

December 11, 2022: Third Sunday of Advent

“Tell What You Hear and See”

FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

300 E. Oak Street, Ft. Collins, CO 80524

Worship: 10:00 AM

Pastor: Steve Ramer

Cell: 970-412-7510



ADVENT THEME: Advent means “coming” and it is an active season. The primary actor is God, born in human likeness, into a real world. But the created world has its share of action with dramatic stories of angel visits, forced relocation, homelessness, and harrowing life and death escapes. We too are active as we long for light, seek hope, and try to restore a broken world. Together we cry out for restoration, watch for this restoration to take place, and join in God’s restorative process with all creation.

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude (John)

A Prayer for Advent (based on Psalm 146:5-10)

O Lord God of history, we put our trust in you and you have filled us with great joy. Help us to place our future hope in you so that our joy will be complete. You are the one who made everything; the heavens, earth, the sea and everything, from elephants to the plankton that resides there!

It is you, Creator God who also executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, who opens the eyes of the blind, who watches over the immigrants, and cares for the poorest of the poor.

It is you, The LORD God Almighty who will reign forever! It is you O God, who will be praised for all the generations to come. Praise the LORD!





Call to Worship (based on Isaiah 35:1-10)

Leader: Just like the crocus that bursts suddenly as if from nowhere in the spring, so too will the most parched places on earth rejoice and blossom.

People: All who feel abandoned or forgotten will rejoice with joy and singing as they witness the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Leader: Strengthen the feeble hands and buck up those with weak knees.

People: Remind those of us who are anxious, to be strong and not to be afraid!

Leader: God is coming to save you! To open the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf!

People: God will cause the lame to leap like deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

Leader: Fresh spring water shall suddenly break forth in the wilderness and become streams in the desert. The burning sand shall become a pool of cool clear water.

Opening Song (Cathy & John)

Welcome and Passing of the Peace:

- **Leader:** May the peace of Christ be with you.
- **People:** And also, with you.
- **All:** Let us offer one another signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

People: A well-marked highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way for God's people; no traveler, not even a fool, will be able to get lost.

Leader: The poor and homeless will travel the darkest streets of our city safely and without fear of being jumped.

People: The homeless poor will be given homes, they shall build community as they sing with everlasting joy. They will be filled with joy and gladness, and their sorrow and sighing shall flee.

Leader: For it is the LORD who watches day and night over the immigrant. It is the Lord who upholds the poorest of the poor and the weakest of the weak. But it is The Lord who will make all the oppressors fall on their face!

All: It is the LORD who will reign forever. It is our God, who's in charge and will be for all the generations to come. Praise the LORD!

"Standing as a witness in all things means being kind in all things, being the first to say hello, being the first to smile, being the first to make the stranger feel a part of things, being helpful, thinking of others' feelings, being inclusive."
— Margaret D. Nadauld

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Matthew 11:2-11

11:2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples³ 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: ⁵the 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. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As 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?"

⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces.

⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹Truly 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.

SERMON: "Tell What You Hear and See" (Steve)

This is a week of encouragement. See and hear as JD shares his story of God's work of restoration in his life - so far. We can be strong because the one who can truly restore us is coming. We have hope because of what we have already seen. What stories do you have to share to encourage the community of faith?

3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Congregational Singing (Cathy & John)

Response (everyone)

Joy and Concerns (everyone)

Offering & Music (John)



Sending (all)

So, who did you come to church this morning to see? Someone who needs our pity? Why did you come to church this morning? To see someone dressed in nice clothes, who was clean-shaven? So, what did you come to see? You came to hear a prophet. May you go out in love, emboldened to share the good news of what you have heard and seen of God's restoration.