

Music to Prepare Our Hearts

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting the Advent Candle (Love)

Richard: Today we light the fourth candle of Advent, the Candle of Love. God's love shines in the birth of Jesus, and in every act of kindness, mercy, and compassion.

Many Voices: The Gospel of John reminds us, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

[Light All Four Candles]

Richard: God of love, fill our hearts with your everlasting love.

Many Voices: Help us to share it freely with all people, so that your light may shine in every corner of the world. Amen.

*Opening Hymn

"Once in Royal David's City" (*verses 1 & 2*)

UMH #250

*Passing the Peace

Opening Prayer

Richard: In this season of love, hope and family, grant us joy and peace this day. You offered signs to Joseph and Mary long ago—signs that their son would be the Messiah, Emmanuel. May your light shine on us here, that we might understand the signs in our lives. We come with open hearts and minds to hear of your love coming into the world. We come to hear of a young woman with child, a foster father with trust in God, a match you made in heaven to shepherd a tiny boy to his destiny. Holy God, show us your peace as we make ready for your light in the world!

All: Amen.

Blessing Our Children

Offering Ourselves

Blessing our Gifts with Music

*Doxology

*Offering Prayer

All: Faithful God of unfolding plans, when our certainty falters and our expectations collapse, you are still at work, inviting us into grace that redefines and redeems. Like Joseph, we bring our gifts and lay down our plans, trusting that your Spirit can shape our offering into something greater than we imagined. Let these gifts and our lives be signs of obedience, humility, and hope. May they help carry Christ into a world still longing for peace, hungry for love, and needing redemption. We pray in the name of the one who is Emmanuel—God with us. Amen.

Scripture Readings

New Testament Lesson

Romans 1:1-7 (*CEB*)

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 1:18-25 (*CEB*)

Richard: The Word of God for the People of God.

Many Voices: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Song

"Star-Child"

TFWS #2095

Proclaiming

"Joseph, Jesus' Father"

Pastor Dave

Praying

Joys & Concerns

Responsive Prayer

Lord's Prayer

*Closing Hymn

"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

UMH #240

*Dismissal with Blessing

Going Forth to the World