

# ALKI UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 20, 2020

## The Fourth Sunday in Advent



**We are a church where Jesus the healer meets Jesus the revolutionary,  
and where together, we grow a just and peaceful world.**

**Gathering Music**                      Betsy Stelzer, Accompanist

### **Lighting of the Advent Candle**

**Welcome**                                Rev. Kelly Wadsworth

**Call to Worship**                      Dan K, Liturgist

**Opening Song**                        *In the Bleak Midwinter*                      French Folk Melody

**Scripture Reading**                  John 1:6-8 and 14, a vision for a people in need of hope

There once was a man, his name John, sent by God to point out the way to the Life-Light. He came to show everyone where to look, who to believe in. John was not himself the Light; he was there to show the way to the Light.

John pointed him out and called, “This is the One! The One I told you was coming after me but in fact was ahead of me. He has always been ahead of me, has always had the first word.”

We all live off his generous bounty,  
    gift after gift after gift.

We got the basics from Moses,  
    and then this exuberant giving and receiving,

This endless knowing and understanding—  
    all this came through Jesus, the Messiah.

No one has ever seen God,  
    not so much as a glimpse.

This one-of-a-kind God-Expression,  
    who exists at the very heart of the Father,  
    has made him plain as day.

When Jews from Jerusalem sent a group of priests and officials to ask John who he was, he was completely honest. He didn’t evade the question. He told the plain truth: “I am not the Messiah.”

They pressed him, “Who, then? Elijah?”

“I am not.”

“The Prophet?”

“No.”

Exasperated, they said, “Who, then? We need an answer for those who sent us. Tell us something—anything!—about yourself.”

“I’m thunder in the desert: ‘Make the road straight for God!’ I’m doing what the prophet Isaiah preached.”

Those sent to question him were from the Pharisee party. Now they had a question of their own: “If you’re neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?”

John answered, “I only baptize using water. A person you don’t recognize has taken his stand in your midst. He comes after me, but he is not in second place to me. I’m not even worthy to hold his coat for him.”

These conversations took place in Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing at the time.

**Sermon** Rev. Kelly Wadsworth

**Sung Response** O Come, O Come Emmanuel Thomas Helmore

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by Thine Advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight!  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, o Israel.

**Offering Prayer**

*Please donate generously through [alkiucc.org](http://alkiucc.org), through a mailed donation to the church office or through text-to-give by texting the word “AlkiUCC” to 44321 and a donation link will come back to you. Your support for Alki is more important now than ever as the church seeks to be a prophetic voice for all people in the year ahead.*

**Offering Music** I Want To Walk As A Child Of The Light Kathleen Thomerson

**Closing Prayer**

**Moment of Ministry** Worship and Music

**Announcements**

**Closing Hymn** Love Has Come Down French Melody; arr. Eric. T. Myers

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

**Hospitality Hour**

**Important note: Alki UCC Sunday worship is recorded for posting on YouTube.**

###