

**St. Paul's United Church of Christ  
Zion United Church of Christ**

301 West Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA 19551  
*St. Paul's UCC:* 610-621-5770 -- office@sprucc.org -- www.sprucc.org  
*Zion UCC:* 610-659-2775 -- mestme@aol.com -- www.1Zion.org

*No matter who you are,  
or where you are on life's journey,  
you're welcome here.*



**Friday, December 24, 2021  
Christmas Eve**

**11:00pm**

*In-Person & Streaming Online*

## Welcome

*May God's loving presence be very real to you,  
and may you receive strength and guidance today  
That will enable you to handle life's challenges.*

### Children's Bulletins

Crayons and activity bulletins are available in the narthex.

The activities match today's Bible readings and are designed for 3-6 & 7-12 year olds.

### Biblias en Español

Biblias Bilingües en Español y Inglés están disponible en el vestíbulo narthex en la mesa de visitantes azul.

*(Bilingual Bibles in Spanish & English are available in the narthex hallway on the blue visitors' table).*

### Nursery

Persons of all ages (including children) are very welcome to participate in the entire worship service. Due to the COVID pandemic, for the safety of children, we are currently not offering a nursery during worship. Normally, we have supervised nursery for 0-8 year olds, located on the first floor.

### Junior Worship

For the safety of children, we are not offering Junior Worship during the pandemic. Normally, the option of "Junior Worship" is offered downstairs, on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month, following the children's sermon, for elementary age children to learn more about today's scripture lessons.

### Restrooms

Restrooms are located both on the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

### Changing Tables

All four of our restrooms have changing tables. Each restroom has two "child care protection seats" to keep toddlers safe and secure while their parents use the restroom.

### Water Fountains

For the safety of all, our water fountains are disabled during the pandemic.

### Sunday School & Adult Faith Formation Classes

Classes for all ages are held at 9:00am.

### Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship is held at 10:15am.

### Prayer and Care

If you would like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list, or request a pastoral call, please call or email the church office. You are welcome to take home with you a copy of *Our Daily Bread* daily devotional booklet, located on a table in the narthex hallway.

### Looking for a Church to Call Home

If you are looking for a new church family home, we would be happy for you to consider St. Paul's or Zion United Church of Christ. For more information about St. Paul's, Zion, and the UCC, we invite you to talk with our pastors, an usher, a greeter, or any member of our churches.

### More Information....

Additional literature about our missions, ministries, and fellowship opportunities is located on the *Blue Visitor Table* in the narthex hallway, or contact us using the contact information on the front page of this bulletin.

Please let us know if we can be in prayer with you or if there is any way in which we can help make your worship experience more meaningful.

*{Symbols used in this bulletin: \* = if able please stand; ♪# = Red Hymnal Page; ♫# = Blue Hymnal Page}*



www.sprucc.org



Free WiFi

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### Virtual Worship Service

Online: [Live Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at [sprucc.org](https://www.sprucc.org) - Live or Watch & Listen Later on [St. Paul's UCC YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)  
[Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/) (St. Paul's) at <https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/> - Live or Watch & Listen Later  
[Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Zion-United-Church-of-Christ-Womelsdorf-733032070041250) (Zion) at <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Zion-United-Church-of-Christ-Womelsdorf-733032070041250> - Live or Watch & Listen Later  
[Phone Stream](tel:1-888-649-5770) at 1-888-649-5770 - Live or Listen Later  
[Zoom](https://zoom.us/j/104401368?pwd=301301): Meeting ID: 104 401 368; Passcode: 301301 (or call 1-301-715-8592) - Live Only

*If you have any access problems, please let us know at 610-621-5770 or [Office@sprucc.org](mailto:Office@sprucc.org)*

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## **Keeping One Another Safer this Season**

*{The full description of our safety policies can be found on a table in the hallway and at sprucc.org}*

Regardless of vaccination status:

**Masks** that cover nose, mouth, & chin **MUST be worn by ALL** (over the age of 2) in the building.  
(\*Except by designated worship leadership while in their designated socially distant areas).

, **Available seating is numbered:** Only one household unit per seating number.

The ushers will seek to sit families in larger pew sections, and individuals/couples in smaller sections.  
(If we exceed our seating capacity in the sanctuary, we will seat worshipers in the fellowship hall - one household unit per table).

The **red ribbons** are placed to increase safety through social distancing.

Do NOT sit on the red ribbons or move the red ribbons.

We are doing **contact tracing** in order to inform attendees if we learn of a positive case.

If you have COVID symptoms or have had a close contact exposure in the past 14 days  
(and have not had a negative test), we invite you to participate virtually, rather than in person.

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## **ORDER FOR WORSHIP**

### **We Gather**

*We are coming together as a community of faith to worship our God,  
and provide for one another our love, support, and care.*

#### **A TIME OF GATHERING**

#### **RINGING OF THE BELL**

#### **PRELUDE**

#### **GREETING, WELCOME, & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*{To center your hearts and minds,  
you are invited to individually offer this prayer silently  
during or before the Prelude}*

#### **PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP** <sup>®</sup> *(Silently Before Worship Begins)*

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*{Those who are able, please rise}*

#### **\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

**"O Come, All Ye Faithful"**

♫ Blue # 249

Vs1 **O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;**

*Refrain*

**O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

Vs3 **Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;**

*Refrain*

Vs4 **See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;  
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;**

*Refrain*

*Composed: John F. Wade, trans. by Frederick Oakeley;  
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**\*INVOCATION**

Leader: In the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Spirit.  
**ALL: Amen.**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.  
**People: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all.**

**We Repent**

*This is a time to confess our wrongdoings and neglects, ask for God's mercy, admit our need for God's forgiving grace, hear the assurance of our forgiveness, and then give God our thanks and praise.*

**\*CALL TO CONFESSION** <sup>④</sup> (Leader)

Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart, and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching him, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

**\*CONFESSION OF SIN** <sup>④</sup> (Unison)

Almighty and most merciful God our Heavenly Father, we humble ourselves before thee, under a deep sense of our unworthiness and guilt. We have grievously sinned against thee, in thought, in word, and in deed. We have come short of thy glory, we have broken thy commandments, and turned aside every one of us from the way of life. Yet now, O most merciful Father, hear us when we call upon thee with penitent hearts, and for the sake of thy Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us. Pardon our sins; take away our guilt; and grant us your peace. Purify us, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, from all inward uncleanness, and make us able and willing to serve thee in newness of life, to the glory of thy Holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**\*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

*{A time to silently offer our personal prayers of confession}*

**\*PRAYER FOR MERCY**

*"Kyrie"*

*♪ Red #518*

Leader (spoken): Lord, have mercy upon us.  
**People (sung): Lord, have mercy upon us.**  
Leader (spoken): Christ, have mercy upon us.  
**People (sung): Christ, have mercy upon us.**  
Leader (spoken): Lord, have mercy upon us.  
**People (sung): Lord, have mercy upon us.**

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**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON** <sup>④</sup> (Leader)

Hear now the comforting assurance of the grace of God, promised in the Gospel to all that repent and believe: As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their way and live. For God so loved the world, that he gave us his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Unto as many of you, therefore, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, who truly repent of your sins, and believe in the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ, with full purpose of new obedience, I announce and declare, by the authority and in the Name of Christ, that our sins are forgiven, according to his promise in the Gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**\*CALL TO PRAISE**

Leader: We have heard angels from on high sweetly singing over the plains

**People: We join the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains**

**\*SUNG RESPONSE OF PRAISE**

*"Gloria Patri"*

♪ Red # 491

**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. Amen. Amen.**

*Composed by Charles Meineke  
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*{Please be seated}*

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath - Light ①**

**INTRODUCTORY SENTENCES:** *(Leader)*

On this Christmas Eve we are gathered as God's people to celebrate again what Christ's coming means to the world. We join with Christians all over the world who are celebrating tonight.

**READING OF SCRIPTURE:** *(Leader)*

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
*(from Isaiah 9:6)*

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

*(from Luke 2:10, 14)*

and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

*(from Romans 5:5)*

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE:** *(Leader)*

Tonight we relight the four Advent candles and recall that the good news means:

Hope	<i>{a blue candle is lit}</i>
Peace	<i>{a blue candle is lit}</i>
Joy	<i>{a pink candle is lit}</i>
Love	<i>{a blue candle is lit}</i>

Jesus Christ is the greatest gift who makes all these other gifts possible. So, we light the Christ candle now, as we think about what Christ's coming means to each one of us.

*{The Christ Candle of the wreath is lit}*

**PRAYER:**

Leader: Let us pray...

**ALL: We thank you, God, for your gift of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We thank you that Christ's coming makes hope, peace, joy, and love possible for every person in every nation. Encourage us to do our part to bring good will and peace to our families, our churches, our neighborhoods, and the world. Now let your Spirit put us in touch with you, the living God, through the words and music we hear tonight. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

## We Hear the Word of God

*We seek to learn more about God's love and grace, and how we are to live our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible is our primary text on faith, which we consider to be scripture - sacred writings. We believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God." Gospel (which means "Good News") refers to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are Christians' most central books of the Bible.*

### PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

Old Testament Prophecy: [Isaiah 9:2-7](#)  
New Testament Letter: [Titus 2:11-14](#)

Leader: The word of the Lord.  
People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON: [Luke 2:1-20](#)

(RSV - Reprinted in bulletin)

### HYMN

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

♫ Blue # 277

Hark! The Herald angels sing, "Glory to the Newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Christ by highest Hea'v adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come, Off-spring of the Virgins' womb:  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail th'incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with men to dwell. Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Text: Charles Wesley; Music: Felix Mendelssohn; arr. by William H. Cummings  
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### REFLECTION

## We Respond with Thanks

*We have heard God's call and have come and worshiped,  
we have confessed our sins and been assured of our forgiveness, we have  
learned more about God's grace and God's will. We now respond by  
re-affirming our faith in God,  
praying with and for one another, trusting in God's providence in our world,*

### HYMN

"Away In a Manger"

♫ Red # 109

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.

Martin Luther; Carl Müller  
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## OFFERTORY INVITATION ②

Leader: We are people chosen for good deeds.

**People: Together we can accomplish much as we bring our tithes and offerings to God.**

Leader: Through our sharing, God brings a new day to many.

**People: Let our offerings be an expression of thanksgiving for the incarnation, for the peace God gives, for the joy that is our today.**

## RETURNING GOD'S TITHES AND PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

Online Giving

*{As we share in hybrid worship, there is no passing of the plate in person.  
A plate is placed in the rear of the sanctuary for offerings to be placed  
when arriving or departing from the sanctuary.*

*Whether worshipping in person or online,  
the safest way to offer your tithe and offering to God through his church  
is through St. Paul's UCC secure [Online Giving](#) option on our website at [sprucc.org](http://sprucc.org). [St. Paul's UCC Click Here](#)  
or Zion UCC's online giving at [www.1Zion.org](http://www.1Zion.org) - [Zion UCC Click Here](#)  
Offerings may also be mailed to St. Paul's UCC; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551  
or Zion UCC; PO Box 97; Womelsdorf, PA 19567}.*

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*"The Birthday of A King"*

Composed by William Howard Neidlinger

*{Those who are able, please rise}*

## \*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

*"We give Thee but Thine own"*

♪ Red # 258

**We give Thee but Thine own,  
What-e'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone,  
A trust, O Lord, from Thee. Amen.**

*Written by William Walsham How, Arr. by Joseph Barnby  
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## \*OFFERTORY PRAYER ② (Leader)

Here, O God, is a portion of the riches you entrust to our management. At best, it is the first fruits of our labors, set aside to support your mission through and beyond our church. You have asked us to clear the highways of stones so our brothers and sisters can find their way to your side. In providing a way for them, we, too, see your pathways more clearly. Help us to walk in your paths as we dedicate ourselves with our offerings.  
**Amen.**

## \*OFFERTORY HYMN

*"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"*

♪ Red # 107

**It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good-will to men,  
From heaven's all gracious King!"  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
To hear the angels sing.**

*Edmund H. Sears; R. Storrs Willis  
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## Sacrament of Holy Communion ①④

*The Sacrament of Holy Communion is the central act of Christian worship, bringing us more fully together with one another and the Triune God, through the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:20-30, Mark 14:17-26, Luke 22:14-23, John 13:21-30)*

### \*INVITATION

Leader: Dearly beloved in the Lord: Our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Communion of his Body and Blood, that it might be a bond of his living union and fellowship with humankind.

**ALL: The celebration of the Lord's Supper has ever been regarded by the Church as the innermost sanctuary of the whole Christian worship. What we do here is not merely with signs, but with the realities these signs represent. We seek to approach the Lord's Table rightly, striving to be devout and repentant, with a believing mind.**

Leader: We cordially invite to partake of this Sacrament all who are truly grieved and penitent for their sins, who look to the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness and salvation, who abide in the fellowship of his Church, and who desire to possess his Spirit and walk in his ways. To all such the compassionate Redeemer himself says: Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

### \*COMMUNION PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader:

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God, who created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, who made humankind in your own image, and whose tender mercies are over all your works.

We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and victory. We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of Mary, our sister in faith, Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in glory.

We give thanks to you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered. With your sons and daughters of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy and sing....

### \*SANCTUS

*"Holy, Holy, Holy"*

*Seraphic Hymn*

{Sanctus is Latin for "Holy." Seraphic Hymn refers to the song of the Seraphim Angels. Sabaoth is a Hebrew name for God, referring to God as both creator and ruler of the world}.

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;  
Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of thy glory,  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

Written by Alonzo P. Howard  
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*{Please be seated}*

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

Leader:

Lord, we remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

Leader: Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

**ALL: Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**

## **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

Ordained Minister:

Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory. We offer you these gifts of the earth and of our labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service in behalf of all people.

Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine, bless these before us here in this place and bless those being shared in homes this night, and bless us all as we receive them. May we offer you our faith and praise, through the Holy Spirit may we be united in communion with Christ and with one another, no matter the physical distance, and may we continue faithful in all things.

**ALL: Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives for ever. Amen.**

## **LAMB OF GOD**

Leader: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:

**People: have mercy on us.**

Leader: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:

**People: have mercy on us.**

Leader: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:

**People: grant us peace.**

## **CALL TO THE SUPPER**

Leader: The gifts of God for the people of God.  
Come, for all things are ready.

## **BREAKING THE BREAD, RAISING THE CUP, AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS**

*{For those who have the pre-filled cups:  
open the first seal - unleavened bread wafer}*

**Pastor:** The Body of Christ broken for you. Take and eat.

**People: Amen.**

*{You may eat the bread}*

*{For those who have the pre-filled cups:  
open the second seal - the fruit of the vine - grape juice}*

**Pastor:** The Blood of Christ shed for you. Take and drink.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*{You may drink the wine or grape juice}*

*{Those who are able, please rise}*

### **\*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**Leader:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Leader:** Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**ALL: Amen.**

## Candlelight Service <sup>①</sup>

### PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

Gospel Lesson [John 1:1-14](#)

### THE PROCLAMATION *(Leader)*

The God who said, "Let there be light," has caused light to shine in our hearts. That light is the glory of God reflected in the face of Jesus Christ. As our candles are a sea of light lit from the one light of Christ, so may the church reflect Christ's light and love in the world. Let us share the Light of Christ.

### SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

*{We will receive the light from the Christ candle.  
As the ushers bring the light to you, please pass the light to the person next to you.  
Keep your lighted candle upright and  
let the person with the unlighted candle tilt their candle to receive the light.  
We will then stand and sing "Silent Night".}*

*{For those who are able, please rise}*

### \*HYMN

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

♪ Red # 101

Vs1 **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.**

Vs2 **Silent Night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight!  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia!"  
Christ, the Savior, is born,  
Christ, the Savior, is born.**

Vs 1 **Stille Nacht! Heilige Nacht!  
Alles schläft; einsam wacht  
Nur das traute heilige Paar.  
Holder Knab im lockigten Haar,  
Schlafe in himmlischer Ruh!  
Schlafe in himmlischer Ruh!**

Vs6 **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.**

Words: Joseph Mohr; Trans by John F. Young; Music: Franz Gruber;  
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### \*PASTORAL PRAYER

### \*LORD'S PRAYER *(Unison)*

**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.**

## We Are Sent Out

*In response to God's love and grace,  
we go out into the world to share God's Good News  
through our words and actions.*

### \*COMMISSION <sup>©10</sup>

Leader: Lift one another's burdens and sing together for joy.  
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

People: **God calls us to live in right-relationship with all humankind.  
We will center our lives on Jesus Christ.**

Leader: Carry the peace of Christ into the world.  
Glorify and praise God in all you do.

People: **The good news of great joy is for all people.  
We will tell others of what we have heard and seen.  
We will show the love of Christ to our neighbors and the world.**

ALL: **Amen.**

### \*BENEDICTION

### \*THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN

♪ Red #558

### \*SENDING HYMN

*"Joy To the World"*

Vs1 **Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**

Vs3 **No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.**

Vs2 **Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns;  
Let men their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

Vs4 **He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders, and wonders of His love.**

Words: Issac Watts; Music: Arr. from G.F. Handel by Lowell Mason;  
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*{Acolyte carries the light back into the world, leading us,  
as we now go to carry God's light and love back into the world.}*

### POSTLUDE



### DISMISSAL

*The ushers will dismiss the congregation pew by pew:  
beginning with from the rear of the sanctuary and working forward,  
dismissing from left to right, dismissing the Penn Ave side first, and the bell table side fourth.*





## The Flow of the Worship Service

Our worship service has an intentional order to it. The flow of worship is called the liturgical movement. The movement reminds us weekly of our journey in faith of moving from being separated from God by sin, to being restored by God's grace as disciples of Christ. It is based on the sixth chapter of the Biblical book of Isaiah.

- (1) God welcomes us and invites us
- (2) We respond to God's call by worshiping Him
- (3) We confess our need for God's forgiveness and grace
- (4) We are assured of God's forgiveness and grace
- (5) We learn more about God's will through scripture, song, and sermon
- (6) We grow closer to God and one another through prayer
- (7) We give God thanks by offering our time, talent, and treasure
- (8) We experience greater oneness with God and each another through Communion
- (9) God sends us into the world to share His love and grace with others



## Worship Service Resource Credits

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- ② *Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).
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## **Luke 2:1-20** RSV

### **The Birth of Jesus**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### **The Shepherds and the Angels**

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

# Merry Christmas!

from  
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Link to Website's  
Upcoming Events

## About Today

**Church Season: Christmas** is the season of celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, God's anointed one, who is our King and Saviour, who is the Light of the World. The season of Christmas last 12 days and is from sunset of December 24 through January 5. (January 6 is Epiphany).

**Color of the Paraments** (cloths on the altar, pulpit, and lecturn):

**White** - symbolizes Christ as the Light of the World; Emmanuel, God is with us; the presence of Christ, for the Kingdom of God is near. (The colors white, gold, and silver are used interchangeably in the church for paraments).

**Colors of the Advent Season** (the 4 Sundays before Christmas) - including the Advent Candles:

**Blue** - symbolizes the hope found in the anticipated coming of Christ

**Violet** - symbolizes royalty and penitent preparation for Christ our King, who offers forgiveness

**Rose/Pink** - symbolizes joy, such as the Biblical songs of joy about a child's birth sung by Jesus' mother Mary and John the Baptist's father Zechariah; used on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent, as the traditional joyful break for those who are observing "Advent fasting."

The suggested scripture lessons are from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), which selects passages throughout the Bible over a three year cycle. The RCL is the most common lectionary used by Christian churches. We are in **Year C**, which emphasizes the Gospel of Luke.

The Bible is in two sections: Old Testament - OT (scripture prior to Christ's birth), located in the first 2/3 of the Bible; and New Testament - NT (about Christ & early church). The first four books of the NT are called the "Gospels," which Christians consider the most central books of the Bible.

### Tonight - December 24 - Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14, (15-20); John 1:1-14

#### Isaiah

The book of Isaiah (OT) is attributed to three prophets. The first of whom is from where the book gets its name, and is about Isaiah's call to become a prophet and his prophecy that Jerusalem will face God's judgement regarding its immorality in order to be God's Holy City (chaps. 1-39, written 738-688 B.C.), the second is about living in exile in Babylon (chaps. 40-55, written 597-539 B.C.), and the third is about the return from exile to Judah and the rebuilding of the Temple (chaps. 56-66, written 520-515 B.C.). A prophet is one who is divinely appointed by God to lead and instruct.

#### Psalm 96

This OT hymn is a song of praise to God, who with righteousness is both ruler and judge. Glory is given to God who is above everything else in the universe.

#### The Letter of Paul to Titus

This epistle (letter) is written to Titus, who occasionally served and traveled with Paul. Paul is writing instructions to Titus, who is in Crete to organize churches recently established by Paul. 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus are known as Paul's Pastoral Letters, because they serve to provide guidance for the leadership of newly formed Christian churches. Paul was a Christian, Jew, Pharisee, Roman citizen, and church leader, who had a direct encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Paul wrote more of the NT than any other person.

#### The Gospel According to Luke

The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles is attributed to Luke "the beloved physician," written around 59-90 A.D. (C.E.). Not having met Jesus personally, Luke undertook the task of "investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account" of Jesus Christ, "so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed."

#### The Gospel According to John

John is the latest of the four Gospels, written around 80-90 A.D. probably in Ephesus, and attributed to John the son of Zebedee, the beloved disciple of Jesus. This Gospel was "written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and through believing you may have life in his name" (20:31).