

# *Hope*

AND OF HIS  
KINGDOM

THERE SHALL BE

NO END

LUKE 1:33



## ***Welcome to Our Celebration of Worship!***

*To all who live joyfully and long to share their excitement ... to all 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 or are 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 ... Old First Presbyterian 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

*Please use the prelude as time to silently prepare our hearts and minds for worship.*

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND UNISON OPENING PRAYER

**Gracious and loving God, as we once again prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus, our Christ, may the light of your love for each one of us help us to live as lights burning in the lives of others. Prepare us in mind, body, and spirit for the joy and gladness of your coming, and fill our longing hearts, until they overflow with the hope that only you may provide. We pray together in the name of Jesus, the Messiah, our hope and the hope of our world ... amen.**

INTROIT

*Open to Me the Gates of Righteousness*  
Sanctuary Choir

J.N. Beck

CALL TO WORSHIP

Gracious God, shake us awake; for we await you.

**We wait together for signs of hope.**

Shaping God, awaken the earth and come; for we await you.

**We wait together for signs of peace.**

Surprising God, tear open the heavens and come; for we await you.

**We wait together for signs of joy.**

Mysterious God, fill our hearts with life as we worship you in wonder and trust.

**We wait together for signs of love; this day and throughout this holy season.**

Rejoicing for this season of listening and preparing,  
let us worship our God together.

\*HYMN 82

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

## INVITATION TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God, once again we approach the season of Advent unprepared in mind, body, and spirit. We are not alert to your coming, for we are too busy with our own preparations. We exhaust ourselves by trying to do everything through our own strength and cannot keep awake to watch and wait for you. We allow our hope to wither, our faiths to wander, and our love to grow cold. We fail to remember that you are our maker and we are the work of your hope-filled hands.**

**Loving God, forgive us and restore us. Illuminate our lives and empower us to live as your faithful and obedient witnesses in the world. Fill our hearts with hope and strengthen our faith, so that when you return in glory, we may joyfully offer ourselves in praise. Prepare our hearts to listen, follow, and worship the precious gift of the Christ. We pray together in the name of Jesus, our Christ, through whom all things hoped for are possible ...**

*(Please continue in silent prayer of confession.)*

Together, let all of God's people say ... **amen.**

HYMN 551 (Kyrie Elision)

*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

Leader: God acts with justice and mercy.

In everlasting love, God redeems us and sets us free.

People: **God forgives us ... frees us ... and give us peace.**

**To God we are ever thankful. Amen.**

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (*Sung Twice*)

*There's A Song*

**There's a song of hope in my heart; hope is a gift from Jesus.**

**There's a song of hope in my heart; hope is a gift from God.**

**Al-le-lu-ia! Hope in my heart is singing praises.**

**Al-le-lu-ia! Hope is a gift from God.**

\*PASSING OF 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.*

### *We Listen for God's Word*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10, Old Testament p. 663 / P. 811

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

*I Will Not Leave You Comfortless*  
Sanctuary Choir

E. Titcomb

TIME WITH OUR YOUNG DISCIPLES

*Preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade children are invited to come to the front pews.*

Congregational Invitation: (*sung twice*)

**This, this is where children belong,  
welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.  
Water, God's Word, bread and cup, prayer, and song:  
This is where children belong.**

*All students are invited to return to their families to prepare for Communion.*

SECOND LESSON

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

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

*"The Wonder of a Star"*

***We Respond in Word and Deed***

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*(A Brief Statement of Faith – Presbyterian Church U.S.A.)*

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.**

**The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.**

**In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.**

**In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

INVITATION TO RECEIVE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

RECEIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent*

G. Holst

Lynda Fallica, Gary Lorentzson, Sanctuary Choir

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (Hymn 606)

Doxology

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

## THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

**It is right to give God our thanks and praise.**

## 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.**

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

## COMMUNION

*All are invited to hold the bread and cup so that we may commune together.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

## OFFERING OF OUR TIME AND TALENT

\*HYMN 360

*Christ Is Coming!*

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL BENEDICTION

*Sung to the tune of "Edelweiss"*

**Come, O Lord, be with us. Fill us with joy and thanksgiving.**

**May our hearts, flow with peace. Come with your love and surround us.**

**Friendship and love, may they bloom and grow, bloom and grow forever.**

**Bless us now. Bless our friends. Bless all people forever.**

\*POSTLUDE

*Let All Together Praise Our God*

P. Manz

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THIS MORNING'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Matthew T. Means, Pastor  
Elder Gillian Plastaras, Lector  
Ken Friese, Director of Music  
Dan Degan, Usher Captain

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*Thank you for worshipping with us and being part of our family of faith!*

*If you are a first-time guest or returning visitor, please allow us to extend a special welcome and invitation to join us in the Parish Hall following worship for light refreshments and a chance to learn more about Old First Church.*

*Please use this opportunity to be greeted by our members and be introduced to our Pastor, Matthew Means, as we celebrate the joys of life shared together.*

**“SERVICE OF COMFORT AND HOPE”**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup> @ 7:00 PM**

Is Christmas a time when you remember friends, family, or loved ones who have gone before?

Do you desire a hope-filled way to honor the memory of those who are no longer with us?

Are you tired of hearing about all the "bad news" in this world and need a place of quiet rest to be filled with the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit as you prepare for the coming Christ?

Come and join us ... **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup> @ 7:00 PM** in the Parish Hall ...  
as we remember ... give thanks ... and join together in rejoicing for the gifts of faith and life!

We will gather in the week leading up to Christmas to seek God's comfort, be inspired by the hope of Jesus Christ, allow space to name our grief, and remember our dear loved ones.

IN OUR PRAYERS:

**New to the prayer list:**

**Carole Witkowski – health concerns**

**Charles and Susan Worledge – health and travel concerns**

**Please continue to pray for those who remain on our prayer list:**

Holly Baptista, Richard Bedell, Tom and JoAnn Bosch, Bob Esser, Lucy Fetterolf, Dave and Else Haddock, David and Sandy Lange, Joan and Pat Lobasso, and Peg Weigers

*Names on our prayer list will remain for approximately one month.  
If you would like to add a prayer request, please contact Pastor Means.*

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*Old First Presbyterian Church*

*125 Main Street*

*Huntington, NY 11743*

*(631) 427-2101*

*Rev. Matthew T. Means, Pastor*

## **Isaiah 35:1-10**

### **Old Testament, p. 663 / P. 811**

**35** The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty

ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Matthew 2:1-12**

### **New Testament, p. 2 / P. 2**

**2** In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them

to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

<sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**