

## Advent @ Home Dec. 20 2020, Woodstock Presbyterian Church

### Those Who Dream... are not alone

*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*



A Dream Confirmed, by Lisle Gwynn Garrity, inspired by Luke 1:26-45

## 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

### Call to Worship

One: I knew joy, but when I heard the laugh of my child,

**All: Suddenly, joy was overflowing.**

One: I knew love, but when you held my hand,

**All: Suddenly, love was overflowing.**

One: I knew God, but when you showed me grace,

when you forgave me,

when you loved me,

when you raised me,

**All: Suddenly, God was overflowing.**

One: So, let us worship Holy God together

As a reminder that God is here and we are never alone.

**All: This is community.**

One: This is the body of Christ.

**All: Welcome home.**

## One Candle Liturgy – Love – Vicky & Kaleb

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

Light one candle for love.  
Because the world is broken and the wait is long,  
but love never ends.  
Love faithfully goes about the work of  
casting out fear  
speaking truth  
healing the deepest wounds  
crossing the divide from this world to the next and back again.  
“Here i am,” she whispers,  
“the servant of the Lord.”  
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:  
Christ with us.

**Children’s Moment – *Little People, Big Dreams: Corazon Aquino* by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara, illustrated by Ginnie Hsu**

**Hymn – Hark the Herald Angels Sing**

**Reading – 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16**

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

<sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders<sup>[a]</sup> of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” <sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I

appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

<sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me;<sup>[a]</sup> your throne shall be established forever.

### Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

*God, you lift up the lowly and fill the hungry with good things.  
You supplant ruthless competition with generosity in which all have enough.  
You envision a world in which the humiliated  
are restored to their rightful place as bearers of your image. I*

*n this season of Advent,  
help us discern the places where you are coming to us to repair  
and renew your good but broken creation.  
By the power of your Spirit at work in our lives,  
liberate us from chronic selfishness and self-negation  
so that we might discover our capacities for compassion and the pursuit of justice.  
Help us to see ourselves and others as bearers of your image  
— as people who shine like the sun.  
Help us also to live according to your Great Commandment:  
to love you with our whole being, and to love others as ourselves.  
Help us to trust that your future is struggling toward realization even now in our  
midst. Empower us for solidarity with all who have been marginalized in our world,  
whose voices have been suppressed.  
Give us ears to hear their hopes and fears so that together we might restore your  
world on the foundation of the justice you intend for us in Christ.  
Into your hands we place those who weigh heavily upon our hearts this week:  
those facing violence in their neighborhoods and countries;  
healthcare and frontline workers who are serving selflessly during this pandemic;  
those experiencing loss during this time  
— loss of loved ones, loss of health, loss of income, loss of security;  
leaders who are discerning new ways forward and plans for how to help those they  
govern in this challenging time;  
congregations and ministries who are now finding new ways to worship and serve  
during this Advent season;  
and for all those we name in these moments of silence.*

*We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray saying,  
Our Father...*

## Reading – Luke 1:26-45

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."<sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"<sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born<sup>36</sup> will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

### Mary Visits Elizabeth

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be<sup>46</sup> a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

**Message –** *Those who Dream... are not alone.*

### Affirmation of Faith

**We believe that this world is hard—  
Harder than it has to be.  
When the world falls apart around us,  
We believe in listening for the angels that say,  
"Do not be afraid,"  
And in seeking out the Elizabeths in our lives—**

**Those who laugh with joy at our arrival  
And throw open the doors to their homes.**

**We believe that healthy relationships can offer healing,  
Through the laughter of cousins,  
The joy shared between siblings,  
And the home found in partnership.**

**Therefore, we believe in church families,  
In chosen families,  
And in the love that extends beyond family.**

**We believe in friendships,  
In neighbors,  
And in leaning on each other when the going gets tough.**

**We believe in the Triune God—  
Lover, Beloved, and Love itself—  
Inherently relational, always connected, and never alone.**

**We believe that that same belovedness exists for us.  
We believe that we are loved and claimed,  
Never alone.  
Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

**Offering – Christmas Joy**

**Benediction**

**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.

Love waits for us at Advent. Love waits for us to care.  
Love waits for our compassion, freely offered, fully shared.  
In this time of preparation for the work of co-creation,  
For the birthing of a world where faith shapes all we do,  
Love is born in us anew.

## Postlude – Heartstrings Dulcimer Group

Thanks you:

Irene Mertens, Vicky Germroth & Kaleb, Carolina Rascoe, Lori Staley

Credits:

Prayers adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org).

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