

COMMUNITY CHURCH LEISURE WORLD

LIGHTING
A pathway into community

GROWING
Disciples in God's Love

SENDING
The Hope and Joy of Jesus

Our Vision: To Be Love to Leisure World

14000 Church Place
Seal Beach, CA 90740-5307

Sunday Service: 9:50 AM
562-431-2503

December 8, 2024

5th Sunday of Extended Advent

New is Difficult
**Do It
Anyway**

Rev. Johan Dodge



**COMMUNITY
CHURCH LEISURE
WORLD**

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS — Rev. Johan Dodge

Good Morning and Welcome to Worship! Worship is often the first place that new people come into contact with this growing community of faith. And so, if you are joining us for the first time, I say to you what is said every Sunday: You are welcome here. Here is a place where all are welcome. For such is the love of God for God's Very Good Creation.

ADVENT 5 — Jeanette Williams

As our nights grow longer and our days grow short,
we look on these earthly signs – light and green branches
– and remember God's promise to our world:

ALL: Christ, our Light and our Hope, will come.



Listen to the words of Isaiah, the prophet:

“I will commit your authority to his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open.” – Isaiah 22:21b-23

Candle Lighters: Fred & Wilma Wind

[As the candles are lit, all stand as you are able and sing:]

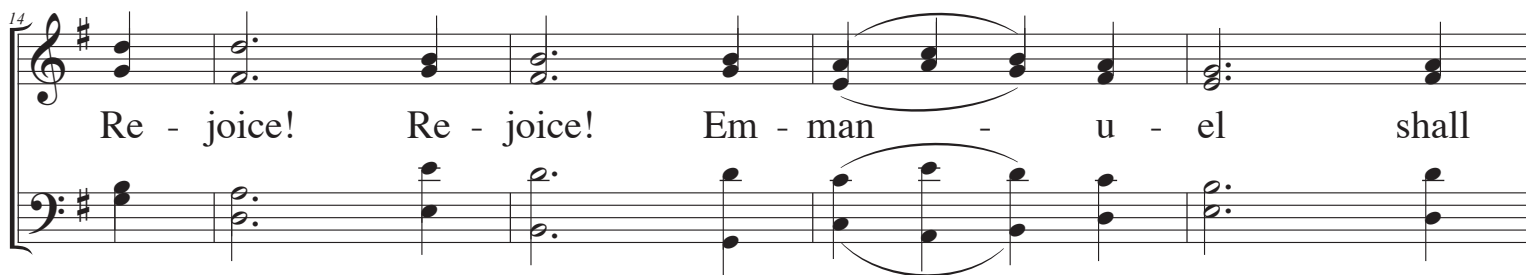
CALL TO WORSHIP: Doxology for Advent (“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise
O come, thou Key of David, come, and

God, all crea - tures here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye
op - en wide our heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that

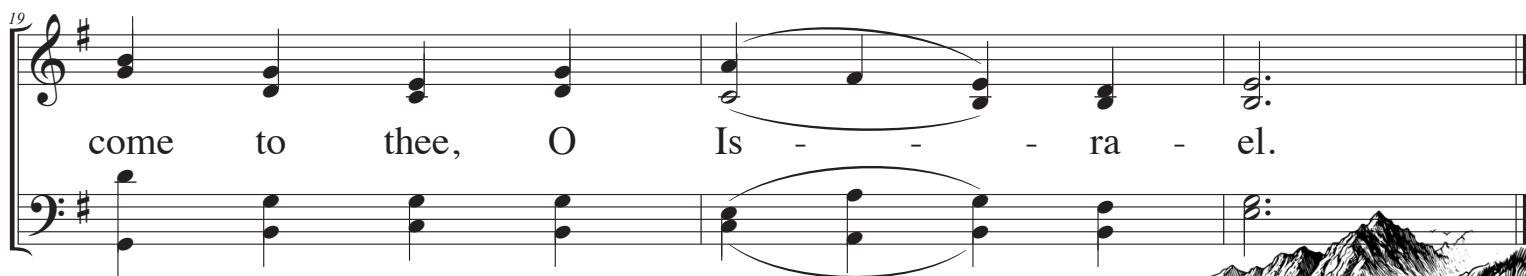
heav'n - ly host: Cre - a - tor, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.
leads on high, and close the path to mi - se - ry.

14



Re - jice! Re - jice! Em - man - u - el shall

19



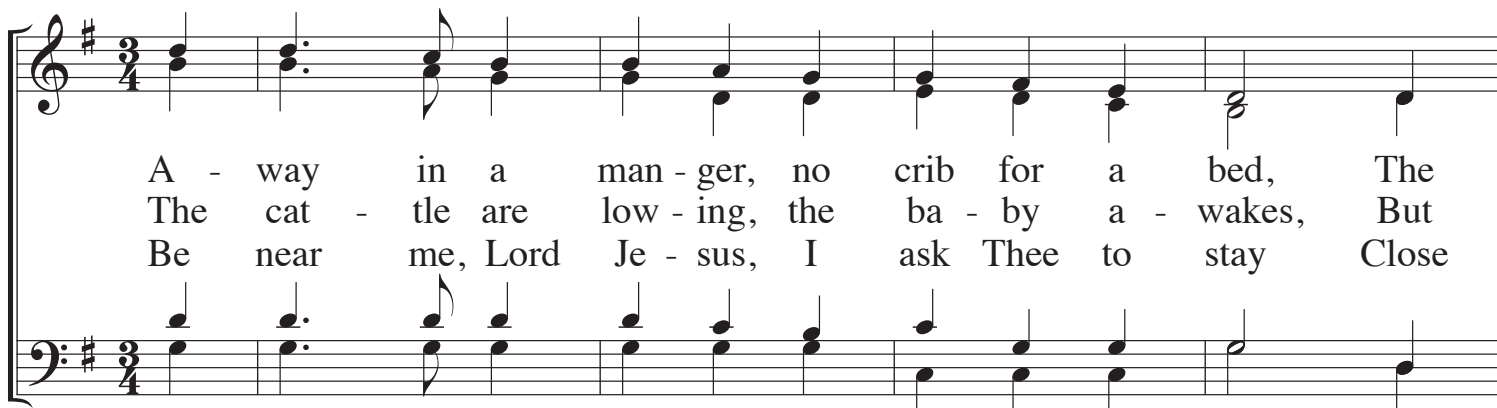
come to thee, O Is - - - ra - el.

Liturgist — Jeanette Williams
Let us pray ...

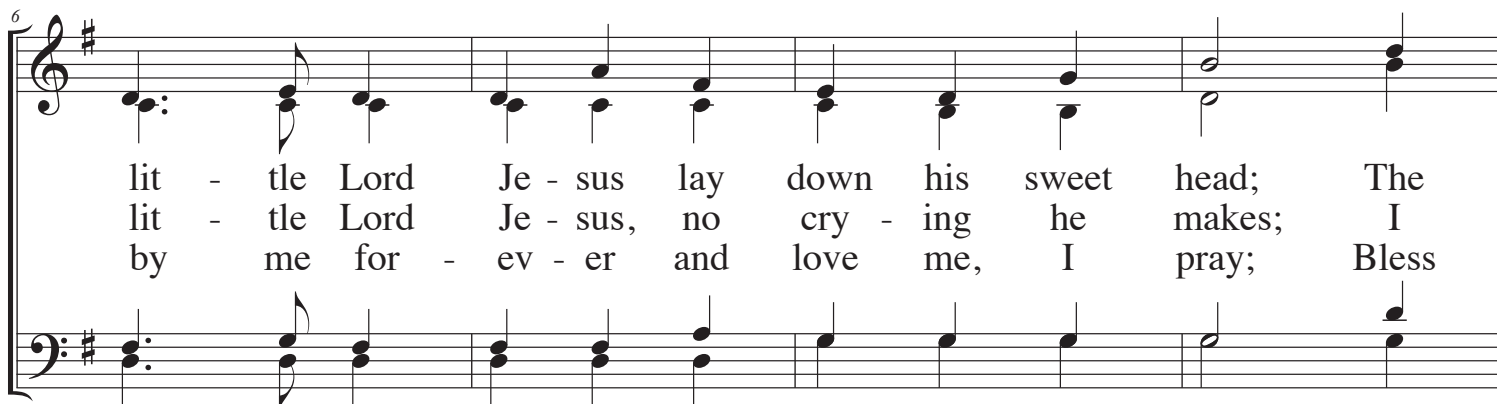


ALL: Gracious God, your Son Jesus Christ opened wide the gate of heaven, making plain the way that leads to eternal joy: Grant that we who have been buried with Christ in baptism and raised to new life may strive courageously for the freedom and peace of the world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

HYMN: "Away in a Manger"

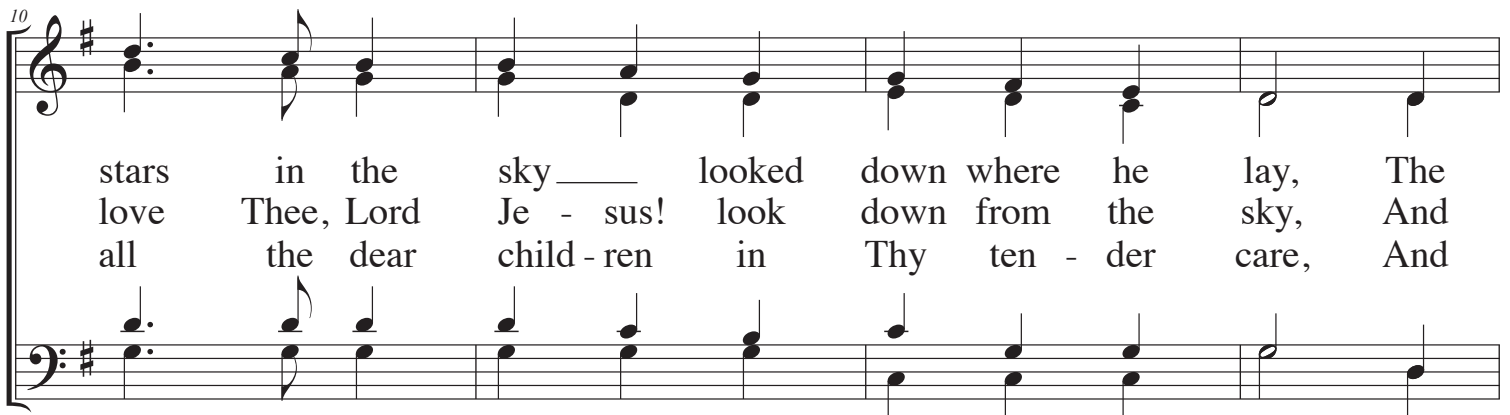


A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed, The
The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes, But
Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask Thee to stay Close



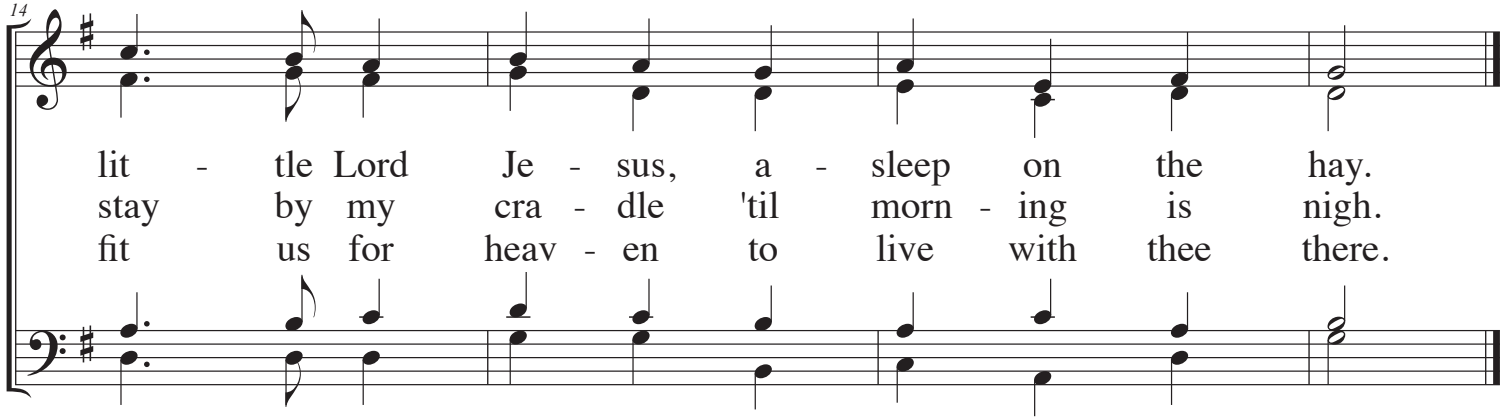
lit - tle Lord Je - sus lay down his sweet head; The
lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes; I
by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray; Bless

10



stars in the sky — looked down where he lay, The
 love Thee, Lord Je - sus! look down from the sky, And
 all the dear child - ren in Thy ten - der care, And

14



lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.
 stay by my cra - dle 'til morn - ing is nigh.
 fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

[A time of silence is kept after each petition.]

Loving God, through the gift of prayer you teach us to hold one another in our hearts. Hear now our prayers:



for the leaders and people of every nation: for the church and all who serve the Lord:

for those who suffer in sorrow and affliction:

for refugees and travelers far from home:

for all who are in prison or facing trial:

for those who sit in darkness, or in the shadow of death:

Gracious God, this is our prayer: that your love will overflow more and more, in our lives, in your church, and in all the world, until all may know the compassion of Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord, in whose name we pray.
Amen.

[please stand as you are able]

HYMN: "Joy to the World"

Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth re-ceive her king.
Joy to the earth! The Sav-ior reigns. Let all our songs em-ploy,—
He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na-tions prove—

— Let ev-'ry heart pre-pare him room,— and
— while fields and floods,— rocks, hills, and plains— re-
— the glo-ries— of his right-eous-ness,— and

heav'n and na-ture sing, and heav'n and na-ture
peat the sound-ing joy, re-peat the sound-ing
won-ders of his love, and won-ders of his
and heav'n and na-ture sing, and
re-peat the sound-ing joy, re-
and won-ders of his love, and

sing, and hea-ven, and hea-ven and na-ture sing.
joy, re-peat, re-peat the sound-ing joy.
love, and won-ders, and won-ders of his love.
heav'n and na-ture sing,
peat the sound-ing joy,
won-ders of his love,

[please be seated]



PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION — Jeanette Williams

Holy One, through your Holy Spirit instruct us by the light of your prophets. Illumine our hearts, that we may hear your call to become your path into the world. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE — Jeanette Williams

Malachi 3:1-4

¹See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Luke 3:1-6

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

MESSAGE: "New Is Difficult – Do It Anyway" — Rev. Johan Dodge

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION — Rev. Johan Dodge

The prophet Malachi says that God is "like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap" (Mal. 3:2). Reflect on events of the past year. How has God been working to refine and perfect your life? Paul writes to the church at Philippi: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now" (Phil.1:3–5). Think about people in your life for whom you give thanks, who have been in your prayers, and who have brought good news and joy to you this year. Consider writing them a letter or card to express your gratitude.

REFLECTION: “When I Think upon Christmas — Hannah Yi, *pianist*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING — Jeanette Williams

We are called by God to present a harvest of righteousness — not by virtue of our own works, but by the grace of the one who began a good work in us, and is even now bringing it to completion. Let us bring the offerings of our lives to the Lord. **Amen.**

[Ushers, please come forward]

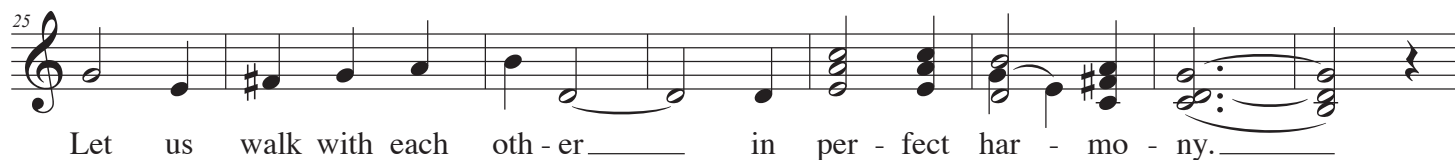
OFFERTORY: “In the Bleak Midwinter” — Kara Brouelette, *mezzo-soprano*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING — Jeanette Williams

God of all loving kindness, receive these gifts of gratitude, the offerings of our lives. Purify them with your refining fire so that they may serve your purposes and shine with your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[please stand as you are able]

HYMN: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”



41 With ev - 'ry step I take, let this be my sol - emn vow: _____ To

49 take each mo-ment and live each mo-ment in peace e - ter - nal - ly; _____

57 Let there be peace on Earth, and let it be - gin with me. _____

BLESSING — Rev. Johan Dodge

I am confident of this: the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with us this day and the God isn't finished with us yet. Let us continue to prepare the way of the Lord! **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH: "Blest Be the Tie that Binds"

Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Chris - tian love: The

fel - low - ship of kin - dred minds Is like to that a - bove. A - men.

Music Team: Jennifer Scoullar, *Soprano*
Hannah Yi, *Pianist*
Kara Brouelette, *Mezzo-Soprano (Guest)*

Dave Albulario, *Tenor / Music Dir.*
John Fluker, *Pianist*

Doxology for Advent (Veni, Immanuel)
15th Century French Hymn, Words by Thomas Ken, Text and Tune adapted by Dean McIntyre

"Away in a Manger"
Music by James R. Murray; Words: V1/V2 Anon, V3 attr. to John Thomas McFarland

"Joy to the World"
Tune: *ANTIOCH* by Georg Friedrich Händel; adapt. & arr. by Lowell Mason; Words by Isaac Watts, alt.

"When I Think upon Christmas"
Music by Aodhan King, Ben Tan, & Renee Sieff
Piano arrangement by Larry Shackley

"In the Bleak Midwinter"
Tune: *CRANHAM* by Gustav Theodore Holst, 1906, alt.; Words by Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1872, alt.; Public Domain

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"
Music & Words by Sy Miller & Jill Jackson
© 1955, 1983; Arr. Copyright © 1991 by Jan Lee Music, Beverly Hills, California

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (Dennis SM)
Music by Johann G. Nægeli, 1768-1836
Words by John Fawcett, 1740-1817
Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

All music herein transcribed & adapted by D. Albulario for Leisure World Community Church, Seal Beach, California.

LEISURE WORLD COMMUNITY CHURCH
14000 Church Pl, Seal Beach, CA 90740
562-431-2503
CCLI License No. 1872250

PRAYER REQUESTS

- new** **Rev. Don Roe** – Former LWCC pastor, Rev. Don Roe passed away this past Wednesday, December 4, 2024. He served Community Church from 2014 to 2018. Prayers of comfort for his family, and peaceful rest for Pastor Don. Watch this space for information on his memorial, which will take place in early 2025.
- new** **Melinda Cowan** – Melinda is recovering at home from a recent fall. She is grateful there were no broken bones. Bruising and soreness is healing. She appreciates our concern and resolves to remember to use her walker more frequently as a precaution.
- new** **Nancy Westcott** – Nancy continues to recover from her fall with the loving support of her children. She is in good spirits, recovering at home. She had 18 stitches removed from her face and will start PT and OT soon for at least 2 weeks.

The Care Team is concerned about the frequency of falls recently.

Please pray that God guide our steps and help us remember to use walkers and canes as a precaution. We are praying that we might think carefully about taking on challenging tasks that might put us at risk.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

FLOWERS and FELLOWSHIP: Flowers and Fellowship refreshments are provided today by Jeanette Williams. See the sign-up charts to provide refreshments or cover the cost of altar flowers for future services. Altar flowers are \$35. Sandy Walker coordinates arrangements.

POINSETTIAS: Please pick up a special *Holiday Flower Order* envelope from the check in table in the narthex if you are interested in purchasing a **poinsettia** in honor or memory of a loved one. Please fill out the form stapled to the envelope, insert a \$15 check or cash and drop it in the offering plate. Purchased poinsettias may be picked up **after Christmas Eve** worship service. The poinsettias will adorn the Sanctuary altar for December 24th service.

COFFEE WITH THE PASTOR: Resuming this Thursday, Dec 12th at 10 AM, you are invited to join Pastor Johan for a weekly time of fellowship and check-in over coffee, and perhaps a little conversation around the book cultivating Christlikeness: loving as Jesus loved.

ANNUAL CHARGE CONFERENCE: This-coming Saturday, December 14th, at 2:00 PM, the annual all-church conference is scheduled in person in Edgar Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited to attend.

FREE PIANO RECITAL: This Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 4:00 PM, the beginner and intermediate students of our resident pianist Hannah Yi will offer a FREE piano recital in the church, featuring a variety of music, including tunes for the holidays, played by students age 6 through adult, and will culminate in a piano duet performed by Hannah and one of her students. Admission is FREE!

CHRISTMAS EVE: Please join us for our Christmas Eve Service: Lessons & Carols, which will take place on December 24th at 4:00 PM.

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone,
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known ...

Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

“All are welcome in this place.”





GROW
PRAY
STUDY

Notes from the Service

My Prayers this week:

Prayer Journal

Use these prayers in your time with God each day.

Household Prayer: Morning

Blessed are you, Lord God: by your tender mercy the dawn breaks upon me. Guide my feet this day in paths of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Household Prayer: Midday

Covenant God, you send me messengers to cleanse and refine me along my life's journey. Help me endure the mirror of the prophets' message, that I may see you more clearly in those around me. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Blessed are you, Lord God: for you have smiled on me this day and redeemed me from the stains of this world. Give light to all who wait in darkness until we rest with you in perfect peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.