

*He said, “Surely they are my people,  
children who will be true to me”;  
and so he became their Savior.*

ISAIAH 63:8



# FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMASTIDE

January 1, 2023

## GATHERING

**PRAYER FOR MEDITATION:** *God of hope and light, your good news has been emblazoned across the skies, the great starry night of Jesus' birth, sung by angels, celebrated by shepherds, witnessed by animals. You have given to us a new chance, a reminder of your continual love for us. Be with us in this worship, we pray. Guide our thoughts, our lives, our spirits. Heal and restore us. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.*

## RINGING OF THE CHIMES

**OPENING SENTENCES** (*John 1:14, Titus 3:6*)

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

One: The Word became flesh to live among us.

**ALL:** *Now we have seen the glory of God.*

One: God has poured out the Spirit upon us,

**ALL:** *through the grace of Jesus Christ our Savior.*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE**

*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

arr. by Cherwien

Dr. Terry McRoberts

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*Luke 1:46-27, 49*)

*Elder David Greene*

One: We recount the gracious deeds of God, all the praiseworthy acts the Lord has done for us.

**ALL:** *Praise God for coming to dwell among us, Immanuel.*

One: Praise God for the good news of Jesus, the pioneer of our salvation.

**ALL:** *Praise God for making us brothers and sisters in Christ.*

One: Praise God who is present with us still, lifting us up and carrying us.

**ALL:** *God's glory shines in heaven and on earth. Praise the Lord!*

**\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN: 664** *Morning Has Broken*

BUNESSAN

## PRAISE GOD AND CONFESS OUR SINS

**CALL TO CONFESSION** (*Isaiah 35:1,4*)

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

Surrounded by God's everlasting faithfulness, we acknowledge our distress in how we have lost faith, become separated from God and one another. Let us confess our sins to God our loving and merciful redeemer.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

*We come to you this day, gracious Lord, exhausted from all the activities of the season. It seems that we spend so much energy, time, and resources in preparation, and then when it is over, we collapse. We wonder what happened to all the enthusiasm we had. Lord, forgive us for placing our energies in getting and gathering. Give us peace and strength to renew our commitment to you. Remind us again to look around at the many ways in which we can be of service to you by serving others. Help us move forward in our compassion and not collapse in our witness. Heal us, merciful Lord, for we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

**One:** Though the world swirls around you and exhaustion threatens to overtake you, rest your spirits in the great God of all creation who is with you now and forever! God will give you strength and restore your spirits.

**ALL:** *Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.*

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: 447 We Are Forgiven**

**WE ARE FORGIVEN**

*We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.*

*We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.*

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

**One:** The peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

**ALL:** *And also with you.*

**THE WORD**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*Thankful*  
Susannah White, soloist

Carol Bauer Sager,  
David Foster, Richard Page

**TIME WITH THE CHILDREN**

*Libby Smith*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

**\*HYMN: 121 O Little Town of Bethlehem**

**ST. LOUIS**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

*Elder David Greene*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Isaiah 63:7-9 (pg. 693)*

*Elder David Greene*

**One:** This is the word of God for the people of God. **ALL:** *Thanks be to God.*

**NEW TESTAMENT READING** *Matthew 2:13-23 (pg. 2)*

*Rev. Courtney Bowen*

**One:** This is the word of God. The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever. **ALL:** *Thanks be to God.*

## RESPONSE

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from *The Confession of 1967*) Elder David Greene

*God has created the world of space and time to be the sphere of God's dealings with humankind. In its beauty and vastness, sublimity and awfulness, order and disorder, the world reflects to the eye of faith the majesty and mystery of its Creator. God has created human beings for a personal relation with himself that they may respond to the love of the Creator. God has created male and female and given them a life which proceeds from birth to death in a succession of generations and in a wide complex of social relations. God has endowed humans with capacities to make the world serve their needs and to enjoy its good things. Life is a gift to be received with gratitude and a task to be pursued with courage. People are free to seek life within the purpose of God: to develop and protect the resources of nature for the common welfare, to work for justice and peace in society, and in other ways to use their creative powers for the fulfillment of human life.*

(At this time, please find the red friendship pad located toward the center aisle on each pew, sign it, pass it down your row and back again, taking note of those who worship with you.)

**OFFERING**

Elder David Greene

**OFFERTORY***As with Gladness Men of Old*

arr. by Hobby

Dr. Terry McRoberts

\*Doxology (Tune: 606)

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;**Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

\*Dedicatory Prayer

Elder David Greene

**\*HYMN: 147** *The First Nowell*

THE FIRST NOWELL

## SENDING

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Rev. Courtney Bowen

(We request that you remain seated until after the Postlude and ask that you use the Postlude as a time to reflect upon the scripture that was read in today's service.)

**POSTLUDE***Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come*

arr. by Wolz

Dr. Terry McRoberts