



**Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025**

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Welcome

Prelude

Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella

French Carol

The prelude signals the beginning of our sacred time together. During the prelude, you are invited to prepare your heart for worship by focusing your attention upon God.

Call to Worship

Carolyn Nash

The signs are there: God's love comes again,
showering us with the light of Christ!

**O Lord God of hosts, let your face shine,
that we may be saved.**

With anticipation of the divine, we remain expectant
and marvel at the steadfast faith of Mary and Joseph.

**O Lord God of hosts, let your face shine,
that we may be saved.**

The time is nearly upon us.

Preparations are almost complete.

Are we ready for change?

**O Lord God of hosts, let your face shine,
that we may be saved.**

Worship and praise God for these signs
of hope and love!

**O Lord God of hosts, let your face shine,
that we may be saved.**

Opening Prayer

Carolyn Nash

In this season of love, hope and family,
grant us joy and peace this day.

You offered signs to Joseph and Mary long ago—
signs that their son would be the Messiah,
Emmanuel.

May your light shine on us here,
that we might understand the signs in our lives.

We come with open hearts and minds
to hear of your love coming into the world.

We come to hear of a young woman with child,
a foster father with trust in God,
a match you made in heaven
to shepherd a tiny boy to his destiny.

Holy God, show us your peace
as we make ready for your light in the world!

Lighting Fourth Advent Candle – Chip and Joyce Ikwild

First Reader: Today, we come face to face with the scandal of Advent: Mary, the unmarried mother; God Incarnate growing in Mary's womb as a vulnerable baby; Joseph contemplating leaving Mary because of her pregnancy; God's love at work in ways that society and propriety could not understand; God calling Mary and Joseph to faithfulness despite the fear of disgrace.

All: With Mary and Joseph, we choose to wait, watch, and listen for the way of Love instead of responding in fear to the world's judgment.

Second Reader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our faithfulness as we seek, find, and follow Emmanuel, God with us.

Light the fourth candle of the Advent wreath.

Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High

UMH 238

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Passing the Peace of Christ

Carolyn Nash

May Christ's peace fill you with joy during this season of hope. May signs of God's love bring peace and serenity, as you await the birth of light. Let us pass the peace.

Children's Message

Pastor Larry

Ministry of Music

Come to My Heart

Choir

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Prayer for Understanding

All Praying

Lord, open our ears and hearts to the reading of your Holy Word so that we may be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Amen

Scripture Reading

Philippians 2:1-11

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death—

even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Response to the Word

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

Hymn

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

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Sermon

"Listen Up"

Pastor Larry

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.**

***Gloria Patri**

UMH 70

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the
beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end. Amen. Amen.**

Morning Prayer

Pastor Larry

The Lord's Prayer

**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 trespass against us. And lead us not into
temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the
glory forever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Offering

Carolyn Nash

**God's wisdom turns the wisdom of the world upside down. God calls us to unexpected and
extravagant opportunities to grow in our gifts and in our faith. Holding things close in fear
distracts us from the path of discipleship, but trusting in God and in God's future leads us
to great generosity and joy. Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in
gratitude and praise.**

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

The Holly and the Ivy

English Carol

**Doxology Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Prayer of Dedication*

Carolyn Nash

**Lord of Heaven, accept these gifts from our hearts,
that they may fulfill the purposes of your people.
As Christ's light shines upon us,
we rejoice in the opportunity to share our abundance
with others.
Bless these offerings to the Christ child
and to our resurrected Lord. Lord of Heaven, accept these gifts from our hearts,
that they may fulfill the purposes of your people.
As Christ's light shines upon us,
we rejoice in the opportunity to share our abundance
with others.
Bless these offerings to the Christ child
and to our resurrected Lord. Amen**

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

***Hymn**

Away in a Manger

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***Benediction**

Pastor Larry

***Choral Benediction**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UMH 230

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!*

Postlude

The Echo Carol

German Carol

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

*Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.*

Refrain:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

*2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song? (Refrain)*

*3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (Refrain)*

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"*

*2. Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th' incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King!"*

*3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"*

AWAY IN A MANGER

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.*

*2. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay*

*close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.*