

GREETING

This is the day the Lord has made!

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP AND CONGREGATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME****SOUNDING OF THE HOUR****PRELUDE*****LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Rich, Betsy, Sean & Shannon Moakler

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Hymn # 9)

***Opening Prayer**

Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season.

As these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination.

Show us the creative power of hope.

Teach us the peace that comes from justice.

Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

Magnify your love within us.

Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,

that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

***HYMN # 20**

"Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

from Psalm 32:1-6

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

based on Isaiah 60:1-3

Leader: Arise, shine: for your light has come.

People: **O God, we live as if the light had never defeated the darkness in the world or in us.**

Leader: And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

People: **We confess that we ignore the Christ you sent to be among us, to be in us.**

Leader: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;

but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.

People: **We've kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his birth each moment in our waiting hearts.**

Leader: And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

People: **Lord, you came to us in the fullness of time.**

Forgive us for not opening our eyes to your coming.

It's time that we prepare for your coming.

Let the earth ring with song. Let the light break forth.

Let us all rejoice in the miracle of love.

Let Christ come into the fullness of our time. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

based on Psalm 85:9-13

Leader Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

and righteousness will look down from the sky.

The Lord will give what is good,

and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him

and will make a path for his steps.

In Christ, God's salvation is at hand, and righteousness has come.

People: Thanks be to God!

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 23 (refrain)**

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

OLD TESTAMENT READING pg. 636

Isaiah 7:10-16

ANTHEM

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

arr.: Mark Hayes

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS

****Gateway to Worship**

***HYMN OF PREPARATION # 15**

"Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers"

GOSPEL READING pg. 1

Matthew 1:18-25

SERMON

What's Love Got To Do With It?

Rev. Sharon Amstutz

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER****GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS****Offertory**

***Doxology # 22 (verse 4)**

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

***Prayer of Dedication**

GOING OUT TO SERVE***HYMN OF CONSECRATION # 376**

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

***BENEDICTION**

Leader: Depart in peace, and take with you the certain knowledge

That God is always coming into the world.

People: **We will seek God, not in a long ago stable or ancient manger,**

But in the people we meet and the depths of our own hearts.

Leader: May the blessing of Christmas make you a blessing to others;
May the peace of the season pervade all that you do.

People: **We will welcome the challenge of discipleship.**
We will offer ourselves as God's ministers.
We will go forth in hope, peace, joy, and love.

*SENDING RESPONSE # 29 (refrain)

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

***POSTLUDE**

*For those who are able, please stand.

****Gateway to Worship** is our worship program for 4-year olds through first graders. The Gateway leader will take the children to their classroom in the Fellowship Hall after the Children's Moments.

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LARGE-PRINT BULLETINS—A few large-print bulletins are available on the table in the Narthex.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

This morning we will receive the **Christmas Joy Offering**. This offering helps students at racial-ethnic schools and colleges develop their gifts and find their calling to serve God through serving their community. This offering also helps support the unmet needs of families who have responded to God's call by giving their lives to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Some of those needs emerge during their service, others after their retirement. As we celebrate Jesus' love in our lives this Christmas, our gifts bear joyful witness to the power of that boundless love that changes lives.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We're about to begin a new year and with that comes the need for **ushers and for elders to volunteer to serve communion**. New calendars for the coming year are posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please use them to let us know when you will be available to help out. Many thanks.

CHRISTMAS EVE MUSIC AND SERVICE

The Christmas Eve pre-service music program will begin at 5:30 p.m. on December 24th. The service will begin at 6:00.

THE MITTEN TREE

The Mitten Tree is in the hallway across from the church office! Please bring hats, scarves and mittens for children in our area who need a little warmth.

ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR

Is it too late?! Not for **Alternative Gift** giving. Each mission could still use and appreciate your help, this year more than ever. If you missed the Alternative Gift Fair and would like to give a gift in a friend or family member's name, there is still time. Missions are: **CASA, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Living Waters for the World, Rise Up for Kids and The River**. You may use the **enclosed Alternative Gift form** to indicate your support. (Cards and envelopes for your use are available in the church office.) These forms may be turned in any time during Advent. Thank you.