

Covenant Congregational Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Worship Gathering December 24, 2017 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing* arr. Smith & Hustad

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Karsten Mohn

INTROIT *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Plainsong

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN *O Come, All Ye Faithful* Hymn # 147

*CALL TO WORSHIP

**It may seem naive,
in a world of grief,
to choose to live in joy;**

**It may seem foolish,
in a world where seriousness is power,
to sing and dance to a different tune;**

**It may seem cruel,
in a world of suffering and injustice,
to speak of light and celebration;**

**But You have come, Jesus,
to bring joy into our grief,
light into our darkness,
singing into our mourning;
and it is an act of healing and proclamation
to believe and embrace the joy You offer.**

**Joy to the world!
The Lord is come!
Hallelujah! Amen.**

*SONG *Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come* Hymn # 146

CHOIR ANTHEM *Light One Candle* Sleeth, arr. Sorenson

ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING *The Candle of Love* ? Family

(Today, there is no Children's Church for K-5th Graders. Nursery care is still available)

THE WORD OF GOD

Old Testament Reading Hosea 14:1-9

14 Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God,
for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

²Take words with you
and return to the Lord;
say to him, "Take away all guilt;
accept that which is good,
and we will offer the fruit of our lips.

³Assyria shall not save us;
we will not ride upon horses;
we will say no more, 'Our God,'
to the work of our hands.

In you the orphan finds mercy."

⁴I will heal their disloyalty;
I will love them freely,
for my anger has turned from them.

⁵I will be like the dew to Israel;
he shall blossom like the lily,
he shall strike root like the forests of Lebanon.

⁶His shoots shall spread out;
his beauty shall be like the olive tree,
and his fragrance like that of Lebanon.

⁷They shall again live beneath my shadow,
they shall flourish as a garden;
they shall blossom like the vine,
their fragrance shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

⁸O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols?
It is I who answer and look after you.

I am like an evergreen cypress;
your faithfulness comes from me.

⁹Those who are wise understand these things;
those who are discerning know them.

For the ways of the Lord are right,
and the upright walk in them,
but transgressors stumble in them.

Response: The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

