



Blossoming Desert by Hannah Garrity (You're invited to color this at home.)

The Third Sunday of Advent | Joy Sunday
December 14, 2025, 10:00 AM

Words of Welcome

“It is the mission of the Community Reformed Church of Colonie to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our souls and with all of our minds; and to love our neighbors as ourselves.” (Matthew 22:37-40)

We are a community bound together and energized by faith, love, and commitment to Jesus Christ. And even though you may not yet share that faith, love, and commitment, you are most welcome to be with us, to belong here, to experience what we’re about. Then, if you are attracted and persuaded by what you see and hear, we hope you’ll want to set down roots here long-term. And even if you don’t, you’ll always be a friend.

The Community Reformed Church of Colonie thanks you for worshiping with us.

Please join in the worship liturgy by reading aloud what is in ***bold italics***.

* = Please rise in body or in spirit

Portions of this service are inspired by the “Grounded & Growing” Advent series from Reformed Worship, and from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship’s “Worship Sourcebook”

For Contemplation

Yes, you will go out with celebration,
and you will be brought back in peace.
Even the mountains and the hills will burst into song
before you; all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12

PRELUDE “How Far is it to Bethlehem”

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

THE ELDER’S PRAYER – Melody

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES | The Bredice Family

Out of darkness a light shines.

From a dead stump, a shoot grows.

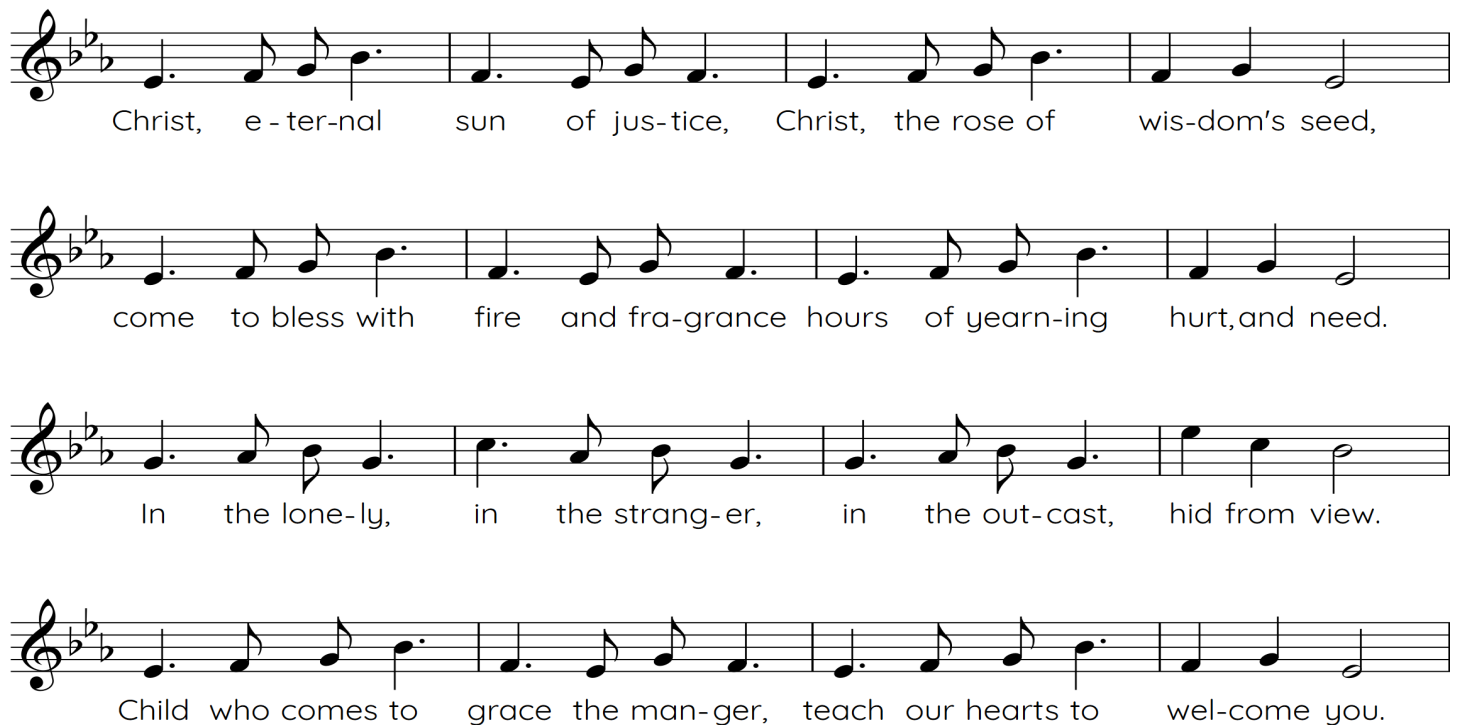
Out of the desert, a river flows,

and flowers will start to bud.

The weak will be strengthened,
and our mourning will turn to joy.
 So, in anticipation of Christ's coming,
we continue our Advent journey.
 Today, we light this candle of joy.

INTROIT "Now the Heavens Start to Whisper"

The soloist sings the verse and the congregation repeats it after.



Christ, e - ter-nal sun of jus-tice, Christ, the rose of wis-dom's seed,
 come to bless with fire and fra-grance hours of yearn-ing hurt, and need.
 In the lone-ly, in the strang-er, in the out-cast, hid from view.
 Child who comes to grace the man-ger, teach our hearts to wel-come you.

CALL TO WORSHIP Based on Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dreamed.
 Then our mouth was filled with laughter
and our tongue with shouts of joy!
 For the Lord had done great things for us,
so we were filled with joy!
 Our God turned our weeping into singing,
our tears into songs of joy!
 So come, thou long expected Jesus,
and set us free from our sin and misery!
 Awaken us to God, the overflowing source of joy.

* **OPENING SONG** “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.



Is-rael's strength and con-so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf-fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo-rious throne.

With its opening “Come,” this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = “coming”). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

PROFESSION OF FAITH “O Come, All Ye Faithful”



O come, all ye of faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant,
True God of true God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,

O come ye, O come ye to the Beth - le - hem!
Lo, he shuns not the vir - gin's womb;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Son of the Fa - ther, be - got - ten, not cre - a - ted;

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

CALL TO CONFESSION

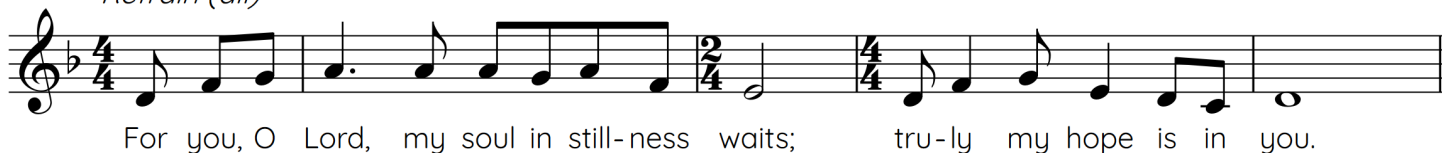
PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, we long for joy to be in our lives, yet we often live in ways that cause us to miss it. We're too busy, we carry shame for no good reason, and sometimes we even struggle to believe we deserve joy.

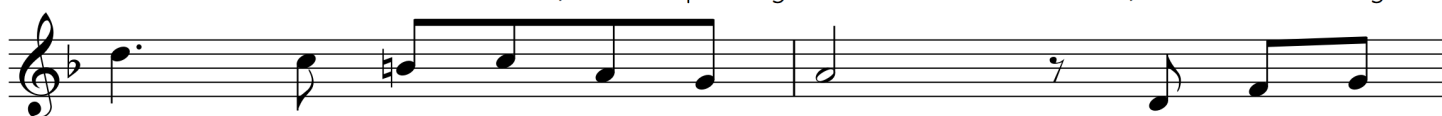
So forgive us when we accidentally or intentionally shut joy out. Help us slow the pace of our living, allowing for joy to catch up to us. Help us release the harsh stories we carry about ourselves and the world, making room for joy to take root and flourish. Enable us to trust that joy is not earned but given, and make our hearts ready for joy whenever and however it comes. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE “My Soul in Stillness Waits”

Refrain (all)



Verses (soloist)



ASSURANCE OF PARDON Based on Psalm 16:11

SUMMARY OF GOD’S LAW “Joy chose you”, a poem by Donna Ashworth

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE – Melody

DEACON’S PRAYER FOR THE WORLD – Marv

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

ANTHEM “Stir Up Your Power”

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit, come. Journey with us, and create within us blissful gratitude—joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 35:1-10 (NRSVue)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of God

Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. God will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. God will come and save you.”

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; then those who are lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of those who are speechless shall sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God’s people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

Sermon “You can only be ready”

* SONG OF RESPONSE “My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”



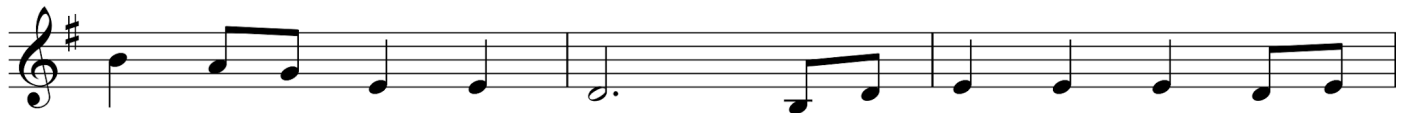
My____ soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the God of my heart is
From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a stone will be left on
Though the na - tions rage from_ age to age, we re - mem - ber who holds us



great, and my spir - it sings of the won - drous things that you
stone. Let the king be - ware for your jus - tice tears ev - ery
fast: God's_ mer - cy must de - liv - er us from the



bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight and my
ty - rant__ from his throne. The hun - gry poor shall_ weep no more for the
con quer - or's crush ing grasp. This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - ery
prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain:



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a -



way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn!

*** CHARGE & BENEDICTION**

*** THE IRISH BLESSING**

***May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be ever at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And the rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again, and until we meet again,
May the God who loves us all
Hold you in the palm of His hand.
Amen.***

WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Leader
Rev. Trey Tirpak

Music Director
Ben April

Elder of the Day
Melody York

Soloists
**Kevin Ingalls
Marissa Lombardo**

Deacon of the Day
Marv Helf

Sound Technician
John Lombardo

Liturgist
Vicki Lane

Video Technician
Cameron Kaercher

Children's Message
Melody York

Welcome Host
Pam Izzo

Coffee Hour Host
Sue Bredice

ZOOM

To join Sunday Worship via Zoom, use the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6880887155>

Meeting ID: 688 088 7155

By Phone: 1-646-558-8656

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How Far is it to Bethlehem

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Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

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Music: Welsh Melody, arr. Thomas Keesecker
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My Soul in Stillness Waits (GtG 89)

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Stir Up Your Power

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My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout (LUYH 69)

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Music: Irish traditional, arr. Rory Cooney
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The Irish Blessing

Words: Traditional
Music: Benjamin April © 2021 Benjamin April

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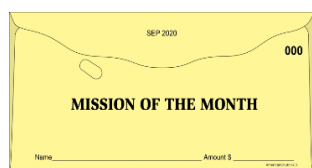
Website:

www.communityreformedchurch.com

Mailing Address:

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701 Sand Creek Road
Colonie, NY 12205

December Special Offering Envelopes –





Prayer E-Chain

Please email prayer requests to:

Karen Latta
kmlatta@nycap.rr.com
&
Karen Reynolds
kreynolds150@gmail.com

COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH OF COLONIE STAFF AND CONSISTORY

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CONSISTORY

Elders

Karl Coté, VP
Vicki Lane
Linda Murphy
Melody York

Deacons

Kevin Bottini
Marvin Helf
Kevin Ingalls
Jessica Kaercher

The Community Reformed Church of Colonie is a **Room for All (RfA)** congregation. Room for All congregations affirm and welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning individuals, and their families into our lives and the full life of the church. As an RfA congregation, we are committed to working with Reformed Church in America churches nationwide to reform denominational policies to allow full inclusion and to celebrate the diversity of all who worship our Lord. Christ's door remains open here and there is "room for all."



A wheelchair is located in the entranceway of the church.



A sign-up sheet for CD copies of this morning's service is located on the back table.



Large print bulletins are available on request.



Our sanctuary is now equipped with a hearing assistance system. Please ask the elder or deacon for a receiver.



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