

Welcome to Our Celebration of Worship

To all who live joyfully and wish to share their excitement...to all those who mourn and need comfort...to all who are weary and need rest...to all who are homeless and desire sheltering love... to all who pray and to those in need of prayer...to all who sin and need a savior...to all who recognize Christ in their midst and hunger to share God's love with all the world, this church opens wide its doors and in the name of Jesus Christ, says...WELCOME!

**Those who are able, please stand in body or spirit.*

*The congregation is invited to join in speaking or singing **items in bold.***

We Gather in Community before God

PRELUDE *Improvisation* K. Friese

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

GATHERING SONG *The First Nowell* Hymn 147 (*verse 1 only*)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us rejoice in God! Let us marvel in all that our God has done!

Our eyes have seen the glory of God; made known to us in the manger.

Let us rejoice in our God; the creator of all that has life!

Our eyes have seen the compassion of God; come to us in the cry of a baby.

Let us rejoice in our God; giver of redemption and grace!

Our eyes have seen the redeeming love of God; alive in Jesus, our Christ.

Let us rejoice in our God; the Spirit of peace and grace among us!

Our eyes have seen the power of God; at work in changing our world forever.

Rejoicing in the eternal presence of Christ in our lives, let us worship our God together!

*HYMN 133 (*verses 1 and 4 only*)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, in Jesus Christ you came among us as eternal light shining in the darkness. We confess that we have not always welcomed the light in our lives or trusted your good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to your glory; expecting little and hoping for even less. As reminders of this joyful season begin to fade, we allow the power of your Christmas miracle to be forgotten. Our “hallelujah’s” and “glory to God’s” are replaced by feeble efforts to remember your gracious faithfulness and proclaim your everlasting love.

Loving God, free us from our doubts and renew our hope, so that we may discover with each new day, the fullness of your eternal grace. Help us to rejoice in the truth of Jesus Christ, our Lord, born to save all of God’s people from our sins; a promise that shatters the boundaries of time and season. Give us the strength to seek your love, grace, and mercy each day of our lives; confident in the everlasting hope, peace, joy, and love of Jesus, our Christ, the Lord and Savior of our lives, in whose name we pray ... amen.

HYMN 551 (Kyrie Eleison)

Lord, Have Mercy

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God acts with justice and mercy. In everlasting love, God redeems us and sets us free.

God forgives us, frees us, and gives us peace. To God we are ever thankful. Amen.

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (Hymn 113, *verse 3 and chorus*) *Angels We Have Heard on High*

*PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with signs of Christ’s peace.

Service of Lessons and Carols

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

The Birth of the Messiah Prophesied

Isaiah 9:2-7, Old Testament, p. 638 / P. 780

*CAROL 88 (*verses 1 - 4 only*)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

The Glory of Bethlehem Foretold

Micah 5:2-5, 7-9, Old Testament, p. 865 / P. 1,059

*CAROL 121 (*verses 1 and 4 only*)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

The Angel Gabriel Visits the Virgin Mary

Luke 1:26-38, New Testament, p. 56 / P. 69

*CAROL 123 (*verses 1, 3, and 5 only*)

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

The Birth of Jesus, Our Christ, Is Proclaimed

Luke 2:1-7, New Testament, p. 58 / P.71

ANTHEM

Just Beyond the Manger

J.M. Martin

Gail Glistler, Soprano / Ken Duncan, Tenor

The Shepherds Worship the Christ Child

Luke 2:8-20, New Testament, p. 58 / P. 71

*CAROL 136

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

The Wise Men Are Led by the Star to Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12, New Testament, p. 2 / P. 2

*CAROL 145

What Child Is This

We Respond in Word and Deed

INVITATION TO RECEIVE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

RECEIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

Believe
Ken Duncan, Tenor

G. Ballard and A. Silvestri

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (Hymn 606)

Doxology

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*RESPONSE OF THANKSGIVING (Hymn 147, *verse 6 only*)

The First Nowell

CHRISTMAS PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

*HYMN 134

Joy to the World

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION (Hymn 122)

Silent Night, Holy Night!

*POSTLUDE

Fugue in C Major

D. Buxtehude

