



DOUGLAS UCC
A JUST WORLD FOR ALL

Order of Service for Sunday, December 17, 2023

3rd Sunday of Advent: Joy

Thank you for joining us today.

For Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Prayer List, [visit this week's E-Pistle here](#), where you can also subscribe to receive it by email, if you like.

***- stand if you wish to, and are able.**

Congregational Responses in Bold

Prelude *Deep River*

Peter Black

(Please use this time for quiet reflection and preparation for worship)

Welcome & Announcements

Lighting of Altar Candles & Ringing in the Hour

Let us recognize the light of the world within us and ring in the hour of worship.

Introit (please stand) *Lighting of Advent Candle*

*A candle is burning, a candle of Joy;
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder our eyes light and glow,
as Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.*

Call to Worship

Isaiah 12:2-6

Reader: Stan Greene

One: Surely God is my refuge; I will trust and will not be afraid;

Many: For God is my strength and my might; God has become my rescue.

One: With joy, I draw water from the inner well of liberty.

Many: With joy, I give thanks to God and call upon God's name.

One: I sing praises to God, for God has done glorious things in me;

Many: Let this be known in all the earth. Make known God's deeds among the nations.

One: Let us shout aloud and sing with great joy;

Many: For great in our midst is the Holy One. Rejoice, for God is near.

Opening Hymn *You Have Anointed Me*

(Green Gather Hymnal No.676)

See music at the end of this document

Unison Prayer

Induction of New Members

God who calls, thank you for the people who have listened to your call to become members of Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ. Send your Holy Spirit upon them and empower them to be instruments of light and peace in the world. May we uphold and support them as they dedicate themselves this day to our church community, and may all of us remain open to your call which continues throughout our lives. Amen.

Assurance of Grace and Peace

One: Peace be with you.

Many: ***And also with you.***

One: Let us offer one another a sign of Peace.

Passing the Peace

Lord, Listen to Your Children

*Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord send your spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*

(repeat after verse)

Words of Integration & Guidance

Rev. Kathryn M. Matthew, UCC Pastor

There are undoubtedly many folks in our pews this week who are beginning to wonder about this whole season of Advent. The contrast between the tenor of our lectionary readings and the mood of the holidays is stark: the baby is already in the manger of many Nativity sets, the decorations are already hung, and Christmas carols are in the air. Why, then, is the church making us listen (two weeks in a row!) to stories about John the Baptist? This wide-eyed preacher in the wilderness boldly proclaimed a message of challenge and exhortation. In his day, the powers-that-be had arranged a world based on empire, with those at the top grabbing the lion's share of power and material wealth for themselves. However, it wasn't just the Roman Empire that experienced his wrath, but the religious institutions also felt the sting of John's rebuke, for things were all out-of-whack, they had gone awry, or, as Richard Swanson so evocatively puts it, the world was being held "upside-down" by the ones on top. John calls the people to prepare for what they had been waiting for all these years: that change was coming, that the Light was on its way. And, to prepare for its arrival, John gives the people simple instructions: "Don't hoard. Share with one another. Be fair. Don't fight. Be kind to one another." The heart of his message is that basic goodness and justice will knock the supports out from under every upside-down, oppressive structure and system that we've built. Many of us today are overwhelmed by the magnitude of world events which seem as large and powerful to us as the Roman Empire must have seemed to Jewish peasants. John's sermon about personal generosity and social justice should call each and every one of us today to prepare ourselves for the new world that is on its way. That is the hope that sustains us, the vision toward which we work, and the good news which we proclaim. Is it no wonder then that we live in joy, as well?

Shouts of Joy

The Words of Holy Scripture

One: A Reading of Scripture from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Lesson

One: The Holy Gospel according to John 1:6-8, 19-28

Many: Glory to you, O Christ.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

"John & Jesus"

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza

Offering

& Offertory Song

I Choose Joy

Pamela Chappell & Pete Wehle

Composer: Teri Wilder

Joys & Concerns/Tibetan Prayer Bell

One: Thanks be to God!

Many: Alleluia!

One: O God,

Many: Hear our prayer.

***Doxology**

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God for all that love has done.

Creator Christ and Spirit One.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, O come to us Emmanuel.

***Celebration of Holy Communion**

One: God be with you.

Many: *And also with you.*

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: *We lift them up to God.*

One: Let us give thanks to God.

Many: *It is good to give God thanks & praise*

***Creation's Praise** *Sanctus for Advent*

*Holy, Holy, God Almighty.
Heav'n and earth your praises sing!
Shout Hosannas to the Savior.
Blessing, honor to the king!
In the name of the Lord, the bearer of light,
triumphs o'er the dark of night,
evermore and ever more!
(Please be seated)*

Breaking of the Bread *This is the Body of Christ*

*This is the body of Christ.
Broken that we may be whole;
this cup as promised by God,
true to the Word, cradles our Lord.
Food for the good of the soul.*

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

(grape juice only on both sides of the aisle)

Receive the Bread of Life. *Amen.*

The Cup of Love, the Drink of Compassion. *Amen.*

***The Lord's Prayer**

(Aramaic Translation)

O Birther! Father- Mother of the Cosmos, focus your light within us - make it useful. Create your reign of unity now - through our fiery hearts and willing hands. Help us love beyond our ideals and sprout acts of compassion for all creatures. Animate the earth within us: we then feel the Wisdom underneath supporting all. Untangle the knots within so that we can mend our hearts' simple ties to each other. Don't let surface things delude us, but free us from what holds us back from our true purpose. Out of you, the astonishing fire, we return light and sound to the Cosmos. Amen.

***Hymn of Sending**

Canticle of the Turning

(Green Gather Hymnal No.556)

(Find Music at the end of this program)

***Benediction**

Postlude

Joyful Day

Peter Black

Keep up with the Douglas UCC community
and the work of our service groups here:

www.douglasucc.org

<https://www.youtube.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.facebook.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.instagram.com/douglasucc>

676 You Have Anointed Me

Verse 1



1. To bring glad tid - ings to the low - ly, to



heal the bro - ken heart, You have a - noint - ed me.



To pro - claim lib - er - ty to cap - tives, re -



lease to pris - on - ers, You have a - noint - ed me.

Refrain



Your Spir - it, O God, is up - on me,



You have a - noint - ed me.

Verse 2



2. To an - nounce a year of fa - vor, to



com - fort those who mourn, You have a - noint - ed



me. To give to them the oil of glad - ness, and

MISSION / MINISTRY

share a man-tle of joy, You have a - noint - ed me.

The musical notation is on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). A triplet bracket is placed over the first three notes (G4, A4, B4). The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction 'D.S.'.

Text: Mike Balhoff, b.1946, Gary Daigle, b.1957, Darryl Ducote, b.1945
Tune: Mike Balhoff, b.1946, Gary Daigle, b.1957, Darryl Ducote, b.1945; acc. by Gary Daigle, b.1945
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556 Canticle of the Turning

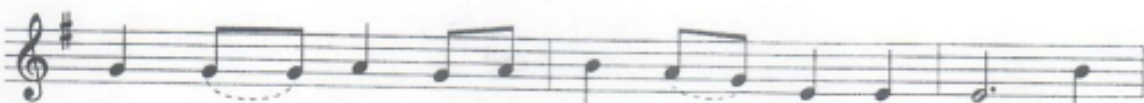
Verses



1. My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3. From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4. Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



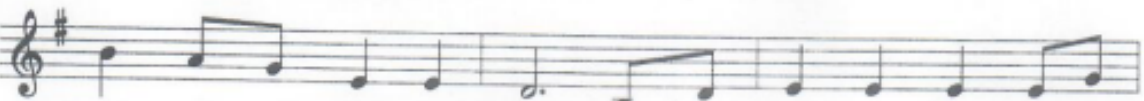
God of my heart is great, And my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, And your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



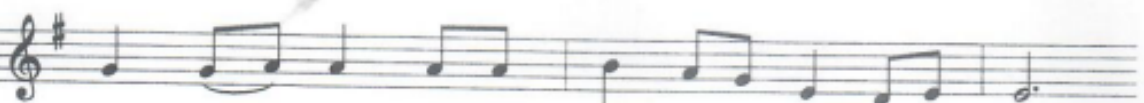
won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant from his throne. The
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp. This



fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, So from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, You will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; There are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, 'Til the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

PRAISE

Refrain



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the



fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the



dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn!

Text: Luke 1:46-58; Rory Cooney, b.1952
Tune: STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN; Irish traditional; arr. by Rory Cooney, b.1952
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