

**CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL  
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawai'i  
Service of Worship December 15, 2024  
Third Sunday of Advent

Rev. Eric S. Anderson, Pastor

**WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD**

*Please note that audio and video of this service are being live streamed on the Internet and will be recorded. The right rear section of the sanctuary will not be captured by any cameras. Please be aware that in other sections you may be visible at times.*

**Prelude:** In the Bleak Mid-Winter

Kayleen Yuda

**Lighting of the Candles**

**Ringling of the Bell**

**Welcome**

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

**Lighting of the Advent Candle of Peace**

Roach family

Leader: It took an angel's visit, and a visit to her cousin, to awaken Mary to the wondrous love who was coming into her world. The words of the prophets were vague; the signs of the times were grim. A Savior's birth was hoped-for but unlooked-for – until the words of Gabriel and Elizabeth unlocked the heart of Mary, and her joy poured forth.

**All sing:**

**Christ be our joy; O let your birth  
Awake our songs of praise!  
Beyond all expectation come  
To resurrect our days  
Into a holy mystery  
We'll celebrate always.**

TUNE: BROTHER JAMES' AIR

Leader: In the first candle of Advent, we declare our Hope. In the second candle of Advent, we declare our commitment to Peace. In the third candle of Advent, we proclaim our Joy, arising when we least expect it. This candle glows for those who mourn. This candle glows for those who hunger. This candle glows for those deprived of health. This candle glows for Joy to the world. Let us pray with Mary in Mary's song:

**\*Hymn #119:** My Soul Gives Glory to My God (v. 1-5)

**Please be seated**

## **WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD**

**Anthem:** Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Kanako Okita

**Time with the Children**

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

**Scripture:** Philippians 4:4-7

Barbara Iwami

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Luke 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

**Sermon:** Gentleness

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

# WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

**Pastoral Prayer**

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

**Please join me in 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 and ever.**

**Amen**

**\* Hymn #115: The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore (v. 1-3, 6)**

**Call to Offering:**

Barbara Iwami

In our baptisms we were given into the care, guidance, and grace of God. In that grace, we are invited to share grace ourselves. This is one of those ways: contributing toward God's worship, God's will, and God's ways expressed in the Church of Jesus Christ. Whether you share your gift here in the church today, through a gift online, or via an envelope in the mail, let the offering now be received.

**Offertory: The Quiet Carol**

Kayleen Yuda

**\* Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below  
Praise Him above ye heavenly host  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost – Amen**

**\* Offertory Prayer**

Barbara Iwami

**Gracious God, you who respond to repentance with forgiveness, respond to these gifts, we pray, with thanksgiving. We have sought to follow your guidance and your ways, and though we may not always succeed, we pray that our efforts may be blessed with your expanding love and your ever-widening smile. Amen.**

**\* Hymn #146: Nu Oli (v. 1 Hwn, v. 1 Eng, v. 2-3 Hwn)**

**Please be seated**

**Announcements**

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

**Benediction**

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

**Postlude: The Advent Chorale**

Kayleen Yuda

**\* Please stand if you are able.**

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## **Dates to Remember**

Today, December 15 -- Deacons Meeting after worship

Entire month of December – The Giving Tree: Donations of canned goods and toiletries for those in need is appreciated

Friday, December 20, 6:00 p.m. – Community Concert, sanctuary or online

Saturday, December 21, 4:00 p.m. – Messiah Sing, sanctuary

Sunday, December 22, 10:00 a.m. – Christmas Pageant, sanctuary or online

Tuesday, December 24, 7:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols, sanctuary

## **This week at the Church of the Holy Cross**

### ▪ **Bible Study with Pastor Eric:**

Tuesdays, 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m. -Pastor's study

### ▪ **One Song:** Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. online

### ▪ **Hand Bell Choir Practice:** Fridays, 10:00 a.m. in the Meeting Room

### ▪ **Community Sing:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Fridays, 6:00 pm in sanctuary

## **Other Faith Groups that meet at Church of the Holy Cross**

### ▪ **The United Church of Christ, Pohnpei** – Sanctuary, 12 noon

**Rev. Bensis Henry**

### ▪ **Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa** – Sanctuary, 2:00 p.m.

**Rev. Sitau Ofoia, Jr.**

### ▪ **The Bedesta Church** – Sanctuary, 4 p.m.

**Rev. Edmes Edwin**

**Pastor**

Rev. Eric S. Anderson

**Moderator**

Stefan Tanouye

**Lay Reader**

Barbara Iwami

**Choir Accompanist**

Kanako Okita

**Choir Director**

Doug Albertson

**Organist**

Kayleen Yuda

**Soloist**

Marlise Ahuna

**Hand Bell Director**

Anna Kennedy

**Chapel Decorations**

Jean & Woody Kita

**Projected Imagery**

Sue Smith

**Web Master**

Ruth Niino-DuPonte

**Videographers**

Eric Tanouye, Eli Yamaki

Ruth Niino-DuPonte, Bob Smith

We welcome you to worship this day. Church of the Holy Cross seeks to help its members, friends, and visitors follow the guidance of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, encouraging all people to love one another according to the teachings of Jesus. We live and teach the faith, speak good news, minister to people near and far, and work with other households of faith and helping agencies to improve our community and our world. To learn more visit our website at [holycrosshilo.com](http://holycrosshilo.com).



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