

Mercy

Presbyterian Church

ORDER OF WORSHIP SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023

CALL TO WORSHIP

Revelation 15:3 & 1 Timothy 1:17

Leader: Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!

People: Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

Leader: To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

HYMN OF PRAISE

The Hymn of Joy (Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee)

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee,
Opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

2. All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and Heav'n reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Singing bird and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee!

3. Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blessed,
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,
All who live in love are Thine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine!

4. Mortals join the happy chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
Father love is reigning o'er us,
Brother love binds man to man
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music lifts us Sunward
In the triumph song of life!

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PRAYER OF INVOCATION

- ¹ Who has believed what he has heard from us?
 And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
- ² For he grew up before him like a young plant,
 and like a root out of dry ground;
 he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
 and no beauty that we should desire him.
- ³ He was despised and rejected by men,
 a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
 and as one from whom men hide their faces
 he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
- ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
 and carried our sorrows;
 yet we esteemed him stricken,
 smitten by God, and afflicted.
- ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions;
 he was crushed for our iniquities;
 upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
 and with his wounds we are healed.
- ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
 we have turned—every one—to his own way;
 and the Lord has laid on him
 the iniquity of us all.
- ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
 yet he opened not his mouth;
 like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
 and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
 so he opened not his mouth.
- ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
 and as for his generation, who considered
 that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
 stricken for the transgression of my people?
- ⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked
 and with a rich man in his death,
 although he had done no violence,
 and there was no deceit in his mouth.
- ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;
 he has put him to grief;
 when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
 he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
 the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.
- ¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
 by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
 make many to be accounted righteous,
 and he shall bear their iniquities.
- ¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
 and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
 because he poured out his soul to death
 and was numbered with the transgressors;
 yet he bore the sin of many,
 and makes intercession for the transgressors.

CONFESSION OF SIN

(Adapted from the Valley of Vision)

O God of Grace,

You have imputed my sin to my substitute, and have imputed his righteousness to my soul, clothing me with a bridegroom's robe, decking me with jewels of holiness. But in my Christian walk I am still in rags; my best prayers are stained with sin; my penitential tears are so much impurity; my confessions of wrong are so many aggravations of sin; my receiving the Spirit is tintured with selfishness.

I need to repent of my repentance; I need my tears to be washed; I have no robe to bring to cover my sins, no loom to weave my own righteousness; I am always going into the far country, and always returning home as a prodigal, always saying, "Father, forgive me," and you are always bringing forth the best robe. Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, the exceeding wonder of grace.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

1 John 5:11-13

¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.

HYMN OF PRAISE

O Holy Night

1. O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! Oh hear the angels' voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night divine.
2. Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here came the wise men from Orient land
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger;
In all our trials born to be our friend.
He knows our need, to our weakness is no stranger,
Behold your King! Before Him lowly bend!
Behold your King! Before Him lowly bend!
3. Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother;
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! Oh praise His name forever,
His power and glory evermore proclaim!
His power and glory evermore proclaim!

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

SERMON “Wanting” - Rev. Bryan Rigg

COLLECTION OF TITHES & OFFERINGS

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

2. For Christ is born of Mary,
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King
And peace to men on earth.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

3. How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray,
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

SENDING HYMN

Angels We Have Heard on High

1. Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains:

Chorus

Glo . . . ria in excelsis Deo!
Glo . . . ria in excelsis Deo!

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee,
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Chorus

3. Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Chorus

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BENEDICTION & DISMISSAL

Minister: Let us go forth to serve the world as those who love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

People: **THANKS BE TO GOD!**