**Worship from Home**

**First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, UCC**

**The Third Sunday of Advent, December 17, 2023**

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Introit  *“Like a Child”*

Call to Worship BJ Harris and Jeannie Warren

**One:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Many: And also with you.**

**One:** We gather to worship with expectations: God revealed in new and astonishing ways.

**Many: God comesto us in real time. God comes to us in dreams.**

**One:** Sometimes God’s presence is hard to take in – difficult to believe.

**Many: Oh God, we long to believe. Help our unbelief!**

**One:**  God is present here. God is working in our midst.

**All*:* Then our mouths are filled with laughter, our tongues shout out with joy!**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

**One:** Joy is the celebration given by God through the light of the world.

**Many: Joy is the celebration given by God at the birth of the Christ Child.**

**One:** Joy is the celebration when the angels sang “Glory to God in the highest.”

**Many: Let us dance and sing and shout for joy. Christ is coming again.**

(The candles of hope, peace, and joy are lit.)

**One:** Let us pray:

**All: Source of light, shine in our lives and in your world with your life-giving joy. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

Unison Prayer of Invocation (from Jennifer Phillips)

**Come, O Holy One, breaker of chains and renewer of life! Open our eyes to your presence in all the earth. Stir us to proclaim gladly the signs of your love: the liberation of those oppressed, the healing of those frail and broken, springs of water in all the parched places, and Jesus Christ risen and alive, through whom we pray. Amen.**

*\**Hymn #107 PH *“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”*

Children’s Message Pastor Lisa

Psalm 100, NCH p. 688

A Reading from the Hebrew Bible Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A Reading from the Gospels John 1:6-8, 19-28

Message *“Advent Words of God: Joy and Jubilee”* Pastor Lisa

\*Hymn *“I Need a Silent Night,”* Amy Grant

Chorus: I need a silent night, a holy night

To hear an angel’s voice ‘neath the chaos and the noise.

I need a midnight clear, a little peace right here

To end this crazy day with a silent night

Prayers of the People *(sharing of joys and concerns)*

The Lord's Prayer *(debts and debtors)*

Choral Response

Invitation to Give

Offertory *“Star-Child”*

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, you heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen**

Unison Prayer of Dedication

**Radiant light and our eternal joy, because of the gifts you bring daily into our lives, we dedicate ourselves to giving as constantly as we receive. Bless these humble gifts, along with us, and all those who have served in ministries of peace and compassion. Grant that we may each be bearers of your joy in this season, knowing the Emmanuel promise, that you are always drawing near. We pray in the name of Jesus, coming soon. Amen.**

*\**Hymn #115 PH *“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”*

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Postlude

\* indicates where the congregation may stand as they are able.

Except where noted otherwise, this morning’s liturgy comes from *homileticsonline*, and also from *Feasting On the Word: Worship Companion*, Kimberley Bracken Long, editor. This morning’s prayer of dedication comes from The Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ’s Christmas Fund Offering Guide.