

**Christmas Eve  
December 24, 2024  
5:00 P.M.**

**Gathering  
*God invites us to enter His presence***

**Prelude**                      *Christmas Carols*  
                                     *Woodwind Ensemble*  
                                     *(Cindy Hoopes, clarinet, Nancy Warrington, bass clarinet,*  
                                     *Pamela Johnson, flute)*

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Preparation for Worship** *(Time for Silent Preparation)*

**✠ Call to Worship** *(Responsively)*

All God's people—  
Boys and girls, women, men:  
**Come and worship!**  
Shepherds, Magi, saints, and angels:  
**Come and worship! Come and worship!**  
All who need the Savior, all who long for comfort:  
**Come and worship, come and worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**✠ Invocation** *(Responsively)*

He came as a baby in a manger.  
**O come, let us adore him.**  
He came in a lowly stable.  
**O come, let us adore him.**  
Shepherds brought their worship.  
**O come, let us adore him.**  
Angels sang his praise.  
**O come, let us adore him.**  
Magi brought their gifts.  
**O come, let us adore him.**  
What shall we do?  
**O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord! Amen.**

**Advent Candle Lighting**

**HOPE**

*Luke Keeler*

Reader: The first candle reminds us our hope we have in the coming of  
our Lord

Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup> *The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness.* <sup>3</sup> *You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy. The people have rejoiced before you as they rejoice at harvest time and as they rejoice when dividing spoils.* <sup>4</sup> *For you have shattered their oppressive yoke and the rod on their shoulders, the staff of their oppressor, just as you did on the day of Midian.* <sup>5</sup> *For every trampling boot of battle and the bloodied garments of war will be burned as fuel for the fire.* <sup>6</sup> *For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.* <sup>7</sup> *The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.*

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.  
(Light 1<sup>st</sup> Candle)

**All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

**Response: Hymn: 131: Angels, from the Realms of Glory** (vs 1,2, 4)

**PEACE**

*Hartenstein Family*

Reader: The second candle represents the peace that we can only experience in the presence of God.

Reading: Isaiah 11:1-9

**11** *Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.* <sup>2</sup> *The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, a Spirit of counsel and strength, a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.* <sup>3</sup> *His delight will be in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, he will not execute justice by what he hears with his ears, <sup>4</sup>but he will judge the poor righteously and execute justice for the oppressed of the land. He will strike the land with a scepter from his mouth, and he will kill the wicked with a command from his lips.* <sup>5</sup> *Righteousness will be a belt around his hips; faithfulness will be a belt around his waist.* <sup>6</sup> *The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat. The calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf will be together, and a child will lead them.* <sup>7</sup> *The cow and the bear will graze, their young ones will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like cattle.* <sup>8</sup> *An infant will play beside the cobra's pit, and a toddler will put his hand into a snake's den.* <sup>9</sup> *They will not harm or destroy each other on my entire holy mountain, for the land will be as full of the knowledge of the LORD as the sea is filled with water.*

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. (Light 2<sup>nd</sup> Candle)

**All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

Song of Reflection:

*All is Well*

*Steve Hoopes, Piano; Pamela Johnson, Organ*

## JOY

Carolyn Thompson, Irene Penza

Reader: This is the candle for joy – a joy that triumphs over the pain and suffering of our broken world.

Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-17

*<sup>14</sup> Sing for joy, Daughter Zion; shout loudly, Israel! Be glad and celebrate with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem! <sup>15</sup> The LORD has removed your punishment; he has turned back your enemy. The King of Israel, the LORD, is among you; you need no longer fear harm. <sup>16</sup> On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: "Do not fear; Zion, do not let your hands grow weak. <sup>17</sup> The LORD your God is among you, a warrior who saves. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will be quiet in his love. He will delight in you with singing."*

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.  
(Light 3rd Candle)

**All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

**Response: 125: Joy to the Lord! (1,2,4)**

## LOVE

Laura Yingst

Reader: This candle reminds us of the amazing love we receive when God sent His beloved Son down to be with us.

Reading: 1 John 4:7-9

*<sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his one and only Son into the world so that we might live through him.*

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.  
(Light 4th Candle)

**All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

**Response: 145: O Come, All Ye Faithful**

## Confessing

**God invites us to be honest with Him**

### Call to Confession

Today we celebrate that Jesus, our Lord, came to earth as a human, just like us but without sin. He came so that we who sin may be freed from sin. With the peace that comes from knowing Jesus came, let us confess our sins and be forgiven.

### Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, always with us, always coming: We confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom;

we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Forgive us, God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the intelligent courage of the Magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them to Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born for us. Now, in the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make us ready for his coming. **Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon** *(Responsively)*

Jesus, the long-expected Savior, was born to set us free. He releases us from our fears and sins and helps us find our rest in him. Jesus delivers us from the way of sin and death. Yet he remains the desire of people in every nation, and he will direct us into the ways of his kingdom. And so, with hopeful hearts, we call to him:

**Come now, long-expected Jesus, come again to rule in our hearts. Amen.**

—inspired by Charles Wesley (1744)

### **Offering**

***Thankful of the gifts God has given us, we offer ourselves to Him***

**Invitation**      Remember the words the Lord Jesus himself said:  
"It is more blessed to give than to receive."  
—from Acts 20:35, NIV

### **Offering**

**Offertory**                      *O Holy Night*  
*Nancy Warrington, vocal; Deborah Rodgers, piano;*  
*Pamela Johnson, flute*

! **O Come, O Come Emmanuel** (Verse 1)

***O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.***

***Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!***

! **Prayer of Dedication**

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part. Yet what I can, I give him, give him my heart.

## Advent Candle Lighting

### CHRIST

Dan Baker

Reader: All of these amazing gifts – hope, faith, joy, love – are not separate things we get to experience for a little while – but part of the marvelous gift – Jesus Christ Himself.

Reading: Luke 2:1-20

*2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. 2 This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3 So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. 4 Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, 5 to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. 8 In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: 11 Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger." 13 Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: 14 Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors! 15 When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the manger. 17 After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard, which were just as they had been told.*

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.  
(Light 5th Candle)

**All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

**Response: 133: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

### Reflection

**Commissioning**  
**God sends us out into the world as His witnesses**

### Lighting of the Candles

*Ushers will come forward to light their candles and then light all other candles as the congregation remains seated and quiet. Then we will stand to sing "Silent Night".*

**Caution:** Please don't tip lighted candles.

🕯️ Hymn 147

*Silent Night*

*Kelly Fox, Nancy Warrington, vocals;  
Woodwind Accompaniment*

***Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.***

***Silent night, holy night,  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing al-le-lu-ia;  
Christ the Savior is born!  
Christ the Savior is born!***

***Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.***

**Christmas Blessing & Benediction**

(Please blow out candles and place them in the baskets by the stairs as you exit.)

🕯️ **Benediction & Blessing**

🕯️ **Postlude**