



First United Methodist Church of Torrance Online Church in Worship

December 10, 2023

PRELUDE - Hani

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Thomas Helmore

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WELCOME

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Family 1: In days when God's people longed for peace, Isaiah declared, "Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins"

(Isaiah 40:1).

Family 2: We who gather today also seek comfort and peace, yet we are unsatisfied with ideas of peace that tell us to keep quiet and go with the flow. We long for real peace, true peace, just peace.

Congregation: We wait as people who yearn for peace that bears the fruit of community, equity, and flourishing for all.

Family 1: We light these candles as signs of God's shocking hope and just peace. May they be beacons calling us to repent and to live the good news of Jesus Christ as we wait and watch and labor for the day when all people can gather together to worship and glorify God. Amen.

(Light the first two candles of the Advent wreath.)

OPENING HYMN #213 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
behold, the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here!

2. Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

3. Redeemer, come, with us abide;
our hearts to thee we open wide;
let us thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in us reveal.

4. Thy Holy Spirit lead us on
until our glorious goal is won;
eternal praise, eternal fame
be offered, Savior, to thy name!

Lift Up Your Heads Ye Mighty Gates
Catherine Winkworth | Georg Weissel
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PASTOR'S TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

JOYS AND CONCERNS / PASTORAL PRAYER / LORD'S PRAYER

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, the power, and glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING

For those who are called and able, gifts and tithes can still be made through [online giving](#), by mailing them in, and by dropping them off to the church office through the secure mail slot to the left of the double door entry to the church hallway.

OFFERTORY MUSIC - Richard and Marshall

Panis Angelicus, from "Mess à trois voix"
César Franck
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ADVENT DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow
Louis Bourgeois | Thomas Ken | Dean McIntyre
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OFFERTORY PRAYER

Almighty God, we enter this season from a chaotic world filled with violence, division, and injustice. We hear your prophet Isaiah promising comfort—then John the Baptist calling us to construction projects. We are reminded we are called to prepare the way, to be the designers of peace, the builders of justice, the producers of kindness. As we bring our tithes and offerings to you, we pray that our giving continues to point to the Christ who comes in love and compassion. May our giving in this season reflect our hope for the promised kin-dom to reign in our world. We pray this in the name of the Messiah, Jesus our Savior. Amen.

(Mark 1:1-8)

SCRIPTURE Matthew 11:2-11 (NRSV)

2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples 3 and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” 4 Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. 6 And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9 What then did you go out to see? A prophet? a Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Response

The Word of the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

Anthem – Chancel Choir**The King Shall Come**

Trevor Thomson | Vocal Arr. by Scott Soper

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SERMON – Rev. Jacob Lee

No Such Thing As Coincidence

CLOSING HYMN #383 *This Is a Day of New Beginnings* (v. 1, 2, 4)

1. This is a day of new beginnings,
time to remember and move on,
time to believe what love is bringing,
laying to rest the pain that's gone.

2. For by the life and death of Jesus,
God's mighty Spirit, now as then,
can make for us a world of difference,
as faith and hope are born again.

4. Christ is alive, and goes before us
to show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings;
our God is making all things new.

This Is A Day Of New Beginnings (Beginnings)

Brian Arthur Wren | Carlton Raymond Young

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BENEDICTION**POSTLUDE – Hani****Postlude on “Hyfrydol”**

Arr. Jason D. Payne

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Online Giving

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