

The Winter Rose

A Christmas Cantata

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Facebook: Bethel United Church of Christ – Kansas City

Bethel United Church of Christ Bulletin

Dec.20, 2020

Fourth Sunday in Advent

“While the world lies frozen beneath the chilling breath of winter, a spotless Rose blooms.”

The Winter Rose

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



CALL TO WORSHIP

When will he come? Our anticipation grows for Christ's love to bloom again.

We have waited and now the time grows near. Hope, peace, joy, and love live again.

Let our joy be made known through the sound of our singing and proclamation.

Let the light of Christ shine in the darkness and never fade.

INVOCATION *(unison)*

Long ago, O Christ, you came to us as an infant. This Advent season as our time of waiting draws to a close, we feel our hearts fill with anticipation. May our time of worship be dedicated to proclaiming your Good News to the world. Bless us and guide us in our worship this day. AMEN.

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE-LOVE* Rev. Karen Aitkens

“And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight.” Philippians 1:9

Advent is about love. We are social beings. That is our blessing and our curse. We long for each other. We long to touch, to share, to bare some part of ourselves, to be understood, to invite others into our lives. (All those things we have not been able to do this year.)

But love is dangerous. We hurt each other. When you choose to care about another, you can get your heart broken. If you reach out, you can be rejected, and that is more painful than never reaching out at all. If you try to belong, to give yourself to some group, you can be excluded, and that hurts more deeply even than being alone.

There is no love without risks. Love scares us...but the hunger and thirst, the longing for love is implanted in our deepest selves.

There is some part of this gift of life that does not keep, that can't be stored up or locked away. Some part of this spirit that God has placed within us *dies* if we do not spend it or share it or give it away.

To love is to touch the heart of God. To look into the eyes of another and recognize our common soul is to see the face of God. Even to feel the ache of a heart broken for love is to discover God's grace. As Tasso wrote: “Any time that is not spent on love is wasted.”

Today we light our fourth Advent candle: LOVE
(congregation sings as candle is lit)

*Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play,
where evil is banished and faith takes the day,
a babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes.
One candle is lit for God's loving surprise.*

Let us pray: (unison)

O God, you pour out your love on us and ask us to take the risk of loving one another. We can see that the stable is not far away where pure LOVE will come down and be among us. Prepare us for this awesome gift. Amen.

**edited from Seasons of Hope: Reading for the Liturgical Year by David E. Butler, c 1998.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Gracious God, who promised to send a Redeemer to your people, we confess that we have not trusted your promise, but have busied ourselves with activities that cloud our vision. We see the thorns and not the Rose. We give presents, but fail to be present with one another. We create commotion, and refuse to receive your peace. Forgive us, God, for our busyness and our lack of trust. Teach us to wait with loving patience for the fulfillment of your promise to us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

OUR SACRED STORY

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/LORD'S PRAYER (forgive us our sins...)

OFFERING OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Invitation

Offertory

*Prayer of Dedication

"Mary Did You Know"

AnnaLee Kapp

CANTATA

“*The Winter Rose*” by Joseph Martin & Pamela Martin

FOREWORD

“From the earliest Christian time, the rose has been a symbol of divine love. It gently reaches across the ages in ancient illuminations and freely spills from the pens and brushes of countless poets and artists. Echoing through our sanctuaries in the melodies and texts of many beloved carols, it brings to life the beautiful visions of biblical prophets and the hope of early Christian pilgrims.

“Today, the rose remains a vital expression of love and peace both inside the Church and the outside world. Her appearance in the garden is a treasured harbinger of the coming spring’s abundance. As a gift, the rose’s delicate beauty is usually reserved for the most meaningful expressions of the heart. No flower holds our dreams of love more beautifully than she.

“It is in that same spirit that the present work was conceived and written. It is our sincerest prayer that as Christ, the Rose of Sharon, opens before you this Christmas, your spirit will be encouraged by the beauty of God’s greatest gift. Let the words and music of this cantata remind you that even in the deepest winter, we are people of joy and life. . . children of the garden.”

Joseph and Pamela Martin

TODAY’S PARTICIPANTS:

Director – Jeremy Faust

Narrator – Rev Karen Aitkens

Pianist – Chad Willis

Instrumentalists - Natalea Bonjour
Gabbie Bates
Stephanie Coulter
Haley Hogue

Choir Members:

<u>Sopranos</u>	<u>Altos</u>	<u>Tenors</u>	<u>Basses</u>
Anne Eversmeyer	Lauri Buck	Tim Coulter	Kyle Buck
Toni Faust	Bev Duer	Don Eversmeyer	Mike Mendon
Randa Niederhauser	Shellie Ficco	Stan Niederhauser	Randy Pace
Marquita Pace	Liz Guevel		
Mary Ann Pierson	Kathy Hayes		
Susan Schindler	Beverly Heath		
	Marie Penrod		

Presentation of: THE WINTER ROSE

The Winter Rose

Words & Music by Joseph M. Martin

When Will He Come

Words & Music by Joseph M. Martin, based on French Folk Song UNFLAMBEAU JAENETTE ISABELLA

Advent Cry

Soloist – Mary Ann Pierson

Words & Music by Joseph M. Martin

Every Valley

Adapted from Isaiah by Joseph M. Martin incorporating VENI EMMANUEL, French 15th c.

Carol of Remembrance

Soloist – Lauri Buck

Music by Joseph M. Martin & J. Paul Williams
based on an Early American Song by C. E. Horn 1837

Lullaby to a Rose

Duet – Stan & Randa Niederhauser

Words & Music by Joseph M. Martin

In the Judean Hills (Underscore)

Music by Joseph M. Martin

Dance Into the Light

Words by Maddy Winer & Joseph M. Martin, Music by Joseph M. Martin

The Rose Tree Carol

Words & Music by Joseph M. Martin

The Winter Rose (Reprise)

Music by Joseph M. Martin

Lo, How a Rose

Arranged by Joseph M. Martin, ES IST EIN ROS' Geistliche Kirchengesang, German, 15th c.

***COMMISSION/BENEDICTION**

Take with you the message of the Good News of Christ Jesus.

Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth.

Go out to serve with hope, peace, joy, and love in your hearts. Go with purpose knowing that God our Creator guides us, Christ our Redeemer walks with us, and the Holy Spirit, our Sustainer, abides in us. The waiting is almost over, so let us proclaim, **Come Lord Jesus! Alleluia! Amen!**

POSTLUDE

“Rise Shepherds”

Preston & Kathy Corn

Music and Lyrics by Preston Corn