

THE MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Rev. Ben Wingard, Pastor
The Third Sunday of Advent
The Sunday of Joy
December 11, 2011

Reflect silently preparing your hearts for worship

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Wingard

Striking of the Hour

Prelude

Organist

Call to Worship

"Still, Still, Still"

Responsive Call To Worship

L The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

P And also with you.

L Come once more, with eager longing, to receive the promises of God.

P Out of the desert places of our lives we gather with joy and gladness.

L Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.

P Our God has promised that lonely places and deserts will be glad and blossom as the rose.

L The Lord has promised that the blind will be able to see, the deaf will hear, the lame will leap and dance, and those who cannot speak will shout for joy.

P Our God, who made heaven and earth and all that is in them, keeps faith forever. He sets the prisoners free and brings healing to all who seek Him.

L The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down and watches over strangers. He upholds the orphan and the widow.

THE CANDLES OF ADVENT: HOPE — PEACE — JOY— LOVE

During each of the Sundays of Advent, we begin our services with the lighting of the Advent Wreath

The candle lighting litany includes the Prayer of Invocation for the day and is followed by the singing of "A Candle Is Burning" with the congregation.

"A Candle Is Burning" is an Advent song written by Sandra Dean (copyright 1986). The tune is "Away in A Manger." The words are reproduced here with permission as is the litany which is the copyright of Reverend Robert Fairchild.

Folk sometimes ask about the Advent Candle Wreath itself and what it means.

The wreath is of course a circle reminding us of the perfection and eternity of God. Many wreaths are decorated with evergreen branches.

The evergreen, like the circle, is a symbol of eternity but also of life. Holly is sometimes used instead of evergreen. The sharp points of the leaves of the holly remind us of Christ's crown of thorns. The red berries remind us of his blood. There is a story that holly berries were white until Christ's blood fell on them causing them to be red ever since.

