

Order of Worship – Thursday, December 24, 2020

CHIMES

PRELUDE “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” F. Mendelssohn Catalina Daggett

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Reader: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Messiah. King. Savior. Emmanuel. Word made flesh. Light of the world. Lord. We know Jesus by all these names and many others. We light the Christ candle in celebration of his birth, and of the hope, joy, love, and peace he brings to us and to the whole world. No one has ever seen God, but in Jesus Christ God is made known.

Light the Christ Candle.

“Joy to the World” v. 1

OPENING PRAYER Landes Dung

Eternal God,
by the birth of Jesus Christ you gave yourself to the world.
Grant that, being born in our hearts,
he may save us from all our sins,
and restore within us the image and likeness of our Creator, to
whom be everlasting praise and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

OPENING SONG Carol Medley Praise Band

PASTORAL PRAYER Pastor Allison

We come from different walks of life as we gather in this place on this most holy night. Some of us come from various faith traditions, and others of us were born and raised in this very church. However we come, great God of love, here we are.

Let us approach the manger as the shepherds, who came to see this wondrous thing of which they had been told.

Let us come to the manger with the steadfastness of Joseph who heeded the words of the angel and obeyed his Lord.

Let us come to the manger with the love of Mary who responded to extraordinary words with absolute faith and certainty.

Let us come to the manger like the three wise men, who left their lives and followed the star.

O God of great love, let these lives of courage and faith kindle hope in our hearts that we, too, might bow down and kneel in gratitude to worship our Lord, the King of Kings and the Prince of Peace, who came that we might know what a life of love looks like. Let it be so, O God; let it be so. Amen.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY Luke 2:1-20

SERMON “We Need a Little Christmas” Pastor Allison

INVITATION TO COMMUNION Pastor Allison

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Landes Dung

Wondrous God: On this birthday of your Son, when we rehearse the Christmas stories we love so much, we confess with embarrassment that, if we had been around at the first Christmas, we might have missed it all! In our busyness, we would not have noticed even the setting sun, let alone an odd little star that had no business being where it was. Even now, Father, we seldom pay real attention to signs and signals from you, missing messages of hope, comfort and love.

Help us to be more attentive, O God, to your presence: in a guiding star, in the angels' song, in the small body of your newborn Son, but also in the face of a lonely old woman or the sprawling shape of a homeless man; for they may be bearing a Christmas message to us -- from you. We pray in the name of the Holy Child who grew up to care and would have us care. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE Pastor Allison

Hear the good news. Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. That proves God's love for us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God! Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING Pastor Allison

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.

Lord, we greet you this happy night,
for you have been at work in our world throughout all time.
You made all things and called them good.
You claimed your people Israel,
freed them from the bondage of Egypt,
and journeyed with them through the wilderness to the promised land.
You sent prophets to call your people back to you.
Then in the fullness of time you sent your Son Jesus,
Immanuel, born the King of Angels,
your Word in flesh appearing.
He was one of us and lived with us,
giving up all his glory for our sake to make us whole.
And yet you raised him up again
to overcome the power of death and live a new life.
Still we wait for the day
when we too will share the fullness of life in him and with him.
And so with the faithful of all the ages, we sing the praise and glory of your name:

**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.**

And so, O God, come among us tonight.
Show us your presence in this bread and this cup,
and make this bread we break and this cup we bless the body and blood of Christ.
By the power of your Holy Spirit,
unite us with Christ and all who share this feast,
just as you send us out to be his presence in and for your world.
Give us courage to be your people,
to show your justice, grace, mercy, peace, and love,
and to be a part of your transformation of our world
until the day when the baby whose birth we celebrate tonight
comes again in peace
and we sing your praise and glory forever.
Amen.¹

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor Allison

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

BREAKING THE BREAD, BLESSING THE CUP

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

Pastor Allison

Eternal God, we give you thanks for his holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Pastor Allison

As we wait together for the day of Christ's coming, may these, our offerings, be signs of God's fruit. In our giving, may we grow in the compassion and justice of Jesus, in whose name we pray and whose coming we celebrate. Amen.

LIGHTING OUR CANDLES

Pastor Allison

CLOSING SONG

"Silent Night"

Landes Dung

BENEDICTION

Pastor Allison

POSTLUDE "Joy to the World" G. F. Handel, arr., Herbert Colvin

Catalina Daggett

Welcome

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020

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Monday – Wednesday 9:00am - 1:00pm

Our Mission Statement:

**To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for
the Transformation of the World**



Allison Byerley, Senior Pastor
Marcelo Escarzaga, Pastor for

Hispanic Ministry

Lynnda Boswell, Administrative Assistant
Landes Dung, Music Coordinator/Director
Catalina Daggett, Organist
Andrew Summers, Technical Services Director
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¹ written by Rev. Andy James, pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Whitestone, New York, and posted on **LiturgyLink**. <http://liturgylink.wordpress.com/2011/12/24/a-communion-prayer-for-christmas-eve/>, accessed 12/15/2020.