

## **Dare to Imagine 3rd Sunday of Advent: Dare to imagine God's song!**

FOCUS: Singing together causes great joy and jubilation. But, even more, our hearts exult and swell as we imagine God singing over us.

### **Welcome**

### **Call to Worship**

*(adapted from Zephaniah 3:14-20; Philippians 4:4-7)*

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say: Rejoice!

**People: Shout for joy, rejoice with all your heart!**

Leader: God sings over you. Fear not, for God is in your midst.

**People: Shout for joy, rejoice with all your heart!**

Leader: Sing praises to God—shout aloud and sing for joy.

**People: God is in our midst.**

Leader: We listen.

**People: We strain to grasp the sound of God's song.**

### **Prayer**

#### **Candle Litany**

Leader: We light a candle of joy.

And we imagine:

**People: Jubilation! Rejoicing! Do not fear!**

Leader: We light the candle and join in God's song, singing loudly, singing fiercely, singing together.

**People: Imagine that . . . we are God's wonders, blessed wonders.**

### **Songs**

#### **Confession and Assurance**

Even our wildest imaginations cannot grasp the immense beauty and love of God. This is our true confession. We are small, God is bigger. We will never fully know, but we are fully known. We catch glimpses of God's magnificence, and we accept that it is only that, a glimpse. God invites us to accept our smallness—while we join the awesome songs of God's joy.

Our desire is to be immersed and "covered" in song.

Over our heads there is music with God. As we await the birth of Jesus, we do well to joyfully give ourselves to the One who imagines the divine in the form of a child.

Dare to imagine!

*"Over My Head," Voices Together 594)*

### **Children's time**

**Scripture** Zephaniah 3:14-20, Luke 3:7-18, John 1:29-30, Philippians 4:4-7

**Sermon** Fire of God Igniting a Song

### **Song**

## Sharing/Pastoral prayer

- Memories of Glen Rinckenberger

- After prayer times, *“Lord, in your mercy”* respond with *“hear our prayer.”*

## Offering Song

## Announcements

## Sending

Sing and sing. And when you cannot raise a note of song,  
the rocks will cry out. And when the echoing stones go still,  
in the dangerous crevice that is your heart, if you lie still,  
there remains an altar, a way to enter  
a terrible holiness, a lush and delicate calm.

## Sending Song

“You Shall Go Out with Joy” VT#847

Zephaniah 3:

<sup>16</sup> On that day

they will say to Jerusalem,

**“Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.**

<sup>17</sup> **The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves.**

**He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”**

**Luke 3:7-18** <sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

<sup>11</sup> John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

<sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

<sup>13</sup> “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

<sup>14</sup> Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

<sup>15</sup> The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup> John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” <sup>18</sup> And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

**John 1:29-30** John Testifies About Jesus

<sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup> This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”

**Philippians 4:4-7** Final Exhortations

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.