

ORDER OF WORSHIP - DECEMBER 22, 2024
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER

Dr. John Hatton

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF JESUS

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Carillon Choir
Bonnie Lynch, director

Joy to the World
arr. Sandra Eithun

INTROIT

Chancel Choir

Sing Out, My Soul
Jacques Berthier

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Rev. Joan Wooden

Our souls magnify the Lord!
Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!
The mighty One has done great things for us!
Holy is God's name!
Let us worship God.
For God is our Maker and our Redeemer;
from generation to generation God gives mercy.

***HYMN 224**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

***THE APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

INTRODUCTION

LITANY

Choir and Congregation
Mark and Mary Jo Nielsen (8:45)
The Blain Family (10:45)

Love creates the bonds that provide us with deep meaningful relationships.

The greatest of all gifts is love.

Love inspires random acts of kindness and generosity.

The greatest of all gifts is love.

Love causes us to look only for the best in others.

The greatest of all gifts is love.

Love allows us to be accepted for who we are, flaws and all.

The greatest of all gifts is love.

Advent's Holy Light
Congregational Part

JOEL RANEY

(on cue)

Lord, we are wait - ing for peace to reign.

Lord, we are lis - tening for love's re - frain.

For hope, peace, and joy and love to u -

nite in the beau - ty and won - der of

Ad - vent's ho - ly light.

(repeat this chorus after the candle lighting and litany)

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CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Gracious Creator, we gather in your presence today, hearts brimming with gratitude for the extraordinary gift of love you have bestowed upon us. May the celebration of love extend beyond our immediate circles, creating ripples of compassion and unity in the world. In recognizing the beauty of love, may we become vessels of your light, shining brightly for all to see. Amen.

ACT OF PRAISE

Hannah James, soprano
Rachel Marshall, Celtic harp
Lynne Grace Wooden, flute

In the Bleak Midwinter
arr. Rachel Marshall

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Adam Brewer

CALL TO CONFESSION

Dr. John Hatton

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful Savior, you know the hunger of our hearts,
the hurt of our world,
and the weakness of our lives.
Feed us with faith and hope.
Comfort us with love and joy.
Forgive us with your grace.
Strengthen us with your Spirit
and give us the faith of Mary.
For we yearn to proclaim your promises
and draw strength from your vision
of justice and peace in our weary world.
In hope and trust, we pray. Amen.

SILENT PRAYER OF PERSONAL CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Rejoice! God has looked with favor
upon the powerless and the lowly.
Christ has come to redeem us from our sin.
The Spirit has strengthened us
with the power of grace and love.
**In the mercy of the triune God,
we are forgiven.
Glory to God. Amen.**

HYMN 242

Love Came Down at Christmas

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dennis Burrows

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

Chancel Choir

Candlelight Carol

John Rutter

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF BLESSING**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Carol Douglas

Luke 1: 26-38 (NLT)

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For the word of God will never fail."

Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Dr. John Hatton

***HYMN 240**

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

Fantasia on "In dulci jubilo" BWV 729

J. S. Bach

Dr. James Humlong