



*"Contours of Mary's Dream"* by Lauren Wright Pittman

# **Christ Church** UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Dan Stark, Pastor  
Organist, Matthew Lawrenz  
Pam Kothrade, Song Leader  
Nancy Charles, Soloist

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December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Today marks the third Sunday of Advent. In today's service we light the joy candle and focus on the meaning of joy. The 126<sup>th</sup> Psalm tells us, "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream..." What does it mean to live as those who dream? In the Bible the prophets, psalmists, and the whole ensemble of characters in the Christmas story were dreamers. They received dreams. They discovered dreams. They responded to God's dreams for the world. They invite us to dream. Dreams have the possibility of sowing joy, even if joy doesn't immediately spring forth from them. This Sunday we are invited to dream with Mary. Like Mary, we are called to tend and nurture the dreams God has planted in us. Those who dream...*sow joy.*

*\*Please recite the purple words aloud.*

**Prelude**

*Rejoice, Rejoice, and Greet the New Morn*

Sedio

**Words of Welcome**

**Opening Song**

*Shine, Jesus, Shine*

**Refrain: Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory; blaze, Spirit, blaze set our hearts on fire. Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy; send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light.**

- 1. Lord, the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness shining; Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth you now bring us, shine on me, shine on me. Refrain.**
- 2. As we gaze on your kingly brightness, so our faces display your likeness; ever changing from glory to glory, mirrored here may our lives tell your story, shine on me, shine on me. Refrain.**

*WORDS and MUSIC: Graham Kendrick*

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Once upon a time, there was a little girl who had a terrible day.

She left her lunch at home.

She skinned her knee on the playground, and no one wanted to sit with her on the bus.

As she sank into her mother's arms at the end of the day, her mother said,

"Honey, what was the best part of today?"

The little girl cried and said, "Nothing! The entire day was terrible."

So the mother got down on one knee, wiped away her tears and said,

"There is always some good. Sometimes we just really have to look for it."

The little girl looked up at her mom and said, "What is good about today?"

And the mother said, "For starters, you're here in my arms."

Friends, anytime we gather together to worship God, we are here in God's arms.

So may we recognize that gift, and in doing so, may we sow joy.

Let us worship Holy God.

**Candle Lighting Song**

*Lead Us To Your Light*

Carol Browning

**Lead us to your light, lead us out of darkness.  
Lead us to your light. Come, Jesus, come.  
Lead us to your light, lead us out of darkness.**

One: May this light be an invitation to *sow joy*. May this light be our invitation to be Advent people – people who dream. Amen.

**Solo**

*Prepare Ye the Way*

arr. Benjamin Harlan

**Opening Prayer**

Creator God,

Scripture is flooded with dream-like images:

the lion lying down with the lamb,  
justice rolling like a mighty river,  
swords being beaten into plowshares,  
the prisoner being set free,  
good news to the oppressed,  
the whole world rejoicing.

To our human ears, there are times when these words can sound  
like nothing more than a far-off dream –  
downplaying prophecy to fantasy.

However, what we know is that to dream is to hope,  
and to hope is to imagine,  
and to imagine is to wonder,  
and to wonder is to believe,  
and to believe is to live and breathe for your promised day.

So give us the strength to listen as we dream, O God.

For deep down, we know your words are the very thing we need.

Amen.

**The Gloria**

**Glory be to the Christ-Child,  
God's strength made weak, has come to light our way.  
As the Firstborn of Creation, the Alpha and Omega, wonderful birth,  
God has come to earth.**

*Lyrics. Jacqueline A. Burnette*

## Old Testament [Isaiah 61:1-4 \(ICB\)](#)

Isaiah is the longest and arguably the most important prophetic book in the Old Testament. Isaiah covers the broad spectrum of God's prophetic judgement – from harsh words of punishment to comforting words of hope. Isaiah shows God as the mightiest of creators and gentlest of comforters. In today's passage, Isaiah speaks about the future messianic king whose reign will be good and just.

*The Lord God has put his Spirit in me. This is because he has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken.*

*He has sent me to tell the captives they are free. He has sent me to tell the prisoners that they are released. He has sent me to*

*announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness and the time when our God will punish evil people. He has sent me to comfort all those who are sad. He has sent me to the sorrowing*

*people of Jerusalem. I will give them a crown to replace their ashes. I will give them the oil of gladness to replace their sorrow. I will give them clothes of praise to replace their spirit of sadness. Then they will be called Trees of Goodness. They will be like trees planted by the Lord and will show his greatness. They will rebuild the old ruins. They will build up the places destroyed long ago. They will repair the ruined cities that were destroyed for so long.*

### Prayer of Confession

Leader: O Great Writer,

**All: With a sky full of stars and a world full of flowers, there should be no end to my joy.**

**And yet, instead of decorating my very being with joy, I let it slip away like loose change.**

**Instead of singing like Mary, or dancing like David,**

**I pass by remarkable beauty and love most days, unfazed. Forgive me.**

**Teach me the ways of children, who laugh and dance and sing as if joy is the very thing that keeps them alive.**

**Maybe they have joy figured out.**

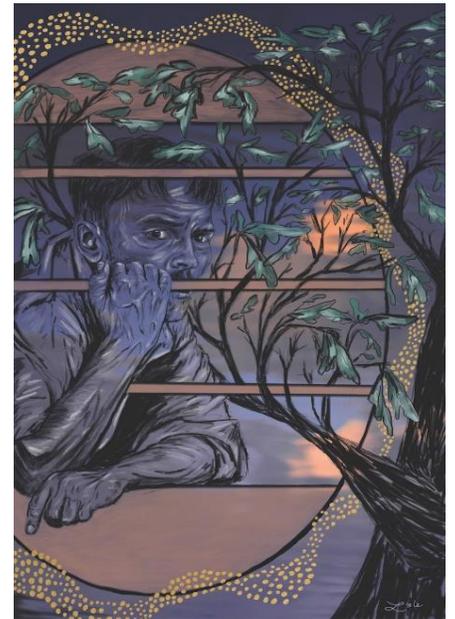
**Gratefully we pray, amen.**

### New Testament

### [Luke 1:46-55 \(ICB\)](#)

During a visit with her pregnant cousin Elizabeth – Mary's greeting causes John the Baptist to leap with joy in the womb. In turn, Mary is moved to praise God in song.

Today's passage from Luke's gospel is known as the Magnificat – Mary's song of joyful praise of God. It has political, economic, and social dimensions to it, but it is also a



"God of Justice"

by Lisle Gwynn Garrity.

song of great hope and promise. Out of Mary's mouth we hear that God has named and favored her, of *all* people, to bring God's child into the world.

*Then Mary said, "My soul praises the Lord; my heart is happy because God is my Savior. I am not important, but God has shown his care for me, his servant girl. From now on, all people will say that I am blessed, because the Powerful One has done great things for me. His name is holy. God will always give mercy to those who worship him. God's arm is strong. He scatters the people who are proud and think great things about themselves. God brings down rulers from their thrones, and he raises up the humble. God fills the hungry with good things, but he sends the rich away with nothing. God has helped his people Israel who serve him. He gave them his mercy. God has done what he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his children forever."*

**Sermon**

**Those Who Dream – Joy**

Pastor Dan

Stark

**Song of Response**

*For Ages Women Hoped and Prayed*

**Verse 1**

**For ages women hoped and prayed To bear the Anointed One  
Both Israel's Savior and the world's The new day's shining Sun  
Did they not know did they not guess What pain would then be theirs  
If God's anointed graced their home In answer to their prayers**

**Verse 2**

**Our hearts rejoice as Mary's song Becomes our hymn of praise  
For Christ has come Emmanuel To claim our years and days  
Both present now and coming still Accomplished fact and dream  
We join the song that Mary sings An earthly heavenly them**

*WORDS: Jane Parker Huyber MUSIC: English melody; arr. Arthur S. Sullivan*

**Prayers of the People**

*Hear Our Prayers, O God, for...*

~Tom, brother in law of Doris and Paul Mayeshiba who is suffering from ALS and as a result has become a paraplegic.

~Matt, brother of Doris Mayeshiba who had another spinal surgery on his neck this week and will have a 3 month recovery.

~Dawn, daughter in-law of Laurel and wife of Brad Dayton, as she recovers from a heart attack and manages diabetes and dialysis 4 times per week. Continued prayers are requested.

~Nancy Charles' work facility, as it has been struck with a COVID outbreak.

~Tracy, daughter of Nancy Kaye, who is at home with Nancy awaiting liver and kidney transplants. She is doing well.

~Pat, a friend of Pat Popp who is navigating COVID and dealing with the recent loss of her husband.

~Nichola, friend of Jill Unglaub who can't be home in England with family and friends for the holidays because of the virus. This is especially difficult as her brother just passed away from cancer, and her good friend is in hospice for cancer. She is thankful that her hip replacement rehabilitation is going well.

~Melissa, wife of Doris and Paul Mayeshiba's nephew who is recovering from lumbar fusion back surgery. Prayers for a healthy recovery.

~Maureen, friend of Sue Klockow, who has breast cancer.

~Jean, sister of Doris Piacentine and her niece who is recovering from COVID.

~Kathy, Ken Klockow's sister who will be receiving home care for a serious infection.

~Dan, friend of Molly Pufall Brown, who is very sick with an undiagnosed illness. Prayers also for his wife and 2 young children.

~Kelley, friend of Nancy Charles as she receives radiation treatment for breast cancer.

~Bernee, friend of Nancy Kaye who has end-stage lung cancer.

~Joe and Laurie, son in law and daughter of Jackie Struck. Prayers for continued healing for wounds.

~Family of Ken and Sue who live in California close to the wildfires.

~Julene Flanagan's nephew, who is struggling with mental health issues.

~Julene Flanagan's family member who is struggling with health issues related to kidney disease.

### **Prayer Song**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

**O come, come thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to slight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

### **Call to Offering**

### **Prayer of Dedication**

Psalm 126 says, "*The Lord has done great things for us, and we are very glad.*" We find ourselves nine months into a pandemic, but we are *still here*. We still stand as a congregation. Even when the world around us seems to be completely upended, there are blessings that may be hidden in plain sight. Bless these gifts, O God. You have done great things for us, and we are very glad!

### **Doxology**

*Tune: The First Noel*

**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.  
A-men.**

## Closing Song

*Savior of the Nations, Come*

1. **Savior of the nations, come, show yourself the Virgin's son.  
Fill with wonder, all the earth, that our God chose such a birth.**
2. **Not by human power or seed did the woman's womb conceive;  
only by the Spirit's breathe was the Word of God made flesh.**
3. **Christ in glory, intercede for your creatures' suffering need;  
let your resurrecting power soon complete the victory hour.**

WORDS: *Attr. Ambrose of Milan, 4th c; German version, Martin Luther;  
tr. Calvin Seerveld* MUSIC: *Enchiridia, 1524; harm. Seth Calvisius*

## Sending Blessing

*Great Creator,  
We are in awe of you.  
We will never know how you managed to dream up  
Mountains and valleys,  
Freckles, dimples, and curly hair,  
A cool morning mist,  
The change of seasons,  
Or the magic of music.  
Your greatness is beyond our reckoning.  
And because we are in awe of you,  
We believe we must follow Mary's lead  
And allow our souls to sing.  
We believe that the appropriate reaction to your  
goodness  
Is complete gratitude,  
Which looks like love for our neighbor,  
Justice for the poor,  
Food for the hungry,  
And joy that overflows.  
And even though we do not always believe in ourselves,  
We believe that our song is pleasing to you.  
We believe. Help our unbelief.  
In Christ's name we pray, amen.*



*"Sow in Tears" by Hanna Garrity.*

## Postlude

*Wake, Awake, for night is flying*

Miller

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## Happy Birthday to these wonderful people!

Paul Wick December 13

Larry Brewer December 14

Kristen Wick December 14

Carol Polachowski December 15

Jeff Crouse December 16

Tyler Gaeth December 17

Emmalyn smith December 18

Elliott Stark December 19

Virginia Redlin December 19

## Thanks

~We accept with thanks and appreciation memorial gifts to Christ Church from the Augustyniaks, Bittners, Freitags, Gaeths, Gebauers, Grosskruets, Lovas, Mills, Neists, Veits, Warehams Wilkers, Zablers, Wicks, Beth Meyer & Dale Stohre, Susan Zabler, Judy Borkowicz, Nancy Radke, and Chuck Veit in memory of Lorraine Zabler.

~We accept with thanks and appreciation memorial gifts to Christ church from the Moriwakis and Kathleen Scaffidi in memory of Ernestine Faja.

## Announcements

2021 Giving envelopes are now available for pick up at church. They can be picked up during office hours which are Monday-Wednesday 8am-2pm and Thursday 8am-12pm for the week of December 13th. Thanks!

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*Some Prayers and Liturgies written by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*

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**If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email [pastor@uccmke.org](mailto:pastor@uccmke.org).  
Christ Church UCC, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.**

**We are currently worshiping online-only. Learn more here.**

**<https://www.uccmke.org/covid-advent>**

**You can make your offering to Christ Church through [PayPal](https://www.paypal.com) at [www.uccmke.org/donate](http://www.uccmke.org/donate) or by mailing a check to Christ Church, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.**

