

LET THERE BE

Love

THE SEASON OF  
ADVENT

First Chinese Baptist Church  
December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

Welcome and Announcements

Lisa Lee

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

“The First Noel”

Offering & Doxology

Advent Service

The Candle of Love

Rev. Jeannie Gong

“Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”

“Resound and Rejoice!”

Bell Choir

“Mary’s Love”

Pastor Steve Thurman

“Joy to the World”

Benediction

God be with You

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

### Mary's Song

And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has been mindful  
of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—  
holy is his name.  
His mercy extends to those who fear him,  
from generation to generation.  
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;  
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.  
He has brought down rulers from their thrones  
but has lifted up the humble.  
He has filled the hungry with good things  
but has sent the rich away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering to be merciful  
to Abraham and his descendants forever,  
just as he promised our ancestors."

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Luke 1:39-56





## *How Do We Find Love in a Weary World?*

### **A Responsive Advent Call to Confession:**

Leader: How does a weary world practice love?

**People: By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others. By learning people's stories and finding common ground in our diversity.**

Leader: By advocating for justice, and saving a place in our worship, in our celebrations, at our tables.

**People: There are a million ways to practice love. So today may we be such examples to our neighbors, our friends and family.**

## **Lighting the FOURTH CANDLE OF ADVENT**

Leader: Today we light the fourth candle of Advent: The Candle of Love. With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world. Thanks be to God for His unending love. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer: Rev. Jeannie Gong

**Let's Sing: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!**

## **Hark! the Herald Angels Sing**

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful, all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing.  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest Heav’n adored,  
Christ the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time, behold Him, come,  
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail th’ incarnate Deity,  
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing.  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heav’nly Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris’n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die;  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing.  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

**Some background on our series...**

**Look closely this morning at the confusion. Do you see the first evangelists? The shepherds kneeling at the manger? I've always been fascinated by the scripture which describes how they got the message to go see the baby. Read with me, Luke 2:9, "An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified."**

**Wow! I wonder what that must have looked like? Was the sky lit with fireworks. Perhaps LED lighting, maybe a glow like the northern lights. All we know is the colors must have come raining down from the Lord. So, use your imaginations as you read Luke 2:8-18.**

For Advent this year I thought it would be appropriate for our pastoral leaders to direct our service as we prepare for Christmas. We are so fortunate to have strong pastoral leadership that serves both here in our church, in education and globally. Today we welcome one of our own The Rev. Michele Turek.

Michele currently serves as ABHMS National Coordinator of Asian Ministry for American Baptist Churches. Rev. Turek has served and continues to serve here in our fellowship but has always had a long history of serving Asian American Baptist Churches in a variety of leadership roles. She spent three years with Japanese Baptist Church of Seattle and then served as Field Operations Director for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA. In addition to an undergraduate degree from CSU Fresno, Rev. Turek has a Master of Divinity from Fresno Pacific University. FCBC had the privilege of ordaining her to the pastoral ministry. PLUS, she plays in our praise team. Today we give thanks for Michele and her family as they serve among us.



*Christmas Eve*  
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24TH

6:30 PM

**Interim Pastor Steve Thurman** · [steve@fcbcfresno.org](mailto:steve@fcbcfresno.org)

**Rev. Jeannie Gong** – 中文牧師 · [jeannieg@fcbcfresno.org](mailto:jeannieg@fcbcfresno.org)

**Music Director Jeff Burkett** · [jeff@fcbcfresno.org](mailto:jeff@fcbcfresno.org)

**Office Manager Elizabeth Ott** · [liz@fcbcfresno.org](mailto:liz@fcbcfresno.org)

**Pianist Cristobal Abejo**

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