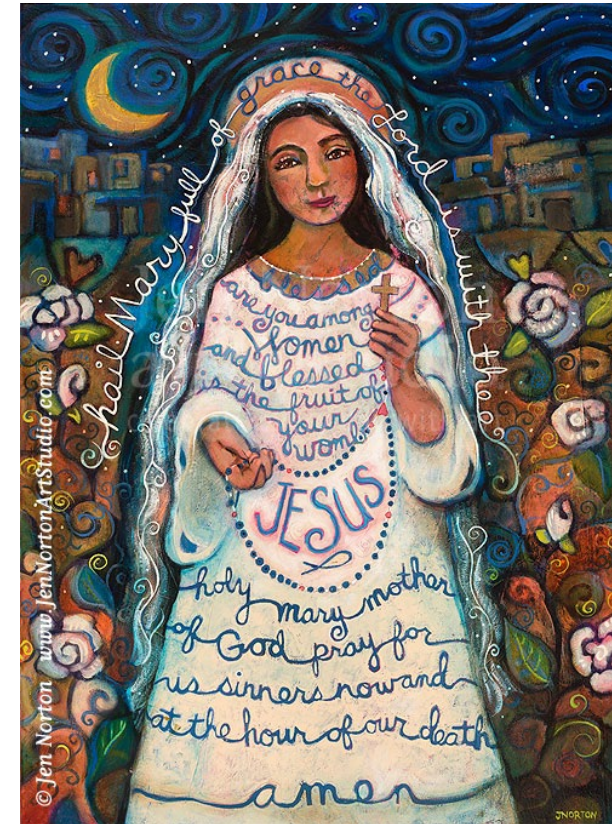


Orinda Community Church
Order of Worship
Sunday, December 17, 2023, 10:00 a.m.
Third Sunday of Advent: JOY



Painting by Jen Norton

Reflection:

Is sorrow the true wild?

And if it is—and if we join them—your wild to mine—
what's that?

For joining, too, is a kind of annihilation. What if we joined
our sorrows, I'm saying. I'm saying: What if that is joy?"

— Ross Gay, from *The Book of Delights*

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

David Milnes

BRINGING OF THE LIGHT & RINGING OF THE HOUR

The Acolytes

WELCOME

Reverend Elizabeth Robinson

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP* *from John Shelby Spong's website* Nancy Peterson

One: Our souls sing in gratitude. We are dancing in the mystery of God. The light of the Holy One is with us and we are blessed, so truly blessed.

All: **This goes deeper than human thinking. We are filled with awe at Love whose only condition is to be received.**

One: The gift is not for the proud, for they have no room for it. The strong and self-sufficient ones don't have this awareness.

All: **But those who know their emptiness can rejoice in Love's fullness. It's the Love that we are made for, the reason for our being. It fills our inmost heart space and brings to birth in us, the Holy One.**



SPONSORSHIP ORDER FORM Christmas 2023 Sponsor a Memorial/Honorary Poinsettia

Your name _____

Name of memorial or honoree (**circle one**) _____

Number of flowers at \$18.00 each: _____

Check for \$_____ enclosed

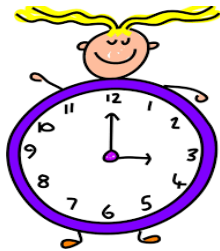
Flowers can be picked up following the 5:00 pm service on Sunday, December 24.
Return form to church office or put in offering plate by December 17, 2023.



Elementary aged kids are welcome to join us in the Agape Center each week for some learning and fun! Kids start in the Sanctuary for Sunday service and then are excused part way through, to go to Sunday School.

For any questions about Sunday School or if you want to volunteer, please contact Amy Parlett at saparlett@comcast.net

STEWARDSHIP TIME



You may have received your pledge card in the mail.

In case you have not received yours yet, you will find extra pledge cards with the ushers.

Because of YOU our church changes lives.

If you haven't sent in your pledge card yet, please do so now!
There is no OCC without your support!

HYMN* BH 128

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina G. Rossetti

COMMUNITY PRAYER *from Julian of Norwich* Nancy Peterson

Glad and merry and sweet is your blessed and lovely demeanor towards our souls, for you have witnessed us always living in love-longing, and want our souls to be gladly disposed toward you. By your grace you lift up and will draw our outer disposition to our inward, and will make us all at unity with you, and each of us with others in the true, lasting joy which is Jesus. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Reverend Leonore Cruise

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

**Stand as you are able*

POEM

by Reverend Leonore Cruise

The Gospel brings Good News.
“Joy’s alive - our gift, our muse.”

Even though our memory ebbs
and confusion sets the tone,
And even though a sinful act
may leave a spouse alone.

Yes, even when a cancer
crawls inside one’s very bones,
and focused hate may lead to war;
foundations fall as silt and stones.

Even then love weaves us hope.
A tiny thread will lift our lives
from deep despair to purposed goals.

The miracle of presence holds
a peaceful place inside our souls.
In Christ, we know this home.

A smile unlocks the holy ground
where joy abides, a sacred find.
Gratitude will worship joy - a gift divine.

SAVE THE DATE JANUARY 14, 2024!

**LUKAS VESELY PRESENTS
SONGS OF GRATITUDE**

*Lukas Vesely - piano and bass
Jonathan Bautista - sax
Joe De Rose - drums*

*January 14, 2024
1 pm*

*Orinda Community Church
Sanctuary
10 Irwin Way
Orinda, CA 94563*

LIGHTING OF THE 3rd ADVENT CANDLE: JOY Craig Taatjes



**Winter Nights will be at OCC
February 12 through February 26, 2024**

Winter Nights is a shelter program for families who are unhoused.

The shelter moves to different churches for two weeks each, through the nine months it is open. Each church provides a warm, hospitable environment, healthy food and friendly volunteers. Winter Nights staff are always on hand while families are in residence.

Many volunteer opportunities will be available. The sign-up for the various tasks will take place beginning Sunday, January 7. Meals preparers and servers, child care, tutoring, overnight helpers are among the volunteer tasks.

The Christmas offering collected at OCC will be dedicated to Winter Nights. Also, you can just put Winter Nights in the note on your check any time between now and Christmas.

ANTHEM

WE LISTEN

SCRIPTURE READING

Nancy Peterson

Luke 1:46-53

And Mary said, My soul magnifies God, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For God has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For the Mighty One has done to me great things; and holy is God's name. And God's mercy is on them that fear God from generation to generation.

Our God has showed strength with the Divine arm and has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. God has put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

See, our Loving God has filled the hungry with good things; and the rich have been sent empty away.

SERMON

Ragged Joy

Reverend Elizabeth Robinson

WE RESPOND

HYMN* BH 123 *Mary, Woman of the Promise* Mary Frances Fleischaker

A TIME OF PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

**Our God, 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.
Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever. Amen.**

MOMENT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY SOLO

**Stand as you are able*

THANK YOU TO

Jill Oberheim

for providing coffee and refreshments today.



**If you're able to take on this greatly appreciated service
for one Sunday, please sign up today!
The ushers have the Coffee Hour sign-up sheet.**



Thank you to this week's ushers:

**Joyce Crawford, Mike Kersten,
and Jeane & Roger Samuelsen**



ARE NEEDED!

About 4 friendly volunteers are needed to join our usher teams for the 2024 calendar year. Youth are especially encouraged to volunteer. Two additional greeters are also needed to focus on welcoming first-time visitors to our worship services.

The commitment for both ushers and greeters is for just one Sunday a month. These opportunities for service are a great way to meet and serve all who attend our worship services and to provide an extravagant welcome to people in the greater community.

If you would like to volunteer or for more information, please contact our Usher Coordinator, Mike Kersten, at mikejkersten@aol.com or by cell **925-254-2209**

DOXOLOGY **RH** 94

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

HYMN* BH 132

Joy to the World!

Isaac Watts

BENEDICTION*

Reverend Elizabeth Robinson

POSTLUDE

David Milnes

**Stand as you are able*

Orinda Community Church

10 Irwin Way, Orinda, CA 94563

(925) 254-4906

office@orindachurch.org

Reverend Elizabeth Robinson, Senior Pastor

David Milnes, Director of Music

Anna Gregory, Office Administrator

WEEKLY EVENTS

In addition to 10 am Sunday worship, we offer these weekly:

- ✚ Monday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Chapel, we host Centering Prayer.
- ✚ Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., we hold a brief Contemplative Service in the chapel, which includes readings, music, prayer time, and silence. This service also goes out electronically.
- ✚ Life and Loss Group meets every Thursday in the Fireside Room from 12:15 pm to 1:45 pm. No need to sign up. Please stop by if you are interested.
- ✚ Thursday afternoons at 2:00 p.m., our Theology and Scripture group meets via Zoom to discuss theology, the bible, and other topics. The next meeting is Thursday, December 21.

And these, every other week:

- ✚ Two Tuesdays a month, the Writers' Group shares and discusses their writings via Zoom at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, January 9.
- ✚ Two Thursdays a month, starting at 3:45 p.m., the Reading Group meets via Zoom. The room opens 15 minutes early for welcome and chatting. Our next meeting is Thursday, January 11.

ADVENT

**Please join us for the last 2023
Advent Wednesday Night Special Event**



**Wednesday, December 20, @ 7 pm in Fellowship Hall:
Solstice Service and Labyrinth Walk**