

GATHERING MUSIC: Christmas Carol Hymn Sing

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

LIGHTING THE CHRIST LIGHT

Acolyte: Mikayla Henrick

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS; SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS

(Please introduce yourself; give a brief description at this time; ask people to seek you out after worship.)

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

*Lighting of the **Second** Advent Candle: Peace - Joan Crimlisk and Margie Ives*

One: Hope is a light given by God at the beginning of Creation.

All: Hope is a gift of God revealed in the life of Christ.

One: Hope is a light given by God to every Child of God.

All: We light the candle of Hope as we remember Christ's gift.

(Light the candle of Hope)

One: Peace is a flame given by God to be a light in the darkness.

All: The flame of Peace is righteousness and equity, compassion and justice.

One: The flame of Peace, just as the Peace of Christ, is the true order of life.

All: We light the candle of Peace as we remember to live into Christ's Peace.

(Light the candle of Peace)

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Please stand in body or Spirit.)

One: The day of God is coming; lift up your voices.

Many: We await God's coming day with anticipation.

One: Let us seek the peace and patience God provides.

Many: Comfort, comfort my people, says our God.

One: God will feed us like a shepherd.

Many: God will gather us in gentle, caring arms.

One: God's hand is upon us in blessing;

Many: We are welcomed by God's steadfast love.

*HYMN: #116 – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*INVOCATION

Righteous and holy God, your glory is revealed to us day by day as valleys of despair are lifted up and mountainous problems are leveled. In your presence, we see more than our immediate situation. We catch a glimpse of your eternal purposes. So come among us now and speak your word of peace. Feed us with your truth, and equip us to welcome Christ's coming. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE #236

Halle, halle, halleluja. Halle, halle, halleluja.

Halle, halle, halleluja. Halle, halle, halleluja.

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES

At this time, all children are invited to come forward for the children's offering, and children's time. An offering is not required for participation. All are welcome, especially first time visitors.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

"Come as a Child"

Come as a child, when He calls you to follow.

**Just come as a child, for His love is untold. Come as a child,
when you seek His communion, for then, all His blessings unfold.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

In our hearts these gifts we bring; for you give us everything. Teach us how to follow you; in all we say and all we do. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Anne-Marie Merrill

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

*HYMN: #101 – Comfort Ye, My People

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰ See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³ the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, John the baptizer appeared^[e] in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

SERMON "A Voice in the Wilderness"

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Come, Emmanuel”

Pepper Choplin

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

One way we prepare for Christ's appearance is to support the church's mission in our community and beyond. Our church's programs share good news, our outreach provides comfort and practical help, and our goals are nothing less than newness of life for all God's children. May our gifts reflect God's generosity.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY #562 – Take My Gifts

**Take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me,
gave me light and food and shelter, gave me life and set me free,
now because your love has touched me, I have love to give away,
now the bread of love is rising, loaves of love to multiply!**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

While we are waiting and preparing for Christ to appear, we are seeking, O God, to act as faithful followers. May our offerings extend the promise of salvation to people whose lives are broken by neglect, abuse, bad choices, and sinful ways. May these gifts offer hope to all whose suffering and loss seem too heavy to bear. May our church be a listening, caring presence for all its members and through us for all those we meet in our work and leisure. Amen.

WE GO OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE A LOVING, SERVING GOD

*HYMN: #104 – We Hail You, God's Anointed (Please be seated after the hymn.)

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude and until the Christ Light departs.)

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

Members of the Congregation

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

Ken Gould and Julie Turner

LAY READER

Harry Handy

USHERS

Stanley & Holly Gorgol, Tom & Andrea Cooper and Michael Bryan

GREETER(s)

Joyce Pope

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Susan Handy

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Christine Lehoullier

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

Chris Ferrin

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Hannah Collier