

# A CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

## The Third Sunday of Advent

December 16, 2007

8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

\*All who are able may stand.

**Bold type spoken by the congregation**

### GATHERING. . .

The Prelude

The Welcome and Announcements

The Introit

*"The Snow Lay on the Ground"*  
Covenant Choir

Vicky H. Wright, arr.

The Call To Worship

...This is the season of holy waiting.  
**We wait for the time when the desert will bloom abundantly.**  
We watch for the day when all God's people will come together with singing.  
**We wait while the dawning light appears on the horizon.**  
Let us walk in the light of the Lord!  
**Come Lord Jesus!**

The Prayer of Praise

**Mighty One, we rejoice that You strengthen our weak hands and make firm our feeble knees. You open our eyes and unstop our ears. You meet our hungers with good things. You disturb our false pride while helping us discover our true strength. You topple us from our pretensions while lifting up the lowly to claim the inner power You alone can provide. We have assembled to worship You. Awaken the gladness that comes when we recognize Your presence. All praise and honor, glory and blessing be to You the One Eternal God – Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all. Amen.**

\*The Hymn 13

*"Prepare the Way"*

\*The Prayer of Confession

**We are patient with the wrong things, Eternal God, and we endure what should not be tolerated. We bow gladly to vogues and fashions, yet refuse to stand steadfastly for justice. We indulge the wealthy in riches, yet abide the poor in hunger and poverty. While You watch over strangers, we often barely see them at all. Always alert to changes that threaten our own welfare, we close our eyes to possibilities of a new day. We have waited long enough. It is time to repent of our misplaced patience, and live rejoicing in Your patience with us. Have mercy on us in Jesus' name. . . (time for silent confession).**

\*The Choral Response

\*The Assurance of Pardon

God's word of forgiveness always comes to us at the right time.

**It's worth the wait.**

The heart of all our waiting is knowing this:

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Alleluia. Amen.**

\*The Gloria Patri

p. 579 in the Hymnal

\*The Peace and Greeting

The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you!**  
(Please exchange this ancient greeting with worshippers seated near you.  
Please stand to greet one another in the name of Christ.)

TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD. . .

The Prayer for Illumination

The Old Testament Lesson: *Isaiah 35:1-10* p. 811 in the pew Bible

The Psalter Hymn 600 "Song of Mary"

The Anthem (11:00 am) "Mary Had a Baby"  
Carol Choir

A Moment With the Children

\*The Hymn 1 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

The Epistle Lesson: *James 5:7-10* p. 280 in the pew Bible

The Anthem "And the Glory of the Lord" from *Messiah* G. F. Handel

The Gospel Lesson: *Matthew 11:2-11* p. 13 in the pew Bible

The Sermon "Tired of Waiting?"  
Allen H. Fisher, Jr.

TO RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD. . .

\*The *Apostles' Creed* p. 14 in the Hymnal

The Prayers of Thanksgiving  
The Lord's Prayer p. 16 in the Hymnal

The Service of Offering  
The Gathering of Our Gifts

The Offertory

\*The Doxology and Prayer of Dedication

**Majestic God, thank you for inviting us to share the blessings you pour out on us. We want to extend the healing ministry of Jesus who gave sight to those who were blind and new insight to some who only pretended to see. Use our resources to heal attitudes as well as bodies, to bring wholeness, not just cures. Embolden us to address the inequities of the earth that leave so many without food or shelter or hope. Lead us into your realm in the midst of our daily living. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

TO GO FORTH AND SERVE IN GOD'S NAME.

\*The Hymn 3 "Comfort, Comfort You My People"

\*The Charge & Benediction

\*Postlude