



The Second Sunday of Advent

December 4, 2022 – 8:15 & 10:35 – Worship Guide

Co-Pastors: Rev. Ron Harris and Rev. Karla Sheffy

Worship Accompanist: Sue Woods

Ministry of Music: (8:15) Jubilee Ringers / (10:35) Jubilee Ringers (Prelude/Postlude)

Children's Christmas Program (10:35)

Acolytes: Esther Henrikson & Evelyn Henrikson

Reflecting the Sacred

Sacred People (Love)

Gathering Video

Welcome: Rev. Karla Sheffy

The shiny trimmings to our Advent and Christmas visuals remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we will remember the call to shine with this holy light.

**Prelude (8:15 and 10:35)
Acolytes (10:35)**

"Sing We Now of Christmas"

Jubilee Ringers

Threshold: Rev. Karla Sheffy

This year as we approach Christmas, what if we saw the presence of the holy in all that has been, is, and always will be—right here—reflected in and through everything and everyone around us? I want to invite us to spend some quiet time at the beginning of each of our Advent and Christmas worship experiences to soften our focus on life. To blur the hard edges of our lives. Let us settle into God's love and learn to love as God does. May we look at life through the reflections of our Sacred Christ.

I invite you to get comfortable where you are sitting. I invite you to open your hands upward in your lap. Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so and take a deep, intentional breath in and out. If it is difficult to get your mind to quiet down, it's OK. Don't judge it... just take another breath and let all your "to-do lists" and plans go for just a moment. That's it. Take time to settle in.

Bring to your mind's eye—to your memory and imagination—a very familiar person's face that you love. What is it about them that warms your heart? Imagine particles of light emanating from them, and let your memory move to an encounter when you felt this love and light extended from them to you. Now imagine the refracted light showering them, as if a prism has just lit up the surface of the walls and their own skin. As you see this scene, let their face fade and change, and in their place for just a moment see someone you struggle to love, or someone you've seen but do not know well. If you can, let the same reflection of light emanate and shower this

person. Let it be an anointing of love on this person, made possible because the Christ light is the gift we all have to give, whether we feel able to or not. Continue to just breathe, listen, and see with your heart.

Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.
And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.
[music continues to underscore]

Take one more deep breath and open your eyes slowly, as we move to our Advent Wreath Celebration.
For those worshipping online, you are invited to light your candle.

Advent Wreath Celebration—

Readers: Please repeat after me [us]:

*We pray for Love this day.
We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.
We open to see each person
as a gift of holy presence.
This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,
lighting the way to love.*

**We pray for Love this day.
We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.
We open to see each person
as a gift of holy presence.
This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,
lighting the way to love.**

Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.
And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.

*Leader:
Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Love,
we give you thanks for this holy gathering of Beloveds.
As we take in the love you offer,
may we be a reflection of your light,
expanding the sacred presence you have promised
into the sacred presence we can offer.
Amen.*

Hymn

“People Look East”

UMH 202

(10:35) Children's Christmas Program

(8:15) Refracting the Sacred: Rev. Karla Sheffy

As light passes through a medium, it can be redirected in ways that make its brilliance more visible, as in a prism. As we encounter the message today, we see the world and our own lives and loved ones in a different light, one that invites us to know more deeply the sacred nature of all things.

(8:15) Scripture: Romans 15:4-13 (NRSVUE)

⁴For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant

you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors ⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰ and again he says,
“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹ and again,
“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹² and again Isaiah says,
“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(8:15) HYMN **“Help Us Accept Each Other”** **UMH 560**

(8:15) Sermon **“Sacred People”** **Rev. Ron Harris**

(8:15 and 10:35) Prayers: Rev. Karla Sheffy
Hymn *“Emmanuel”* *UMH 204*

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us,
his name is called Emmanuel.**

Pastoral Prayer / Lord’s Prayer: Rev. Karla Sheffy

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
his name is called Emmanuel
God with us, revealed in us,
his name is called Emmanuel.**

Responding in Gratitude for God’s Gifts with our Gifts– Rev. Karla Sheffy

Invitation

Doxology To the Tune of “What Child Is This” UMH 219

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God all heavens and the earth
reflecting the sacred story.**

**This, this is Christ the One
who mirrors love for all of us.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Word of time eternal.**

Prayer of Dedication

Hymn

“Love Has Come”

W&S 3059

(tune: Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella)

***Sharing Opportunities: Rev. Karla Sheffy**

I hope you had the opportunity last week to let the act of anointing with oil or lotion ritualize the marking of meaningful moments... of seeing Time as Sacred. As we consider Sacred People this week, I want to invite you to use the oil or lotion in a couple of different ways, of course whatever you are comfortable with. Each morning as you look in the mirror while getting ready for your day, consider anointing yourself as you remember that you are a reflection of the sacred. If you live with others and they are comfortable with it, take one point during the week to anoint one another and to celebrate the ways that you reflect the sacred to each other. And—this is the harder one—whenever you encounter someone that you just cannot yet see their reflection as sacred—either in person or in the news, or other situation—just take a moment in your imagination to envision the anointing, or the emanating light like in our opening contemplative time, to cover them and pray a little prayer for Christ to open a way to get through them and open your eyes to see them in a different way eventually.

***Blessing: Rev. Ron Harris**

**Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise.**

Recessional Music
(8:15 & 10:35 am)

“Ding Dong! Merrily on High”

Jubilee Ringers