

Online Gathering for Worship  
Junction City United Methodist Church  
December 20, 2020

Advent 4: "The Steadfastness of Love"

**Opening**

**Prelude** "Prepare the Way of the Lord" - Nathaniel Cabanero  
(used with permission)

**Advent Welcome**

**Opening Song** "In the Bleak Midwinter" - Susan Boyle

Opening to the Spirit's Instruction

**First Scripture Reading**

**Psalm 89:1-4, 8-11**

- I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;  
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.
- <sup>2</sup> I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;  
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.
- <sup>3</sup> You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,  
I have sworn to my servant David:
- <sup>4</sup> 'I will establish your descendants forever,  
and build your throne for all generations.'"
- <sup>19</sup> Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:  
"I have set the crown on one who is mighty,  
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
- <sup>20</sup> I have found my servant David;  
with my holy oil I have anointed him;
- <sup>21</sup> my hand shall always remain with him;

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- my arm also shall strengthen him.
- <sup>22</sup> The enemy shall not outwit him,  
the wicked shall not humble him.
- <sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him  
and strike down those who hate him.
- <sup>24</sup> My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;  
and in my name his horn shall be exalted.
- <sup>25</sup> I will set his hand on the sea  
and his right hand on the rivers.
- <sup>26</sup> He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father,  
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!'

**Second Reading, taken from the Gospel According to Luke  
1:46b-55**

And Mary said,  
"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the  
Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his  
arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has  
brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

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He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

*May God’s Spirit speak to us today through these words of Scripture,  
the music we sing and hear, and the message shared this day.*

Song “He Came Down” - Concordia College Choirs

Sermon Greater Northwest Advent Series: “Love” - Guest Preacher  
Cote Soerens

Song “I Wonder as I Wander” - The Darkeyed Musician

**Prayers for Our World and One Another**

Let us enter now into a time of prayer for one another and for our world. We will do what is called a Bidding Prayer. I will open, and then I will bid your prayers based around various categories. During the silence after each category is bid, I invite you to add your own prayers, either aloud or in silence. I will then close with a prayer, then the Lord’s Prayer. Let us be in prayer.

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Let us pray now for all who are ill, in hospital or at home, especially those affected by cancer or COVID-19.

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Let us pray now for all medical and emergency services personnel who are responding to the best of their abilities with the resources that they have at hand.

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Let us pray now for all those who are hungry or food insecure, and for all community and religious efforts to provide food and shelter.

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Let us pray for all who are still displaced from their homes, and those who have no home.

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Let us pray for the leaders of nations around the world, not only regarding their response to this pandemic, but also that they may do everything possible to assure the health and welfare of their citizens.

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Let us pray for all school and college governing boards, administrations and staff, all faculty, and students as they work to offer appropriate and equitable education in a manner that protects the health and safety of all persons.

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Let us pray for our friends, family, and neighbors for their health and well-being.

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Let us also express our thanks to God for the expressions of love and caring that we have witnessed in our families, communities, and world.

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Let us express our gratitude for life and the myriad things that gladden our hearts.

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These prayers, spoken aloud or in silence, we lift into the universal embrace of the One who is Love, and we make them in the name of the One who showed us what Love looks like in the flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, and we now join our voices in the prayer he taught us, saying:

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**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen**

**Prayer Response** "Wait for the Lord" – Taizé - Emmaus Music

**Benediction** "Advent Blessing,"

In the midst of darkness, be like candles shining forth in hope.

**Come, Lord Jesus, fill our hearts anew!**

In the midst of darkness, illuminate the way with peace..

**Come, Lord Jesus, fill our hearts anew!**

In the midst of darkness, dance to the promise of joy.

**Come, Lord Jesus, fill our hearts anew!**

In the midst of darkness, let your bowl of love be filled to overflowing.

**Come, Lord Jesus, fill our hearts anew!**

In the midst of darkness, go forth to be the light of Christ.

**Glory to God in the highest! Alleluia! Amen.**

**Closing Song** "Come, Oh Redeemer, Come" – Fernando Ortega

**Closing Credits**