

Faith United Methodist Church

December 24, 2020



Centering

Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:11-12

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Send, O God, into the darkness of this troubled world, the light of your Son. Let the star of your hope touch the minds of all people with the bright beams of mercy and truth; and so direct our steps that we may ever walk in the way revealed to us, as the shepherds of Bethlehem walked with joy to the manger where he dwelled, who now and ever reigns in our hearts, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Angels We Have Heard on High

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may always be ready to welcome him. Come, Lord Jesus.

We have opened our hearts to God's love in the season of Advent so that the light of Christ would penetrate the darkness of sin. We see you, Lord Jesus.

We marked this time of preparation looking to the light of the world to dispel the darkness. Fill us with your light to reflect your glory Lord Jesus.

Tonight we light this candle as a symbol of the great light that shines in the darkness. May the presence of your Son, O God, shine through us. O come let us adore him. **Amen.**

Prayer of Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as the scriptures are read and your Word proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. **Amen.**

O Little Town Of Bethlehem

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore.

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:8-18

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news

of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’ ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

The Word of God, for the People of God. Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

Special Music

Silent Night, Holy Night

Witness

See the Glory

Prayers for the World

Holy God, heaven and earth are met this day in the newborn Child, Savior of the world. We celebrate his birth; for in him you come to be close to us, that we might be close to you.

Especially, we give thanks
for the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and all
he means to us . . .
for confidence in your almighty love . . .
for those who generously give . . .
for those who graciously receive . . .
for the Church’s nurturing us in the faith . . .
God of all mercy, as you have come in Jesus Christ to be our guest, inspire
our hearts to a hospitality that welcomes all your children in his name.

Especially we pray
for those who have not heard your good news . . .
for the sick and suffering . . .
for those who know no laughter, only tears . . .
for those who govern and rule . . .
For those enslaved by tyranny . . .
For prisoners of addiction or abuse . . .
For the Church as refuge for the needy . . .

All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Offering & Prayer for the Gifts of the Community

O God, our hope, transform our gifts and the acts of giving into ministries of love and compassion to all the persons this church serves in your name. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, almighty God, creator & heaven and earth. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. In the fullness of time you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour, and at his birth the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. **Hosanna in the highest.***

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of a woman, on that night long ago, so on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Once in David's Royal City

Proclamation of the Light

John 1

(Each row will follow outside, light their candle outside and gather in the lawn around the tree)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Benediction

Go forth from this time and place, bear the light of Christ in all that you say and do. May the blessing of God, Father, Son & Holy Spirit be with you this day and always. **Amen.**

Benediction Response: Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!