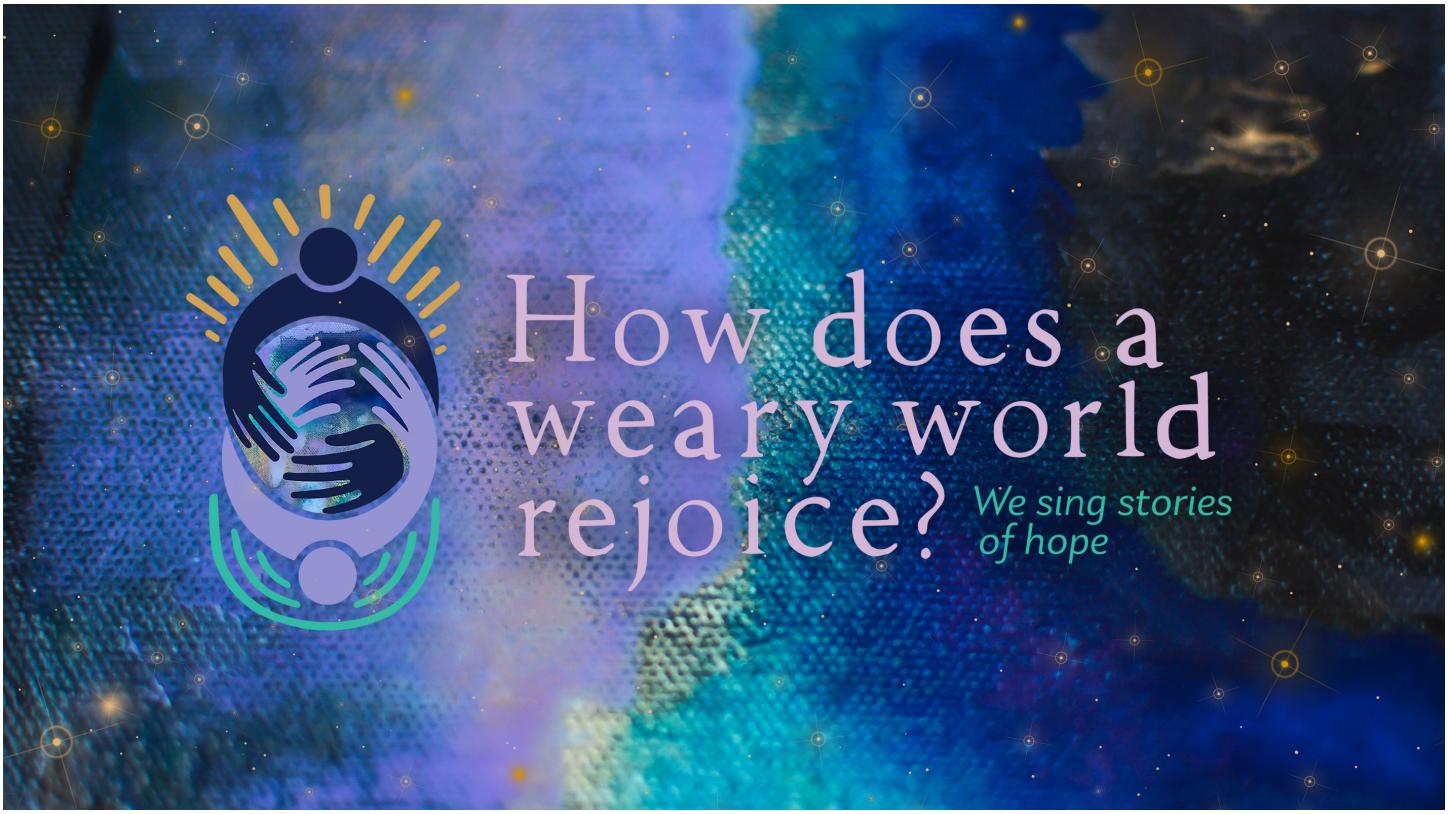
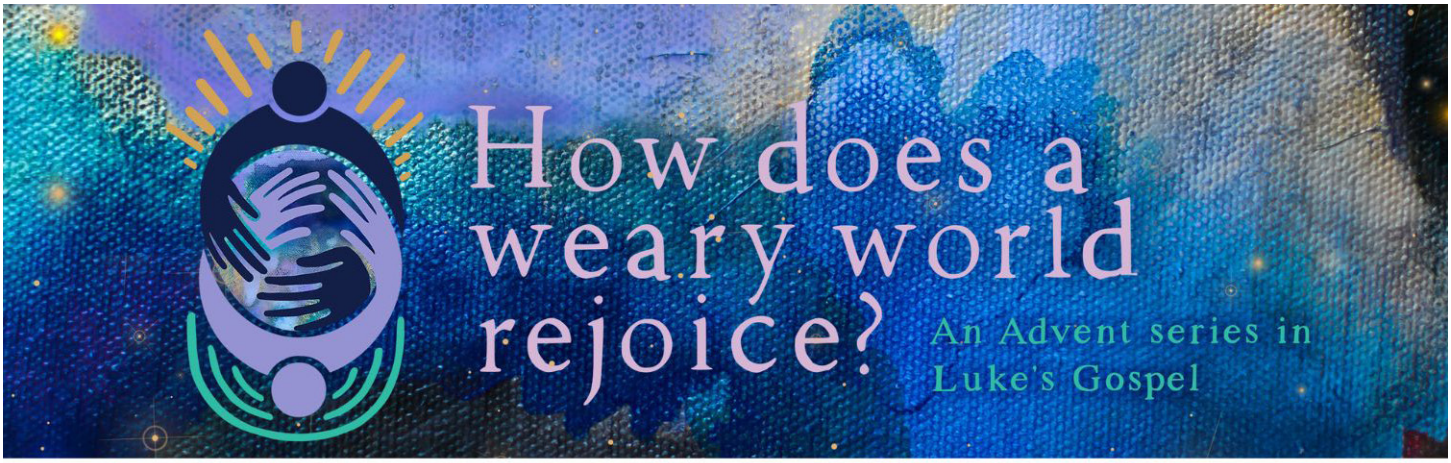
Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 24, 2023

Albany
First United
Methodist Church

Rev. Alyssa Baker, Pastor
Eric McKirdy, Organist & Music Director
Jason Caffarella, Choir Director



This advent season we are sharing in a worship series from Sanctified Art. We will journey through the beginning of Luke's Gospel reflecting on the question "How does a weary world rejoice?"

December 3rd: We acknowledge our weariness - Luke 1:1-23

December 10th: We find joy in connection- Luke 1:24-45

December 17th: We allow ourselves to be amazed - Luke 1:57-66 and Psalm 126

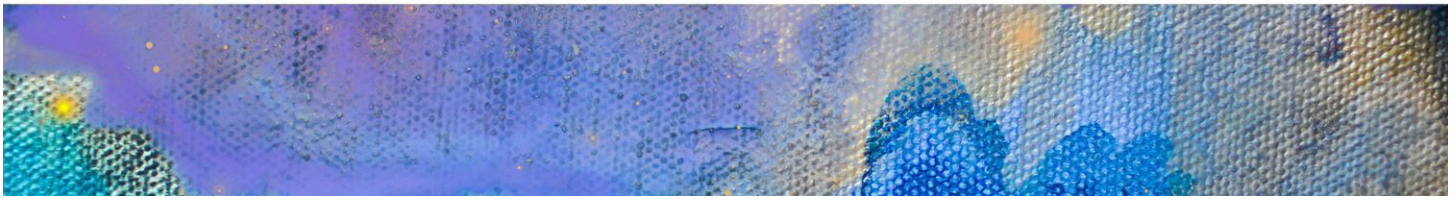
December 24th: We sing stories of hope - Luke 1:46-55 & 67-80 (Christmas Eve Sunday Morning Worship)

December 24th: We make room - Luke 2:1-20 (Christmas Eve Sunday Afternoon or Evening Worship)

December 31st: We root ourselves in ritual - Luke 2:21-38

January 6th: We follow the star - Matthew 2:1-12

January 7th: We trust our belovedness - Luke 3:21-22



Worship Notes: Unison responses are in **bold type**. An asterisk (*) shows where you may stand if you wish.

Welcome!

Welcome Terrie Sanderson

Prelude

Call to Worship Terrie Sanderson

How does a weary world rejoice?
We sing songs of hope. We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us. We tell the stories of what could be. We listen for God's word. We resist the temptation to give up or give in. We remember Mary's song. We gather for worship. We hope. We hope. Against all odds, we hope.
Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making. Let us worship holy God.

Passing the Peace
May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Please turn to your neighbor and share signs of Christ's peace. Listen for Eric to lead us into our opening hymn.

***Hymn:** *Lullaby of Praise* (page 5)

Lighting the Advent Candle: Sharon Justham & Carol Poppee

How does a weary world practice love?
By sending cards, and picking up the phone.
By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others. By learning people's stories and finding common ground.
By advocating for justice, and saving a place at the table.
There are a million ways to practice love. So today we light the candle of love as a reminder and a charge.
With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world. Amen.

An Advent Candle Skit Guys Video

Anthem: *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* Chancel Choir

Scripture: Luke 1:46-55

46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name;
50 indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.
54 He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Luke 1:67-80

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the
Holy Spirit and prophesied:
68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has
looked favorably on his people and redeemed
them.
69 He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the
house of his child David,
70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy
prophets from of old,
71 that we would be saved from our enemies and
from the hand of all who hate us.
72 Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our
ancestors and has remembered his holy covenant,
73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abra-
ham, to grant us
74 that we, being rescued from the hands of our
enemies, might serve him without fear,
75 in holiness and righteousness in his presence
all our days.
76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of
the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to
prepare his ways,
77 to give his people knowledge of salvation by
the forgiveness of their sins.
78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, the
dawn from on high will break upon us,
79 to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in
the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the
way of peace."
80 The child grew and became strong in spirit,
and he was in the wilderness until the day he
appeared publicly to Israel.

Sermon: "We sing stories of hope" Eric McKirdy

***Hymn:** *Song of Zechariah (Blessed be the God of Israel)* (pages 6-7)

Prayer Terrie Sanderson

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

Prayer Response: *Doxology for the Weary* Chancel Choir

***Hymn:** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* UMH #216

Closing Blessing Terrie Sanderson

Postlude

Announcements:

— This afternoon at 4 p.m. we will gather for our Christmas Eve worship. All are welcome. The service will be in person and also on our livestream.

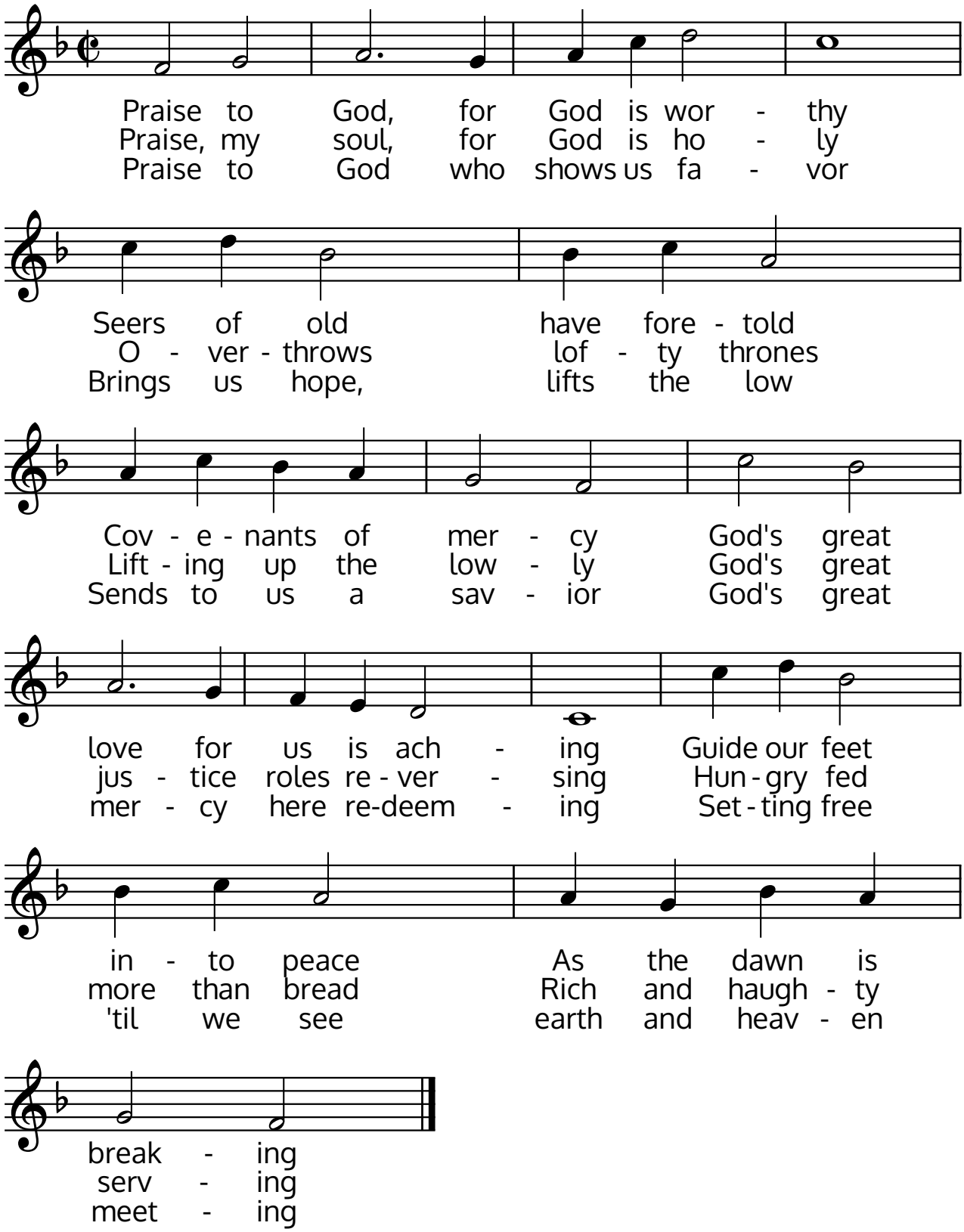
Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC |sanctifiedart.org.

Lullaby of Praise ©2023 Anna Strickland | A Sanctified Art, LLC | sanctifiedart.org
Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus ©Public Domain
Song of ZechariahMusic ©1983 Hope Publishing Company Text: Words ©1973 Jubilate Hymns
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming ©Public Domain

Lullaby of Praise

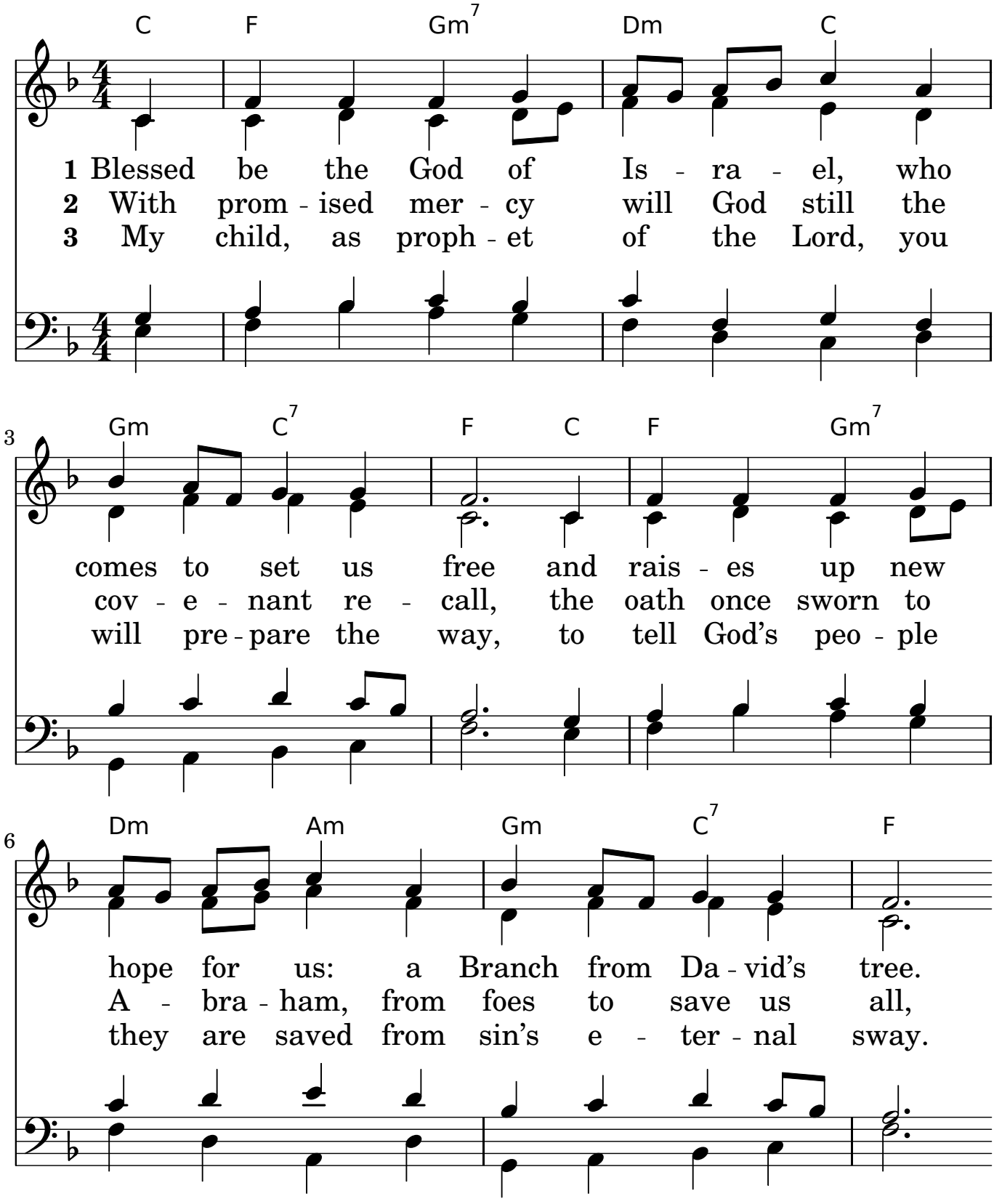
WARUM SOLLT' ICH ("All My Heart This Night Rejoices")

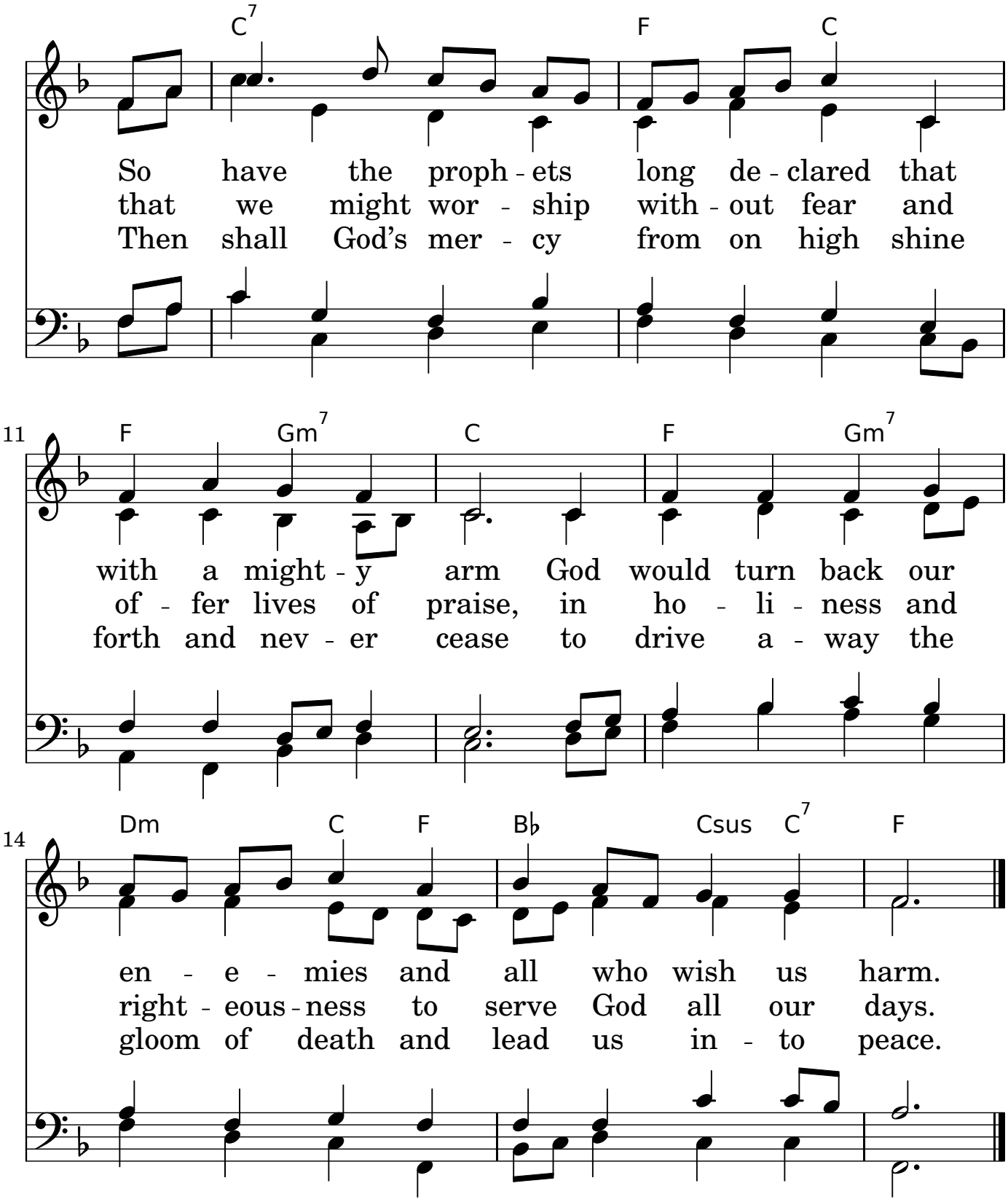
Text: Anna Strickland (2023) Music: Johann G. Ebeling (1666)



67 Blessed Be the God of Israel

LUKE 1:68-79



Chord symbols represent a simplified harmony.

C7 F C
So have the proph - ets long de - clared that
that we might wor - ship with - out fear and
Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine
11
F Gm7 C F Gm7
with a might - y arm God would turn back our
of - fer lives of praise, in ho - li - ness and
forth and nev - er cease to drive a - way the
14
Dm C F B♭ Csus C7 F
en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
right - eous - ness to serve God all our days.
gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Upcoming Events

Our advent worship series from Sanctified Art continues into the New Year. We will continue our journey through the beginning of Luke's Gospel reflecting on the question "How does a weary world rejoice?" All are welcome! Prior attendance in the series is not needed.

December 31st: We root ourselves in ritual - Luke 2:21-38

January 6th: We follow the star - Matthew 2:1-12
**South Santiam Circuit Epiphany Worship on Saturday January 6th at 11am at Albany First UMC with Potluck Fellowship to follow. All are welcome!

January 7th: We trust our belovedness - Luke 3:21-22

What is the South Santiam Circuit? A collection of United Methodist Churches who have sparked a new connection. Together the churches have one pastor, share in worship series, and are continuing to build relationships across the connection.

Worship For the South Santiam Circuit: One of the great things about sharing in ministry together is there are multiple options for worship. You can worship in person, live online, or online at your convenience.

Albany First UMC in person / Youtube live Sundays at 9:30am
Lebanon First UMC in person at 11:15am
Sweet Home UMC in person Sundays at 11am
South Santiam Circuit UMC Youtube Channel for Pastor Alyssa's message each week.

Follow South Santiam Circuit on Social Media: Each week on Facebook you will find scripture, news, and links to the weekly sermon video that is on our Youtube channel. Follow along! Invite your friends!

Facebook: @southsantiamcircuitumc
Youtube: @SouthSantiamCircuitUMC