



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 21, 2025
7th Sunday of Advent



Rev. Johan Dodge



Be Not Afraid

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 Week 7: Be Not Afraid — Phyllis Spencer

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



Candle Reader — Hannah Yi

Listen to the words of the prophet, Isaiah:

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good." — *Isaiah 7:14-15*

Candle Lighter — Joey Bencie

[As the candle is lit, all stand as you are able, and sing]



CALL TO WORSHIP: Doxology for Advent

5

9

14

19

2



Candle Prayer — Rev. Johan Dodge

Let us pray:

Eternal God of power and love, who woes and nudges us in surprising ways — show us the face of Immanuel in our time. Bring us from fear to awe, we pray; in the name of Jesus who showed us the way. Amen.

HYMN CAROL: "What Child Is This?"

1. What child is this — who laid to rest — on Ma - ry's lap — is
2. Why lies he in — such mean es - tate, — where ox and ass — are
3. So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come pea - sant, king — to

sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet — with an - thems sweet — while
feed - ing? Come all, come near, — and hur - ry here, — the
hon - or Him; The King of kings — sal - va - tion brings, let

shep - herds watch — are keep - ing. This, this — is
si - lent Word — is plead - ing. Peace, peace — and
lov - ing hearts — a - dore Him. Raise, raise — a

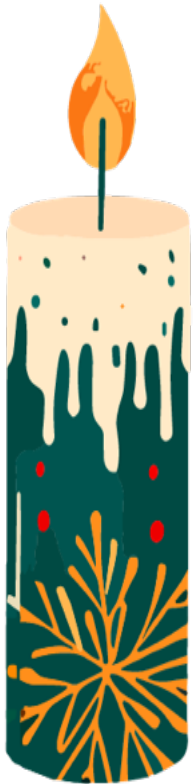
Christ the King, — whom shep - herds guard — and an - gels sing,
har - mo - ny, — the Christ child brings — for you and me,
song on high, — the vir - gin sings — her lul - la - by;

14

Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the Son of Ma - ry.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,

please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge



Holy One, who astonishes us with surprising gifts, we pray for your church and for your people of every language and belief, that your wisdom will show us our common life, and that all people may rejoice in what you create.

Giver of the stars and planets, creator of rivers and oceans, and creatures large and small, we pray for wisdom as we live on and with your earth. Evoke in us awe for your goodness in these familiar surroundings: our hills and valleys, forests and beaches, that the powers you have placed here to move through soil and air will remind us always of your bounty and your love.

Power above all powers, we pray for the leaders of governments in every nation, that they may have wisdom to choose what serves the common good.

We pray for those we all too easily forget: those of your children who are poor or unhoused or in prison; those who are sick, or lonely, or frightened; all who hunger for faith and hope. Help us to care for them, that they may be strengthened by joy in your restoration.

Holy One, in whose community we thrive, we pray for those with whom we share our daily lives: our families, friends, and neighbors, those with whom we work and play, those whose names we do not know who provide for us, that we may all be renewed in courage and nurtured in hope.

Sustainer of your people, we give you thanks for the members of the body of Christ resurrected who throughout the ages have brought us to this place today.

That we who live in this time and this place may see the work of God's kingdom further carried out through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit who calls us to celebrate the birth of Jesus — Immanuel — God with us. **Amen.**

[please stand as you are able]

HYMN CAROL: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee
For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a -
How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is
O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we

lie; a - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go
bove, while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring
giv'n; so God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his
pray; cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to -

by. Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing
love. O morn - ing stars to - geth - er, pro - claim the ho - ly
heav'n. No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of
day. We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings

light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
birth, and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!
sin, where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
tell; O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

[please be seated]

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION — Phyllis Spencer

As your Holy Spirit spoke to Mary, speak to us now through your Word that by hearing we too may receive the courage to be your light in the darkness before us. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE — Phyllis Spencer

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²² “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.



MESSAGE: “Be Not Afraid” — Rev. Johan Dodge

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION — Rev. Johan Dodge

The way of the world is often not the way of God. The culture of the day when Jesus was born suggested that Joseph should have divorced Mary. The angel that appeared to Joseph encourages him to defy the tradition of the day. For many of us, traditions are comforting and deviating from tradition is scary. How do we move on from traditions that have locked us into unhelpful ways of going through life?



REFLECTION: “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” — Hannah Yi’s daughters:
Cameron Hellems, *pianist*
Leah Hellems, *violinist*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING — Phyllis Spencer

All that we have is gift from God.

For the sake of the joy that is ours when our bonds grow deep, let us give generously for the well-being of the world.

[Ushers, please come forward]

OFFERTORY: “Be Not Afraid” — Dave Albulario, *tenor*



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING — Phyllis Spencer



Holy God, you bless us with many gifts, you retrieve us from despair and fear, you visit us with surprising proclamations, and you intend for us good things. We thank you for your steadfast love, and your gifts of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Use our gifts to bring comfort and justice to those in need, reforming the ways of our world for the sake of new life. Amen.

[please stand as you are able]

HYMN: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

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

Let there be peace on Earth, the peace that was meant to be._____

— With God, our Cre - a - tor,_____ we are fam - i - ly._____

Let us walk with each oth - er_____ in per - fect har - mo - ny._____

Let peace be - gin with me, let this be the mo - ment now;_____

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

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

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

BLESSING — Rev. Johan Dodge

Now, let the face of God shine upon you to bless and encourage you as you bring light to the darkness. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH: “Blest Be the Tie that Binds”

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Blest Be the Tie that Binds". It is written for voice and piano. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "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." The score includes a piano introduction and a final cadence.

Music Team: Dave Albulario, *Tenor / Music Dir.*
Hannah Yi, *Pianist*

Jennifer Rudy, *Soprano*
John Fluker, *Pianist*

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

“What Child Is This?”
Traditional English Hymn Carol
GREENSLEEVES, harmony by John Stainer,
Words by William Chatterton Dix

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”
Tune: *ST LOUIS* by Lewis Redner,
Words by Rev. [Phillips Brooks](#)

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”
Music by Felix Mendelssohn; Words by
Charles Wesley; Arrangement by

“Be Not Afraid”
Music by Bob Dufford, SJ;
Arranged by Theophane Hytrek, OSF;
Lyrics based on *Isaiah 43:2-3* and *Luke 6:20*

“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.*

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PRAYER REQUESTS

new Nancy Westcott – Nancy asks for prayers of general health and well-being for SuZan, an elderly family friend who is in a care facility, recovering from hip replacement surgery and a fractured arm.

new Patricia Wolfe – Patricia asks for prayers for her daughter and son-in-law, Tiffany and Johnny. They are trying a second time to have a baby through IVF. Prayers that they are successful and that the embryo will go full term.

Carol Olsen – Carol is at home recovering well from a surgical procedure she had on December 8th. Her daughter is caring for her during recovery. She is grateful for all the prayers and thoughts, and absolutely loves the Prayer Shawl she was blessed with by our LWCC Prayer Shawl Team.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

FLOWERS and **FELLOWSHIP:** 🌸 Today's flowers are provided anonymously. 🍪 Fellowship refreshments are provided by Fred and Wilma Wind. See the sign-up charts to provide refreshments or cover the cost of altar flowers for future services. Altar flowers are \$35. See Sandy Walker to coordinate the arrangements.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: Our annual Christmas Worship Service will take place at 4:00 pm, this Wednesday, December 24, 2025, Christmas Eve. There is no service Christmas Day. The following Sunday, December 28th will be "Hymn-Sing Sunday."

RECENT LWCC WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:

November 23rd: 36 | November 30th: 33 | December 7th: 35 | December 21st: 38

POINSETTIAS GIVEN WITH LOVE

Donated by

In Memory / Honor of

LW Korean Community Church.....Friendship with LW Community Church

Mo Ashley.....Don & Rosie Ashley,
and Taylor White

Sandy Cardot.....Linda Haviland,
and Flora Lamphear

Lois & Jim Dimos.....Our Sons: Nic, Tony, Jon, & Matt

Jeanette Williams & Fred Reker.....Robert McKinney Jr.,
and Peter Fernandez

Patty Jo Schmitz.....My Son: B.C. Keller

Marylee Thomsen.....The Thomsen Family

Shirley Bator.....Harold Loerch

Carol Graves.....Taylor White

Advent



December 21, 2025



GROW PRAY STUDY

Notes from the Service

My Prayers this week:

Prayer Journal

Use this prayer in your time with God each day.

Household Prayer: Morning

Giver of light, in the light of your Christ I see myself clearly as your child. I rise in thankfulness for you are ever present when I sleep and when I wake. I rise to come to you in the hours of joy and in sorrow. I rise to live this day in your wisdom, without fear, without acrimony, but with charity toward those I meet and toward myself when I find I am wanting. Lead me into your desire for me this day, O God. Let me know your love is deep and abiding, in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Consider The Upper Room Daily Devotional
as a resource for Midday Prayer.*

Household Prayer: Evening

Giver of rest and resilience, in you I take time to recharge when the shadows grow long and the time for sleep has come. I thank you for the ventures of this day, for friends who helped me and for those who sought my help, for the skills you planted in me to hone and use, for the strangers whose lives entangled mine today and whose insights enrich my life. Keep me safe from harm as I sleep and bring me to a new dawn with strength to serve and rejoice; in Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

