



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES

4th Sunday of Advent: ADVENT OF LOVE

SILENT MEDITATION

ORGAN PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL (Worship Leader, Reader, Minister, Choir silently approach the Altar)

OPENING RESPONSES

Reader We are standing on the edge:
our earth—the blue-green jewel we call home –
stands on the edge of global catastrophe:
her green forests give way to charred blackened mess
her blue skies stifled by smog
her waters discolored by filth
her climate warming...

ALL WE ARE STANDING ON THE EDGE
THE EDGE OF LIFE—THE EDGE OF DEATH

Reader We are standing on the edge:
Earth's creatures stand on the edge of extinction.
Myriad species crafted at the hands of the Creator –
delighting Him in their diversity –
God's creatures vanish from the face of the earth –
and are lost forever.

ALL WE ARE STANDING ON THE EDGE
THE EDGE OF LIFE—THE EDGE OF DEATH

Reader We are standing on the edge:
human beings stand on the cutting edge of a new millennium.
Creatures made in God's image and likeness look into the future with fear –
standing on the edge of inescapable debt
standing at the edge of hunger and thirst –
life lived – but always at the edges...

ALL WE ARE STANDING ON THE EDGE
THE EDGE OF LIFE—THE EDGE OF DEATH

Reader We are standing on the edge:
human beings stand on the cutting edge of a new millennium.
Creatures made in God's image and likeness look into the future with fear –
standing on the edge of poverty
standing on the edge of homelessness
standing on the edge of addiction –
life lived—but always at the edges...

ALL WE ARE STANDING ON THE EDGE
THE EDGE OF LIFE—THE EDGE OF DEATH

Reader We are standing on the edge:
human beings stand on the cutting edge of a new millennium.
Creatures made in God's image and likeness look into the future with fear –
standing on the fringes of family-life

standing at the fringes of a prosperous society
standing on the fringes of what is called "normal"
life lived—but always at the edges...

ALL WE ARE STANDING ON THE EDGE
THE EDGE OF LIFE—THE EDGE OF DEATH

Reader We will follow You, Lord –
we will go where You go
and see as You see.

But when we see a world filled with pain—Lord, what hope is there?

(Adapted from "Standing on the Edge" @ 2005Wellspring)

ALL **WE BELIEVE**, that God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God's Kingdom in which love, justice and peace prevail. That the Kingdom of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, and where liberty is given to the captive and oppressed.

WE BELIEVE, that the resurrection of Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death, gives assurance of life after death, and we look forward to His coming again in all fullness and glory to make all creation new and to gather all the faithful in the Kingdom of God. Amen.

(From the UCCP Statement of Faith, revised 1992)

SUNG RESPONSE "The Kingdom of God is Where God is" HFJ #380

LIGHTING OF THE 4th ADVENT CANDLE "The Candle of Love"

Reader 1: The steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. *[Psalm 103: 17, 18]*

Reader 2: Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." *[John 15: 12]*

Reader 3: No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. *[John 15: 13]*

ALL: I AM GIVING YOU THESE COMMANDS SO THAT YOU MAY LOVE ONE ANOTHER. *[John 15: 17, all taken from the NRSV]*

SHARING OF CONCERNS

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

... Prayer for the Church

Response: Khumbaya my Lord, Khumbaya (3x)
O Lord, Khumbaya!

.... Prayer for the Country

Response: Someone's praying Lord, Khumbaya (3x)
O Lord, Khumbaya!

... Prayer for the World

Response: Someone's praying Lord, Khumbaya (3x)
O Lord, Khumbaya!

† SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 4:16-21 New International Version

Reader 1 (Narrator):

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read,¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

Reader 2 (JESUS):

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”^[a]

Reader 1 (Narrator):

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

† ACCLAMATION

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the earth hear His voice
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the people rejoice.
O come to the Father through JESUS the Son
And give Him the glory great things He has done!

MESSAGE OF LOVE AND HOPE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Caring and compassionate Creator, we enter this place set apart for worship, knowing that we have failed to see you in other places. We have ignored the beauty around us in earth and sky, in plants and creatures, in the people who surround us. We have chosen to live more with our fears than by our faith, to be weighed down by what we do not have, rather than in rejoicing in your gifts to us. In these moments together, draw us so close that we cannot help but know every day that you are with us, wherever we go. Enlarge our capacity to care and to love, so we may see you in all who we meet. In Jesus’ name. Amen. (adapted from ARC Retreat Center book of Worship)

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON

Minister: The good news is that God forgives us and gives us Christ to be living water and true bread. Let us accept with joy these precious gifts of abundant life. Amen.

RESPONSE

□ **“Great is Thy Faithfulness”** □

“Great is Thy faithfulness!” “Great is Thy faithfulness!”
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
“Great is Thy faithfulness,” Lord, unto me!

THE OFFERINGS

† HYMN OF ASSURANCE

□ **“Life of the World”** □ HFJ # 240

† PRAYER

Liturgist: May your LOVE strengthen our hands, so that we may use them to build bridges, not walls.

People: May your LOVE surround our hearts, so that we will love each other and all creation.

Liturgist: May your LOVE support our spirits, so that we are never afraid to proclaim and live the gospel.

People: And may your LOVE sustain our lives, so that our thoughts and actions this day will bring peace to our world.

All: We pray with assurance that you are the one who abides in us, and in whom we abide. Amen.

† BENEDICTION

Minister : We go forth in the LOVE of the God who calls us to be, who challenges us to dream, and who empowers us to act. Amen!

† FIVE FOLD AMEN

+++++