

# St. John's Presbyterian Church

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024

10:30 a.m.



### **Vision Statement**

*Worship God*

*Love One Another*

*Serve the World*

### **Worship Participants**

Kent Meads, Interim Pastor  
Elaine York, Pastor  
Ann McElreath, Lay Reader  
Susan Horst, Music Director  
David Brock, Organist  
Chancel Choir

1070 W. Plumb Lane  
Reno, Nevada 89509  
(775) 826-0990

### **Website**

[www.stjohnschurch.org](http://www.stjohnschurch.org)

# St. John's Presbyterian Church

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024

10:30 a.m.

\*Please stand as you are able.

**BOLD** People Response

### **GATHERING**

Prelude (David Brock, Organist)

Chorale Prelude: *Wachet auf*, BWV 645

J.S. Bach

Welcome and Announcements (Kent Meads, Interim Pastor)

*Please sign our Ministry of Friendship pad and pass it to the person sitting next to you.*

Lighting of the Advent Candle (Love)

Raul Cruz Bonilla and Chyannah Rowe

\*Hymn No. 482     *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*

—The Presbyterian Hymnal; CCLI# 43073 Public Domain/One License# 59408ada02c23

\*Call to Confession (Ann McElreath, Lay Reader)

We have all sinned but there is mercy for those who call on the name of the Lord.  
Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sins.

\*Prayer of Confession

**We are coming unraveled, O God, pulled apart because we have each chosen our own way, forgetting the common good, the universal good, Your true good. We are in need of a way back from the messes we make for ourselves because we have, too often, rejected Your way to true peace, true wholeness. We are lost, and we need Christ to come quickly. Amen.**

\*Assurance of Pardon

Leader: In Jesus, God comes to us, removing our sin, our failures, our expectations, so we might have new life through Him.

**People: Thanks be to God!**

\*The Passing of the Peace

Leader: May the peace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

\*Hymn

*Glory Be to the Father*

—The Presbyterian Hymnal, No. 577; CCLI# 221194

**Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

**Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.**

Moment with Young Disciples

Anthem (Susan Horst, Music Director)

Chancel Choir

## **THE WORD**

Message

Two Women with Two Boys

The Rev. Kent Meads

**Luke 1.39-45**

<sup>39</sup>At that time **Mary** got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, <sup>40</sup>where she entered **Zechariah's** home and **greeted Elizabeth**.

<sup>41</sup>When **Elizabeth** heard **Mary's** greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and **Elizabeth** was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup>In a loud voice she exclaimed: "**Blessed (εὐλογέω)** are **you** among women, and **blessed (εὐλογέω)** is **the child** you will bear! <sup>43</sup>But why am I so favored, that **the mother** of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup>As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, **the baby** in my womb leaped for **joy**. <sup>45</sup>**Blessed (μακάριος)** is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill **his promises** to her!"

The birth of sons come to 2 women in unique situations: Elizabeth old and childless and Mary young and a virgin.

And through these 2 women God is fulfilling His saving plan for the world—for us.

### **The Background Setting for the 2 Women**

**Elizabeth** is a relative of Mary.

Elizabeth will have a son who must be named **John**.

John will be involved in Israel's salvation. (1.16-17)

Six months later, God sends Gabriel to **Mary** a virgin who is betroth to Joseph.

She will have a son and will name Him – **Jesus** = Savior.

"For God didn't send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him," (Jn.3.17)

“He will be **great** and will be called **the Son of the Most High**. (1.32)  
“...**the child** to be born will be called **holy—the Son of God**.” (1.35)

### **The Visit (1.39-45)**

Entering Elizabeth’s home, Mary says, “Shalom!” This is the only word Mary speaks in our passage.

With Mary’s greeting, all kinds of divine things begin to happen to Elizabeth and her son: baby leaps and Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit.  
Like so much in this chapter, the presence of the Holy Spirit following Mary’s greeting is unexpected.

### **The Human Birth (v.42)**

The first “blessed” highlights that Mary is special among women.  
The second blessed is important because it declares that Mary is the one who gives human birth to Jesus.

This may be regarded as an answer to the question, “What is the truth about Jesus Christ?”  
The *incarnation* refers literally to the *in-fleshing* of the eternal Son of God.  
Or, Jesus “putting on our flesh and blood” and becoming fully human. The doctrine of the incarnation claims that the eternal second person of the Trinity took on humanity in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

This is the wonder of Advent. God comes to earth as a baby.

“What we celebrate at Christmas is not so much the birth of a baby, but the incarnation of God Himself.” R.C. Sproul

“The Incarnation is the ultimate reason why the service of God cannot be divorced from the service of man.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

In Nicæan Creed: who for us men and for our salvation came down, and was incarnate, and was made man.

### **Blessed/Happy Because She Believed (v.45)**

In the New Testament **Makarios** is used to define the kind of happiness that comes from receiving favor from God.

When it comes to the Christmas story and hearing about the birth of Jesus, we face what Mary faced: Believing or not believing what we hear from God about Jesus.

G.K. Chesterton wrote,

“The problem of disbelieving in God is not that a man ends up believing nothing. Alas, it is much worse. He ends up believing anything.”

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\*Hymn No. 41

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

—The Presbyterian Hymnal; CCLI# 31054 Public Domain/One License# EXS00153SD

Receiving the Morning Offering

Offertory

J.S. Bach

Chorale trio: Meine Seele erhebt den Herren, BWV 648,  
(My soul magnifies the Lord)

\*Doxology

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

—The Presbyterian Hymnal, No. 592; One License# 96892; Public Domain

Prayers of the People (Pray for the future Pastor)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**SENDING**

\*Hymn No. 29

*Go, Tell it on the Mountain*

—The Presbyterian Hymnal; CCLI# 29080 Public Domain/One License# 111469

\*Charge and Benediction

Postlude

J.S. Bach

Chorale Trio: Kommst du nun, von Himmel herunter, BWV 650  
(Come to us, Lord Jesus from highest heaven)

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**EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF THE SEASON WITH ST. JOHN'S CHANCEL CHOIR!**

The Chancel Choir will present selections from G.F. Handel's Messiah during worship. Upcoming choruses include *O Thou that Tellest Good Tidings to Zion, For Unto Us a Child is Born, Glory to God, Hallelujah!*

***Christmas Eve Celebration***

December 24, the Chancel Choir will be joined by a Reno String Quartet for a special musical prelude beginning at 5:00 PM. The evening will feature Messiah Highlights

***Our Family Christmas Eve Service*** will start at 5:30 PM. Join us for this joyous celebration of Christ's birth through music and worship!

## **DONATE ONLINE**



Use your mobile device to scan the QR code and donate online! Please note that any online donations should be made before the 27th of each month. Donations made after that may not be transferred to our account in time to be included in that month's totals. While they will be counted in the next month, this could impact your year-end totals.

## **SPECIAL CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Mondays (Dec. 23, 30): 8:00 am-12:00 pm  
Closed December 24 – 25  
Thursday, December: 26 8:00 am-12:00 pm  
Closed on Fridays

**GOOD SHEPHERD'S CLOTHES CLOSET** urgently needs men's jackets and blankets. Please bring your donations to the designated box in Martin Hall to help provide warmth to those in need this season. Thank you for your generosity!

**This Week at St. John's Presbyterian Church**  
**December 22—29, 2024**

<b>This Week at St. John's Presbyterian Church</b>		
<b>December 22—29, 2024</b>		
<b>Sun. Dec. 22</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	
8:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Music Room
10:00 am-10:30 am	Clawson Memorial Library Open	
10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
12:00 pm-12:30 pm	Clawson Memorial Library Open	
11:30 am	Fellowship/Coffee Time	Martin Hall
3:00 pm	Toccatà-Handel's Messiah & Holiday Favorites	Sanctuary
<b>Mon. Dec. 23</b>		
9:30 am	AlAnon-Monday Morning Wake-Up	Martin Hall
6:00 pm	Cub Scouts Pack 10	Geneva Room
6:30 pm	Bella Voce Rehearsal	Sanctuary
<b>Tues. Dec. 24</b>	<b><i>Christmas Eve-Church Office Closed</i></b>	
1:00 pm	AlAnon-Family Group	Martin Hall
5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Celebration	Sanctuary
5:30 pm	Christmas Eve Service	Sanctuary
<b>Wed. Dec. 25</b>	<b><i>Christmas Day-Church Office Closed</i></b>	
6:30 pm	AlAnon Wednesday Night Beginner's Group	Martin Hall
<b>Thurs. Dec. 26</b>		
	No Events Scheduled	
<b>Fri. Dec. 27</b>		
	No Events Scheduled	
<b>Sat. Dec. 28</b>		
12:00 pm	Living Church of God	Martin Hall
7:00 pm	Back to Basics-Alcoholics Anonymous	Martin Hall
<b>Sun. Dec. 29</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas</b>	
8:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Music Room
10:00 am-10:30 am	Clawson Memorial Library Open	
10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
12:00 pm-12:30 pm	Clawson Memorial Library Open	
11:30 am	Fellowship/Coffee Time	Martin Hall

**Staff**

The Rev. Kent Meads, Interim Pastor  
Elaine York, Pastor  
Maria Winchester, Administrative Assistant  
Liz Salas, Financial Secretary  
Lucas Parke, Security Sexton  
Ann Peterson, Librarian

**Music Staff**

Susan Horst, Music Director  
David Brock, Organist

**Elders**

**Class of 2024**

John Dutton, St. John’s Children’s Center  
Rew Goodenow, Personnel  
Winnie Kortemeier, Worship  
Jeannine Stewart, Membership/Welcoming

**Class of 2025**

Aaron Karr, Multi Media  
Doris Krater, Finance  
Amy Willoughby, Nominating  
Elaine York, Fellowship and Nurture

**Class  
of 2026**

Nancy Lim (2<sup>nd</sup> Term), Missions  
Stan Peck, Membership/Welcoming  
Kathryn Smith, Christian Education  
Stan White, Building and Grounds

**Deacons**

**Class of 2024**

Judy Mahon  
Christie Pierce  
Jewel White  
Bev Zakariassen

**Class of 2025**

Ron Scovill  
Ann Peterson  
June Rosta

**Class of 2026**

Sarah Deardorff (2<sup>nd</sup> Term)  
Ann McElreath, Chair  
John Mahon  
Marc Ullom

**Pastor Nominating Committee**

Dale Clark, Chair  
John Dutton, Vice Chair  
Jann Carmichael, Secretary  
Kelley Bottomley, Treasurer

Sue Goodenow  
Sarah Deardorff  
Nancy Lim  
Marc Ullom

**Multi Media Team**

Aaron Karr, Chair  
John Dutton  
Lucas Parke  
Chyannah Rowe, Staff  
Maria Winchester, Staff