



## ORDER FOR WORSHIP

Sunday, December 20, 2020

Psalm 89: 1-4 19-26; Luke 1:26-38

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### **WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE A TIME FOR GATHERING AND QUIET MEDITATION**

*Welcome! We are so glad you have joined us for worship today. We would love to connect with you and support you in this strange season.*

*Please visit [www.saintjamespres.org/contact](http://www.saintjamespres.org/contact) to share how we can be of support.*

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#### **PRELUDE**

Luke Arnold

#### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Seth Thomas

#### **ADVENT CANDLE LITANY - WEEK 4**

Brian Johnson, Lector

Isaiah spoke to a people called chosen,  
to a tribe called Israel, with a light of hope.  
Gabriel came to a town called Nazareth,  
to a girl called Mary, with a light of joy.  
Mary went to a place called Bethlehem,  
to a stable called a nursery,  
with a light of love.

As we light our third Advent candle,  
**we rejoice with Mary, for Love has flesh.**  
Come now, O Child of Mary.  
**Come now, O Prince of Love.**

#### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

"People, Look East" - GTG #105

#### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

Rev. Seth Thomas

#### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"  
And yet, O Lord, we find ourselves paralyzed  
by fear of what we do not know.**

**Forgive us of our sins, O Lord,  
and give us the faith of Mary to respond to your grace  
with lives of grateful praise.  
Let us hear the good news that she first heard:  
Light is breaking. Love is coming.  
The world is about to turn! Amen.**

## **ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE**

**GODLY PLAY LESSON: MAGI**

Tracy Caruso

## **THE PEACE**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## **WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Brian Johnson

**FIRST SCRIPTURE READING**

Psalm 89: 1-4 19-26

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON READING**

Luke 1:26-38

**SERMON**

"Let All Within Us Praise Christ's Holy Name"  
Rev. Seth Thomas

**HYMN OF RESPONSE**

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" - GTG #88

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP**

**JOYS & CONCERNS**

**PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

## 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.

## INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

"Lo, How A Rose" - St. James Virtual Choir

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**HYMN OF COMMITMENT** "My Soul Gives Glory to My God" - GTG #99

## WE GO INTO THE WORLD AS GOD'S AMBASSADORS

### BLESSING & CHARGE

Rev. Seth Thomas

### POSTLUDE

Luke Arnold

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*As our worship concludes, our service begins.*

*We invite you to join us for fellowship in a chat room. Please introduce yourself to those new to you and extend the hand of peace, friendship, and welcome to everyone.*

**This Thursday, December 24th please join us for a  
virtual Christmas Eve candlelight service.  
Next Week, December 27th: Christmastide**

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## ST. JAMES STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Seth J. Thomas, [pastor@saintjamespres.org](mailto:pastor@saintjamespres.org)

Children & Family Director: Tracy Caruso, [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org)

Accompanist: Luke Arnold

Treasurer: Marina McLeod, [stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com](mailto:stjamestreasurer.bham@gmail.com)

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**ST. JAMES PRESBYTERIAN BUILDING IS CLOSED DUE TO THE  
CORVID-19 SHELTER IN PLACE STATEWIDE MANDATE. ALL  
ACTIVITIES HAVE MOVED TO ONLINE VENUES.  
CONTACT [pastor@saintjamespres.org](mailto:pastor@saintjamespres.org) FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

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Give to St. James Online:

<https://saintjamespres.churchcenter.com/giving>

Stay current on activities and happenings [@saintjamespres](https://www.instagram.com/saintjamespres)



## **GODLY PLAY: ADVENT IV**

This lesson helps children continue to prepare for the Mystery of Christmas. In the Advent lessons, we will move toward Bethlehem, guided by the pointing prophets, with the Holy Family, the shepherds, and the Magi. We arrive at the birth of Jesus and the lighting of the Christ Candle. This week's lesson focuses on the wise men and the celebration of Christmas.

## **BRING GODLY PLAY HOME**

Try the activities that were sent home and send pictures of your work and answers to any wondering questions to [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org).

## **LECTIONARY TEXTS**

For anyone wishing to study the lectionary texts. This week, December 20th, the lectionary texts are:

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26 (worship)

Luke 1:26-38 (preaching)

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 and Luke 1:46b-55

Romans 16:25-27

## **TODAY! CONGREGATIONAL MEETING DECEMBER 20TH**

There will be a meeting of the St. James Congregation, following our worship service today, to receive nominations for incoming church elders and deacons. The meeting will be conducted over Zoom, which has voting and conversation features that will allow us to conduct our business. Please join the Zoom meeting (include zoom link...) following worship, or stay on, to participate in this brief meeting.

## **A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Hello, Friends and Members of St. James,

The Membership Committee is crawling out of their LONG, QUIET winter to find HOPE in an early Spring. We look forward to the day it is once again safe to gather, share stories, laugh, and sing. Our Directory is one simple connection tool available to us. Would you please notify the church at [office@saintjamespres.org](mailto:office@saintjamespres.org) of any changes in your address, email, or phone contacts. We will be rerunning our last year's Directory photos. If you would like to submit a **new** photo to the same email link we will be happy to place it in the new copy.

Please send your changes in by January 8, 2021. This should allow us time to review and run our St. James Directory.

Thank you, the Membership Committee

## **THIS MONDAY! ST. JAMES BOOK CLUB**

St. James Book Club is currently reading *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro. *Never Let Me Go* breaks through the boundaries of the literary novel. It is a gripping mystery, a beautiful love story, and also a scathing critique of human arrogance and a moral examination of how we treat the vulnerable and different in our society.

We will be meeting Monday evening December 21st @ 7:00. Email [tracy@saintjamespres.org](mailto:tracy@saintjamespres.org) for the Zoom link.

## **SUNDAY BOOK STUDY**

Join us for an Advent book study of Kathy Escobar's *A Weary World*. During the holidays, so many of us can suffer from all kinds of reasons. The magnitude of our weary world weighs on our hearts and minds. We wrestle with chronic pain, broken relationships, shattered dreams, fragile faith, and unexpected losses. Our grief and sorrow feel particularly acute when compared to the festivity and joy everyone else seems to be feeling.

In *A Weary World*, Escobar provides daily and weekly reflections paired with prayers and practices to honor our struggles during the holidays. We will be meeting on Sunday mornings at 9:00. Use the regular Sunday worship service zoom link.

If you are interested in purchasing a book use the following link:

<https://www.pcusastore.com/Products/0664266932/a-weary-world.aspx>

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## **THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES**

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**Attention: all church activities have moved to on-line forums where applicable. Contact your group leader for details.**

Next Sunday

10:30am Streamed Sunday Worship Service

<https://www.facebook.com/saintjamespres/>