



## GRACE UNITED CHURCH

Advent 3 - JOY

December 14, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

Worship Leader: Scott Martin

Music Director: Don Salfarie

Lay Presider: Nancy Moon

### GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: **Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming**

John Carter

Welcome, Announcements  
& Traditional Land Acknowledgment

Nancy Moon

**Call to Worship:** **Nancy Moon**

One: We come from the darkness of our night into the light  
of God's Day.

**All: We come from yesterday, journeying into God's  
tomorrow.**

One: In anticipation we gather.

**All: With expectation we wait.**

One: Let our celebration bring new life.

**All: Come, let us enter this advent season with Joy!**

#### Advent Reading & Candle Lighting 3 (JOY): Kendal Family

Reader 1: Again, we light a candle for hope- hope for ourselves,  
hope for God's beloved world.

**[light the shortest BLUE candle]**

Reader 2: Again, we light a candle for peace -peace in our hearts  
and peace on earth.

**[light the next shortest BLUE candle]**

Reader 1: And now we remember how the angels told the shepherds  
news of great joy.

Reader 2: God's beloved was born among us, so that we could all  
have joy deep in our hearts.

Reader 1: This joy is deeper than sorrow, stronger than fear.

This joy surprises us even on the coldest, darkest winter day.

Reader 2: We light a candle for joy. May joy shine bright in our hearts  
and in every human heart.

**[light PINK candle]**

**All: God of deep joy, we do not always feel happy. Sometimes we  
feel sad. Sometimes we are worried.  
Sometimes we feel lonely. But your joy runs deeper than our  
every sorrow. May it bubble up within us, so that we can bring  
light and joy to all we meet. In the name of Jesus, Joy to the  
world! Amen.**

*(from Let Us Pray, Volume 4 by Jane Doull, used with permission.)*

**Song: Joy is a Star**

**(vs. 3 & refrain) VU#7**

**Opening Prayer:**

Christ is at home in your heart  
Place your hand over your heart  
Close your eyes  
and see the candle's light in your mind's eye.  
Sit quietly and notice where peace is stirring...

*(pause)*

Rest in the light of Joy beckoning...  
breathe... breathe... breathe...

*(pause)*

**All: Come, Joy, come**

**Stir in our souls  
Find your birthing place  
in our living.  
May a song of Joy  
for the love of all creation  
echo in our hearts.  
Come, Joy, come.**

*(Centering Prayer by Lori Megley Best, adapted by Shawn Redden)*

#### Praise and Worship 1: Led by the Choir

**Come, thou long expected Jesus**

**Voices United #2**

#### **Time for Youth & Young at Heart**

**Song: Jesus Came bringing us Joy MV # 33 (verse 3 only)**  
**Led by Jenn Gibbs-Reilly**

Children leave for Sunday School

## TO DISCOVER THE WORD OF GOD FOR TODAY

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 11: 2-11 NIV MacLeod Nichols**  
One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.  
All: Thanks be to God!

**Sermon: Are you truly the One?**

**Scott Martin. LLWL**

## TO RESPOND IN FAITH AND HOPE

### Offering Invitation

As we wait the birth of the Messiah, may it root our giving and inspire us to be a blessing. As we present our gifts, let us come to the manager, our offering will now be received.

**Offertory/Special Music: Cindy Tindale  
My grown-up Christmas List David Foster**

**Offering Response: Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow  
Voices United #541**

### Offertory Prayer

God of all gifts, we thank you for the blessings we enjoy: the loved ones and friends who help make our lives good, our chances to make life better for others. In this season we especially give thanks for the child Jesus, who was born into the world to bring JOY. As we give thanks, we offer you our gifts, gifts of money to help your work here and around the world, gifts of food to help those in need, and most of all the gift of ourselves. Help us give of ourselves in love and care for others. May Good News come alive in our hearts and our community. Amen.

### Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

During this advent season, **Lord, help us to wait patiently.**  
God, we pray for your church both here at Grace United and all communities of faith around the world, help us all understand the meaning of advent and to live the love of Christmas.

During this advent season, **Lord, help us wait patiently.**  
We pray for all the countries and people of your world, especially those who are at conflict with each other, those who are experiencing poverty and famine. We hope in this season of giving that all may find hope, joy, peace and love in their lives.

During this advent season, **Lord, help us to wait patiently.**  
We know that within our own community there are people who are hungry, people that do not have the bare necessities of life. As a church, help us remember these people, to have compassion, and to help in whatever ways we can.

During this Advent season, **Lord, help us to wait patiently.**  
We remember those who are sick, who are lonely, who are grieving. Be with them Lord, now and always.

During this Advent season, **Lord, help us to wait patiently.**  
O God, our family and friends are important part of our lives. We pray in this season of celebration you will keep them safe. Help them to know your love and blessings.

During this Advent season, **Lord help is to wait patiently.**  
As we take a moment of silence to pray for ourselves and for those who sit beside us now. Lord, have mercy, hear our prayers.

During this Advent season, **Lord, help us to wait patiently.**  
God, be with us as we place all of our prayers, spoken or held in silence. We put our trust in you Lord, in your faithfulness, as we say the prayer that you taught us to pray, our father.....

**Praise and Worship 2: Led by the Choir  
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice**

**Voices United #35**

## THE CHURCH SCATTERS TO LIVE ITS FAITH IN THE WORLD

### Commissioning and Benediction

The world has not stood still while we have been worshipping, as we leave this place of worship, we go with:  
God's forgiveness to change us.  
God's vision to challenge us.  
God's power to encourage us.  
God's hope, love and joy to uplift us.  
In our busyness, may we know the peace of God.  
Go Now in Peace, AMEN

**Go Now in Peace**

**Don Besig & Nancy Price**

**Organ Postlude: Never Ending Joy**

**D. C. Damon**