Christmas Eve December 24, 2025 5:00 PM

Gathering God invites us to enter His presence

Prelude Joy to the World

(Greg Maurer—Saxaphone, Pamela Johnson—Piano)

Welcome & Announcements

Preparation for Worship (Time for Silent Preparation)

Call to Worship (Responsively)

Bonnie Mecaughey

God is here! The Messiah has come!
We open our eyes to see him and lift our hearts to worship him.
We have come to exalt the name of Jesus, our Savior and King, and to bring glory to God the Father.
In our worship we demonstrate the mind of Christ in declaring to God that he is the supreme authority in our lives.
We bow before him in submission to our Lord and King.
Come, worship the Lord!

Invocation

Bonnie Mecaughey

O God, our Father, creator of the universe, whose Son, Jesus Christ, came to our world, pour your Holy Spirit upon your church, that all people of our world, being led through the knowledge of your truth to worship you, may offer the gold of intellect, the frankincense of devotion, and the myrrh of discipline to him who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns for ever, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn 132

Angels We Have Heard on High

Advent Candle Lighting

Beth Hartenstein
(Lighting of the First, Second, Third & Fourth Advent Candle & Christ Candle)

Reader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life."

All: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

Reader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

-Isaiah 9:2, NRSV

I will lead the blind by a road they do not know, by the paths they have not known I will guide them.
I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do and I will not forsake them.
—Isalah 42:16, NRSV

The LORD says to his servant, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

-from Isaiah 49:6, NRSV

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

-Isaiah 58:8, NRSV

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For the darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

-Isaiah 60:1-3, NRSV

Come, Lord Jesus, our light and our salvation. Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Confessing God invites us to be honest with Him

Call to Confession (Responsively)

Bonnie Mecaughey

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

-1 John 1:5-7, NIV

Prayer of Confession (Responsively)

Bonnie Mecaughey

Arise, shine: for your light has come.

O God, we live as if the light had never defeated the darkness in the world or in us.

And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

We confess that we ignore the Christ you sent to be among us, to be in us.

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen

upon you.

We've kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his birth each moment in our waiting hearts.

And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Lord, you came to us in the fullness of time.

Forgive us for not opening our eyes to your coming.

It's time that we prepare for your coming.

Let the earth ring with song. Let the light break forth.

Let us all rejoice in the miracle of love.

Let Christ come into the fullness of our time. Amen.

-based on Isaiah 60:1-3

Time for Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Bonnie Mecaughey

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me. and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. The messenger of the Lord has come in Christ. In Christ, we present offerings to the Lord in righteousness! Thanks be to God for his lavish grace! -based on Malachi 3:1-4, NRSV

Leader: This is the Promise of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, And to the Holy Ghost: As it was in the beginning, Is now and ever shall be, world without end. A-men, Amen.

<u>Offering</u>

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

Invitation

The willingness to give is a sign of life. The fruit tree gives of its fruit, and we know it is alive. When it no longer gives, we know real life has gone out of it. The heart that hoards the blessings of God is no longer alive with spiritual power. To give is to live.

Offering

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father. Son and Holy Ghost. A-men.

Prayer of Dedication

God of hope, you gave your Son to free a lost world. You give your Spirit to comfort and encourage. You give us hope for a future free of pain, sorrow, and tears. You promise us a future with you. In gratitude, we bring you our time, talents, and tithes. May our gifts be used so that many others will taste and see the goodness of knowing you. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Passing of the Peace

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be with You All: And also with you

<u>Proclaiming</u> God speaks to us through His Word

Preparation Hymn 137

What Child is This?

Prayer of Illumination

O God, our beginning and end, by whose command time runs its course: bless our impatience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us hope in your Word. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading Isaiah 11:1-10

11 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

- or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
- ⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
- ⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.
- ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
- ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

Sermon

"The Hope of God's Promise" Rev. Paul Toms

Hymn of Response 125

Joy to the World!

Responding We respond to God's Word

Profession of Faith (Responsively)

As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world which some seek to control, and others view with despair we declare with joy and trust:

Our world belongs to God!

Our world, fallen into sin, has lost its first goodness, but God has not abandoned the work of his hands:

our Maker preserves this world, sending seasons, sun, and rain, upholding all creatures, renewing the earth, promising a Savior, guiding all things to their purpose.

Remembering the promise to reconcile the world to himself, God joined our humanity in Jesus Christ— the eternal Word made flesh.

He is the long-awaited Messiah, one with us and one with God, fully human and fully divine, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

Being both divine and human, Jesus is the only mediator.

He alone paid the debt of our sin; there is no other Savior.

Jesus Christ rules over all. To follow the Lord is to serve him wherever we are, without fitting in, light in the darkness, salt in a spoiling world.

—from Our World Belongs to God, st. 1, 4, 23, 26, 43

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Prayers of the People

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Alleluia! Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Alleluia! O Christ, splendor of God's eternal glory, the mighty Word, sustaining the universe: Renew our lives by your presence.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, born into the world in the fullness of time for the liberation of all creation:
Release all into your promised freedom.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, begotten of the Father before all time, born in a stable at Bethlehem:

May your church be a sign of hope and joy.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, truly God and truly human, born to a people in fulfillment of their expectations: Fulfill our desires in you.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, born of the virgin Mary, child of wonder and splendor, Mighty God of all ages, Prince of Peace: May the whole world live in peace and justice. Lord, have mercy.

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.



Silent Night! Holy Night!

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.

Benediction & Blessing

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

Eternal God,

you taught us that the night is far spent and the day is at hand. Keep us awake and alert, watching for your kingdom, and make us strong in faith, so that when Christ comes in glory to judge the earth, we may joyfully give him praise who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

