



LA JOLLA
UNITED METHODIST

MARY'S VISIT WITH ELIZABETH

THE JOURNEY



Sunday, December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

www.lajollaunitedmethodist.org

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

In Dulci Jubilo

Arr. Hal H. Hopson
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Call to Worship

One: Children of God, the arrival of the Promised One is almost here!

All: We wait as people of God's promise.

One: The message of the prophets and the expectation residing in Mary's womb call to us today.

All: We listen as people of God's promise.

One: Mary's "yes" and Elizabeth's faithfulness guide our path, showing us that we too have a role to play in bearing God's good news into the world.

All: We follow as people of God's promise.

One: This is the promise Mary, Elizabeth, and the prophets bore that we continue to carry even today—God is with us!

All: God is with us! We are not alone. Thanks be to God!

Congregational Introit

Emmanuel, Emanuel

UMH 204

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

Welcome

† Opening Hymn

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

UMH 196

1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

Lighting the Advent Candle of Joy

Prayers of the People

*A Pastor will begin a time of prayer and name those for whom our congregation is praying.
Online Worshipers may type prayer requests in the Live Chat, taking care for privacy.*

Pastoral Prayer

The 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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer Response

Rejoice! Emmanuel

Arr. Donald Moore
©1996 Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.

WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

Luke 1:39-45 (NRSVue)

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Scriptural Response

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God! Amen**

Anthem

Love Came Down

Hank Bentley and Lindsey Sweat
Arr. Luke Gambill
©2020 So Essential Tunes

Message

Mary's Visit with Elizabeth

Rev. Bob Rhodes

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Response to the Word

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

He Is the Gift
Lisa Corpron, Soloist

Shawna Edwards
©2018 Shawnba Belt Edwards

† Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

† Prayer of Confession

All: Transforming God, we can get so wrapped up in Christmas—the decorating, the gift buying, the parties—that we miss the real event happening in our very midst. We don't want to see that everything will change. We are happy and complacent with the way things are. We resist scriptures that challenge the status quo if it means we might lose positions of privilege. We'd rather focus on a meek and mild Mary and a cute baby Jesus. But Mary's prophecy turns the world upside down—the first order is abandoned and a new order is in our midst even now. We are afraid of what this will mean. Help us hear your word as good news, not bad—as promises of good things to come if we will but live into those promises. Help us embrace the courage of Mary, and the faith of Elizabeth. Help us claim the promise of radical transformation brought by the Babe of Bethlehem. Help us navigate a world turned upside down. Amen.

One: Blessed are we who believe in the fulfillment of what was spoken and promised by God. For the promised one will bring peace and liberation through transformation. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

WE FOLLOW CHRIST INTO THE WORLD

† Closing Hymn

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

UMH 213

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!

† Benediction

Postlude

The First Noel

Arr. Hal H. Hopson
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Liturgical elements from *Discipleship Ministries (UMC)* and *The Abingdon Worship Annual*.

Flowers: from Chee & Grace Chow in honor of their 53rd wedding anniversary
Liturgist: Chelsea Carter
Organist: Bob Wuertz
Pianist: Rebecca Cosford
Ushers: Dave Grundies, Don Lincoln, Peter McCreight, Lon Showley
Tech Team: AJ Prat, Cam Rhodes

LJUMC Ministry Team

Rev. Bob Rhodes, Lead Pastor; Bob Wuertz, Music Ministries Director;
Theresa Erb, Office Manager; Emilio Valente, Information Technology Director;
Erin Wyer, NS Executive Director