



**Furrows, be glad. Though the earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.**

**Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.  
Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Bird, is on the way.**

### **INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

Let us confess our sins to the One whose mercy endures from generation to generation.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Faithful God, we know that you are always there to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening to you and discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins, that our lives may magnify your holy name forever.**

**Amen.**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Sisters and brothers, by the faith of Christ, our sins are forgiven. We are blessed by the God of our salvation, whose mercy is everlasting.

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**Faithful God, you chose Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Sovereign and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now fill us with your grace, that with her, we may understand your ways, rejoice in your salvation, and embrace your will; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

### **CHOIR ANTHEM**

**“When Will the Little King Come?”**

Words & Music by Ruth Elaine Schram

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

#### **2 SAMUEL 7:1-11**

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

<sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal

leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” <sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

### **PSALM 89:1-4, 19-26**

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

**<sup>2</sup> I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

<sup>3</sup> You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David:

**<sup>4</sup> ‘I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.’**

<sup>19</sup> Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said: “I have set the crown on one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people.

**<sup>20</sup> I have found my servant David; with my holy oil have anointed him;**

<sup>21</sup> my hand shall always remain with him; my arm also shall strengthen him.

**<sup>22</sup> The enemy shall not outwit him, the wicked shall not humble him.**

<sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.

**<sup>24</sup> My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him; and in my name his horn shall be exalted.**

<sup>25</sup> I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

**<sup>26</sup> He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!’ and his throne endure before me like the sun.**

### **LUKE 1:26-38**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” <sup>34</sup> Mary

said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

## **SERMON**

## **NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD**

## **HYMN 110**

## **LOVE HAS COME**

**Love has come: a light in the darkness!  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See all heaven has come to proclaim it,  
Hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!  
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.**

**Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.  
Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother;  
What is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers.  
Love! Love! Jesus Emmanuel.**

**Love has come and never will leave us!  
Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us.  
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!**

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**God sent the promised Deliverer to his people. Jesus, the long expected Savior, came into the world as a child, descended from David, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary, a virgin.**

**We affirm that Jesus was born of woman as is every child, yet born of God's power as was no other child.**

**The coming of Jesus was itself the coming of God's promised role. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection, Jesus brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

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

**HYMN 105 PEOPLE, LOOK EAST (vss. 4 & 5)**

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east, Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth. Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

**CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen"** English Melody  
Arranged by Marty Parks  
Piano arr. By Marilyn Ham

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**Sunday, December 20, 2020 7:00 pm**

**Please use the same Zoom link we use on Sunday mornings. Bring your Advent candles to worship as well.**

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**Sunday School will continue and meet on Dec. 27. Many thanks to Donna Van Duyne for this important ministry.**

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***We will worship at 7:00 pm on Christmas Eve.  
Please have a candle or light for the service. Use  
the same Zoom link we use on Sunday mornings.***



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**GIVING TO 1<sup>ST</sup> PRESBYTERIAN OF ROCKAWAY**

- Go to our web page (fpcrockaway.org), scroll down to “donate” and give electronically
- Mail your donation to:  
1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian of Rockaway  
35 Church St.  
Rockaway, NJ 07886

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Stephen Ministry



**Things Are Different This Year**

1. With the holidays upon us and during this year of Covid-19, your Stephen Ministry team continues to provide care to those suffering illness, loss, isolation and stress. Stephen Ministers talk with their care receivers by phone. We look forward to the time when we can meet in person with our care receivers but will continue to follow CDC, state & our church’s guidelines.

If you would like to talk with a Stephen Minister on a one-time basis, we would be glad to talk confidentially with you. Please call our Referrals Coordinator, Linda Kirby (973-316-0598 or [lkirby717@aol.com](mailto:lkirby717@aol.com) ) or one of our Stephen Leaders: Pat Warren (973-586-2923), Sue Scott (201-412-9285) or Betty Smith (973-432-9410).

At Stephen Ministries we continue to pray for you during the holidays and this pandemic.

In His Peace,  
Your Stephen Leader Team