thanks and praise for all we receive. We offer what we have, our treasures, talents, and time, to You. May our lives be a joy to you and to others. Amen.

Charge & Benediction - "All in All", by Sarah Are

**It takes strength to dream.
I imagine it's that same strength that leads
people to say, "I love you" first,
Those three vulnerable words,
Wrapped in heart strings,
Whispered,
Because what could be
Is too good to keep quiet about.**

**It takes strength to choose joy.
It takes strength to push the covers
Off our weary bodies morning after morning,
To plant weary feet on solid ground,
And look for signs of beauty.**

**It takes strength to remember that
we are not alone,
But the story starts with bone of bone and
flesh of flesh.
That feels like so long ago.**

**Oh yes,
It takes strength to dream.
I imagine that's why many choose not to,
For it would be far easier to simply sleep.
But there are always those who dream,
Those who are up at night picturing
what could be,
Because this world is too good not to.**

**So we say, "I love you."
We push the covers off.
We find solid ground.
We look for beauty.
And we dream.**

We dare to dream.

Sending Song – “Hope Waits for Us”

Hope waits for us at Advent. Hope waits for us to trust.
Hope waits for our commitment to a land that’s kind and just.
In this time of preparation for the work of co-creation,
For the birthing of a world that heals the ones in pain,
Hope is born in us again.

Peace waits for us at Advent. Peace waits for us to rest.
Peace waits for our acceptance of the truth that we are blessed.
In this time of preparation for the work of co-creation,
For the birthing of a world of gentleness and play,
Peace is born in us each day.

Joy waits for us at Advent. Joy waits for us to sing.
Joy waits for our amazement at the grace in everything.
In this time of preparation for the work of co-creation,
For the birthing of a world where wonder is restored,
Joy is born in us once more.

-Much Thanks-

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Those who Dream liturgy – A Sanctified Art

One Candle liturgy - Karen Ware Jackson, 2020 – Permission is granted for home and congregational use.

Hope Waits for Us at Advent

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