

## Boundless Love

Ocean spray blossoms may overflow  
their foliage in early summer.

The river may burst  
its banks, swollen with winter rains.

Artwork may erupt  
past its frame and make the viewer look again.

Music of French horn and flute may break  
beyond walls of concrete and wood.

Pandemic, fire, and violence may upend  
life, routine, and comfort.

Tears may course  
over cheeks roughened by wind and hard times.

A little Child's life may turn  
kingdoms of corruption upside down.

While Eastern sages teach: "Do not worry that your life is  
turning upside down. How do you know that the side  
you are used to is better than the one to come?"

And beyond  
and within all that—  
all longing, all joy, all affection—  
overflowing still—  
we may find  
uncontainable,  
unnameable,  
Divine Love.

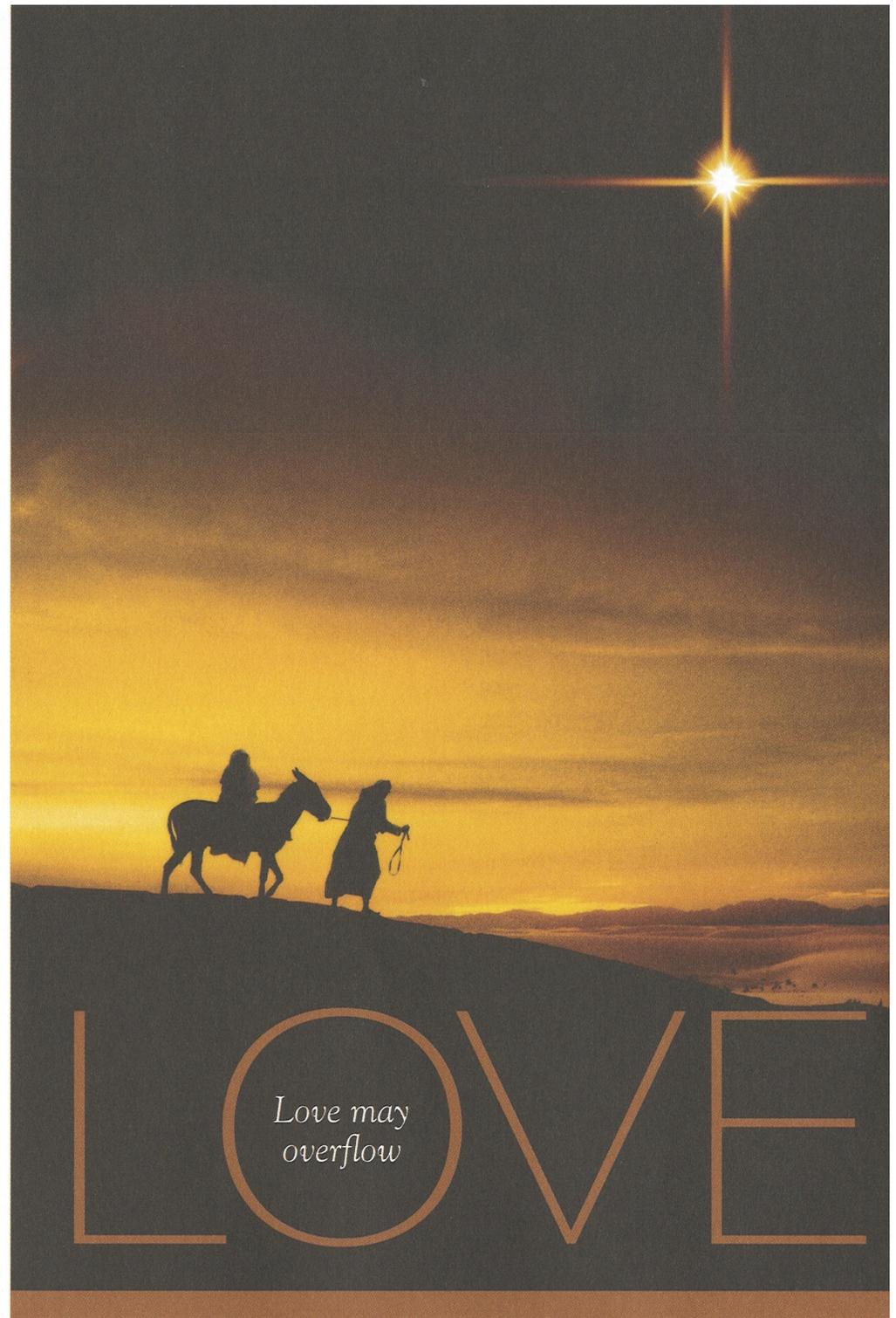
—Lani Wright  
Cottage Grove, Oregon

**Text for today:** "And this is my prayer, that your *love may overflow* more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ . . ." (Phil. 1:9-11, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11 (9); Luke 3:1-6.

Cover design by Paul Stocksdale; © 2021 Church of the Brethren  
12-05-21, Second Sunday of Advent. Printed in the USA  
Worship resource © 2021 Brethren Press

BR-P-21-49  © Anchor/Wallace

Produced for Brethren Press



CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN  
Hagerstown, Maryland

**MORNING WORSHIP**

**10:45 AM**

December 5, 2021

Second Sunday of Advent

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE** "Of the Father's Love Begotten" (Martin)

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** Brenda Shane, Worship Leader

One: Listen! Listen for a messenger from God.  
The way is being prepared for Christ's coming.

**All: We are here to listen for a word from God.  
We have gathered to prepare for Christ's advent.**

One: Come with your joys and sorrows, laughter and  
tears. There is a place for you in the company of  
seekers.

**All: We thank God for our acceptance in the church.  
We rejoice to offer the love of Christ to others.**

One: We are partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ.  
Claim anew today this opportunity  
and responsibility.

**All: We are glad God is doing great things among us.  
We want to rejoin ourselves to God's work  
in the world.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

How good it is to gather where garments of sorrow and  
affliction are removed. Here, we are wrapped in the beauty  
of God's glory and welcomed to life at its fullest. Surely you  
restore us to our best, mighty God, and equip us for produc-  
tive living. Make a difference within and among us today so  
we can work for a better tomorrow. Amen

**\*HYMN #184**

*"Hark! The glad sound!"*

[Verse 1]

*Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes! The Saviour promis'd long!  
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song.  
On him the Spirit largely pour'd, exerts his sacred fire; wisdom and  
might, and zeal and love, his holy breast inspire.*

[Verse 2]

*He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.  
He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure, and with  
the treasures of his grace, to enrich the humble poor.*

[Verse 3]

*His silver trumpets publish loud the jub'lee of the Lord.  
Our debts are all remitted now, our heritage restored.  
Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, thy welcome shall proclaim,  
and heav'n's eternal arches ring, with thy beloved name.*

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE**

One: Too often, the world seems to see the unfamiliar with  
eyes of fear rather than of love.

**All: Too often, we approach even ourselves with  
unfair criticism instead of encouragement  
and understanding.**

One: Yet, as Christmas draws near, we long for the presence  
of love itself in a God who speaks with the silenced  
and walks with the outcast.

(Please pause while the candle is lit)

**All: As we light the candle of love, O God, we pray that  
your warmth would soften our judgments of  
ourselves and our neighbors, that we might see the  
world with your abundant love that defies  
expectation and understanding.**

*(continued)*

## CANDLE LIGHTING RESPONSE

(to the tune of "Still, Still, Still)

*Love, love, love, the heart of Christ is love.*

*On all who come He pours His presence –*

*Life and love in holy essence.*

*Love, love, love, the heart of Christ is love.*

**BELL CHOIR**      *"Sonatina No. 1"*      Michael Helman

**A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN**      Jan Young

## SERVICE OF GIVING

### Call to Giving

What is a fitting offering that is pleasing to God? When we sense the wonder of God's majesty and realize the amazing extent of God's concern for us, we can only respond with all that we have and all we are. What we place on the altar is a small measure of our gratitude.

You are invited to place your offering in the plate at the front of the chancel during the offertory or after the service. If you are watching on facebook live or the HCOB webpage, we virtually pass the offering plate to you. You can prepare your offering to be mailed or to be dropped off at the church this week; or you can use Paypal on the Hagerstowncob webpage.

**Offertory**      *"Love Came Down at Christmas"*  
(Thygerson)

**\*Doxology #119**      *"Praise God from whom"*

### \*Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us pray. How good you have been to us, gracious God! How meagerly we have responded. You have restored our fortunes when we felt all was lost. You

have filled our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy. We give thanks, not only with a portion of our income, but also through renewed commitment to righteous living. By your grace, we share in the work Christ came to accomplish among us. May love abound in and through us. Amen.

## SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

*Please remember our worship is also on Facebook Live and our website. Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public. An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

**TEMPLE CHOIR**      *"People, Look East"*      (Mitchell)

**SCRIPTURE READING: 1 John 4:7-19**      NT 241

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup>God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup>So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

*(continued)*

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. <sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.

<sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. <sup>19</sup> We love! because he first loved us.

**MESSAGE**            "Love"                            Kathy Powderly

**\*HYMN #592**        "Love divine, all loves excelling"

[Verse 1]

*Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heav'n to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art.  
Visit us with thy salvation; enter ev'ry trembling heart.*

[Verse 2]

*Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast.  
Let us all in thee inherit, let us find the promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning, Alpha and Omega be.  
End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.*

[Verse 3]

*Come, Almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive.  
Suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above, pray and praise thee without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.*

[Verse 4]

*Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be.  
Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee.  
Changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.*

**\*BENEDICTION**

*After the Benediction, you may be seated.  
Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.*

**POSTLUDE**        "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord"        (Blake)

~~~~~

*\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship  
Thank you for joining us in worship today.*

~~~~~

*Worship resources from, "Gathered by Love," by Lavon Bayler*