# **Christmas Eve**

December 24, 2024 5:00 & 10:30 p.m.

Please note: The 5:00 p.m. worship service is live streamed and recorded.

### AS WE GATHER

There are very few times of the year that are more joyful than Christmas Eve. The familiar carols, the sparkling lights of the tree, the warm glow of candles, and the precious story of the birth of Jesus all combine to fill us with special joy and peace. On this night we hear again the angel's words and listen to the surprising yet wonderful news that God has given us His own Son to be our Savior.

## PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

#### WELCOME AND EXCHANGE OF PEACE

It is important to recognize that some people are especially susceptible to viruses that can be spread by contact and that some immune systems are very sensitive. Please understand that some may choose not to shake hands during the Exchange of Peace, but might simply greet you with a verbal greeting, a wave, or a smile.

## **▼ PREPARATION**

#### OPENING HYMN

379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him
Born the king of angels: (Refrain)

ref O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

- Highest, most holy,
   Light of Light eternal,
   Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
   Son of the Father
   Now in flesh appearing! (Refrain)
- 3 Sing, choirs of angels,
  Sing in exultation,
  Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
  Glory to God
  In the highest: (Refrain)
- 4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
  Born this happy morning;
  Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
  Word of the Father
  Now in flesh appearing! (Refrain)

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## **INVOCATION AND PRAYER**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: O Christ of Bethlehem, with excitement and gratitude we give You our

hearts and welcome Your coming. We are here to listen to Your story, to rejoice in Your presence, and to receive Your gifts that You give to us here in worship. We thank and praise You for the glory of this most holy

night. In Your name we pray.

People: Amen.

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

People: The glory of the Lord has shone upon us, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Pastor: In His name, let us make confession of our sins and for His sake, seek

forgiveness.

(silence for personal reflection and confession)

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: We do not deserve to be called Your children, for we have disobeyed

You so very often. In our thinking, our speaking, and our doing – we have sinned against You. We humbly come before You and ask for

Your forgiveness.

Pastor: The grace of God has appeared, bringing forgiveness and salvation!

Christ Jesus gave Himself for us to redeem us from the punishment of our sins. All who receive Him, who believe in His name, are given power to become children of God. Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father

and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Glory to God in the highest!

Pastor: And peace to God's people on earth.

People: Amen!

## **HYMN OF PRAISE**

377 On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

1 On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

- 2 Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since our Redeemer made us glad, Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since our Redeemer made us glad, When from our sin He set us free, All for to gain our liberty?
- 3 When sin departs before His grace,
  Then life and health come in its place,
  When sin departs before His grace,
  Then life and health come in its place;
  Angels and men with joy may sing,
  All for to see the newborn King.
- 4 All out of darkness we have light,
  Which made the angels sing this night,
  All out of darkness we have light,
  Which made the angels sing this night:
  "Glory to God and peace to men
  Now and forevermore. Amen."

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## **▼** THE CHRISTMAS STORY **▼**

Pastor: Come and listen as the Christmas story is told!

People: It is a story of good news of great joy that is for all people!

Pastor: Think again of that wonderful night when angels sang to the shepherds:

People: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor

rests."

Pastor: Open your hearts to ponder the message of this most holy night.

People: Praise be to God for the birth of His Son!

#### ST. MATTHEW TELLS THE STORY

- Matthew 1:18-25
- <sup>18</sup> This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.
- <sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."
- <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"--which means, "God with us."
- <sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup> But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

## **HYMN**

- 359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
- 1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
  From tender stem hath sprung!
  Of Jesse's lineage coming
  As prophets long have sung,
  It came, a flow'ret bright,
  Amid the cold of winter,
  When half-spent was the night.

Text: Public domain

2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
She bore to us a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

## ST. JOHN TELLS THE STORY

John 1:1-5, 14

- <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.
- <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.
- <sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### **HYMN**

370 What Child Is This

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
  On Mary's lap is sleeping?
  Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
  While shepherds watch are keeping?
  This, this is Christ the king,
  Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
  Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
  The babe, the son of Mary!
- Why lies He in such mean estate
  Where ox and ass are feeding?
  Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
  The silent Word is pleading.
  Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
  The cross be borne for me, for you;
  Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
  The babe, the son of Mary!

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## ST. LUKE TELLS THE STORY

Luke 2:1-7

<sup>1</sup> In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to his own town to register.

<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

#### **HYMN**

364 Away in A Manger

- 1 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 take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

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## THE ANGELS TELL THE STORY

Luke 2:9-14

<sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

### **HYMN**

380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the\_angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

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## THE SHEPHERDS TELL THE STORY

Luke 2:15-18, 20

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

<sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

#### HYMN

368 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains, And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains. Refrain

ref Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
 Why your joyous strains prolong?
 What the gladsome tidings be
 Which inspire your heav'nly song? Refrain

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

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#### **SERMON**

#### Please stand

## **NICENE CREED**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

#### OFFERING

5:00 p.m. "Love has Come"

Love has come, a light in the darkness; Love explodes in the Bethlehem skies. See all heaven has come to proclaim it, Hear how their song of joy arises: Love, Love, born unto you a Savior, Love, Love, glory to God on high. Love is born, come share in the wonder; Love is God now asleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of His mother, What is the name her heart is saying: Love, Love, Love is the name she whispers, Love, Love, Jesus Immanuel.

Love has come, He never will leave us; Love is life everlasting and free. Love is Jesus within and among us; Love is the peace our hearts are seeking. Love, Love, Love is the gift of Christmas, Love, Love, Praise to You God on high.

"Love has Come" CCLI Song # 2060820 Ken Bible

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10:30 p.m. "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" setting by Ralph C. Schultz

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king." The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled, And still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world. Above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hov'ring wing, And ever o'er its babel sounds the blessèd angels sing.

All you, beneath your heavy load, by care and guilt bent low, Who toil along a dreary way with painful steps and slow: Look up, for golden is the hour, come swiftly on the wing, The Prince was born to bring you peace; of Him the angels sing.

For lo, the days have come to pass by prophets seen of old, When down into the circling years came Christ as was foretold. His word of peace shall to the earth God's ancient promise bring, And all who take this gift will hear the song the angels sing.

#### Please stand

### CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Pastor: Lord Jesus, our Savior, as we stand in spirit at Your lowly manger,

People: we are amazed and full of wonder as we think of that miracle which was

revealed in a stable.

Pastor: We pray that You would come to our homes this Christmastide,

People: and bring the tidings of great joy to all people.

Pastor: In Jesus, You have given us a gift whose worth is beyond all telling. Help us

in the busyness of this holiday season to not overlook or pass Him by.

People: Help us to pause before His manger and discover true peace, hope, and joy

through beholding Your Son as Christ our Lord.

Pastor: Let Your promise of peace, hope, and joy especially fill the hearts of the sick,

the aged, the troubled, the dying. Assure them that their Savior cares for

them and loves them.

People: Let all people find joy in worshipping their new-born Savior and King!

Give them strength to proclaim, "Glory to God in the highest!"

Pastor: Lord God, we pray that You would fill the hearts of all of us with a burning

zeal to spread the glorious news of the Christmas gospel.

People: We are grateful for our Savior – for His love and for His rich forgiveness

and gift of salvation and we find joy in praying in His name. Amen.

#### 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 and ever. Amen.

#### **▼** SACRAMENT **▼**

In the Lord's Supper we receive Christ's body and blood in and with the bread and wine. The two great blessings of the Lord's Supper are the forgiveness of sins and strength to live an improved Christian life. In response to the Lord's command we are to examine ourselves privately prior to partaking of the Sacrament. There are three basic questions on which we should examine ourselves, all of which we should be able to answer in the affirmative if we are to partake of the Sacrament worthily: 1) Am I truly sorry for my sins? 2) Do I believe Jesus Christ is my Savior? 3) Do I promise with God's help to live a Christian life? If you agree with the above statement, we invite you to the Sacrament.

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

## PEACE OF THE LORD

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

(5:00 p.m. only)

A "continuous communion table" will be the method of distribution this day. Communicants will come forward down the center aisle at the direction of the usher. You will receive the wafer from the pastor at the center and then proceed to the right or left (depending on which side of the church you are sitting) to receive the wine. You will then return to your pew. As is our custom, communion will be brought to people in the pews who have difficulty walking to the chancel. If you wish to take communion in the pew, please raise your hand when the communion assistant comes down the aisle. Also young children will receive a word of blessing.

## DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

- O little town of Bethlehem,
  How still we see thee lie!
  Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
  The silent stars go by;
  Yet in thy dark streets shineth
  The everlasting light.
  The hopes and fears of all the years
  Are met in thee tonight.
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary,
  And, gathered all above
  While mortals sleep, the angels keep
  Their watch of wond'ring love.
  O morning stars, together
  Proclaim the holy birth,
  And praises sing to God the king
  And peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

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4 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 Immanuel!

# 393 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

1 Infant holy,
 Infant lowly,
 For His bed a cattle stall;
 Oxen lowing,
 Little knowing
 Christ the child is Lord of all.
 Swiftly winging,
 Angels singing,
 Bells are ringing,
 Tidings bringing:
 Christ the child is Lord of all!
 Christ the child is Lord of all!

Text: Public domain

2 Flocks were sleeping,
Shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory,
Heard the story,
Tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing,
Free from sorrow,
Praises voicing,
Greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!

## Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

- 1 Now sing we, now rejoice,
  Now raise to heav'n our voice;
  He from whom joy streameth
  Poor in a manger lies;
  Not so brightly beameth
  The sun in yonder skies.
  Thou my Savior art!
  Thou my Savior art!
- 3 Now through His Son doth shine
  The Father's grace divine.
  Death was reigning o'er us
  Through sin and vanity
  Till He opened for us
  A bright eternity.
  May we praise Him there!
  May we praise Him there!
- Come from on high to me;
   I cannot rise to Thee.
   Cheer my wearied spirit,
   O pure and holy Child;
   Through Thy grace and merit,
   Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
   Draw me unto Thee!
   Draw me unto Thee!
- 4 Oh, where shall joy be found?
  Where but on heav'nly ground?
  Where the angels singing
  With all His saints unite,
  Sweetest praises bringing
  In heav'nly joy and light.
  Oh, that we were there!
  Oh, that we were there!

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386

## 375 Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

- 1 Come, your hearts and voices raising, Christ the Lord with gladness praising; Loudly sing His love amazing, Worthy folk of Christendom.
- 3 Jacob's star in all its splendor
  Beams with comfort sweet and tender,
  Forcing Satan to surrender,
  Breaking all the pow'rs of hell.
- 2 Christ, from heav'n to us descending And in love our race befriending; In our need His help extending, Saved us from the wily foe.
- 4 From the bondage that oppressed us, From sin's fetters that possessed us, From the grief that sore distressed us, We, the captives, now are free.

- 5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing When by faith we grasp this blessing, And to You we come confessing That Your love has set us free.
- 6 Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us, From Your lowly manger cheer us, Gently lead us and be near us Till we join Your choir above.

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#### **PRAYER**

Pastor: May this wonderful gift of Your sacrament, O Lord, strengthen our faith in

Your saving grace, that we might live in Christ's peace, that we might

confidently speak of Your love to the world, in the name of Him who saved us

through the sacrifice of His body and blood, Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

## **CANDLE LIGHTING**

The pastor will give light from his candle to the ushers. They will in turn give light to the worshiper nearest the aisle, who will pass it on to the others in that pew. Please keep the lit candle upright to avoid dripping wax.

5:00 p.m. "O Holy Night"

Traditional

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining; It is the night of our dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope- the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn! Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born!

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother,
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we;
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!

## 10:30 p.m. "Sleep of the Infant Jesus"

arr. by William Braun

Here by the sheep and oxen mild, Sleep, sleep, sleep God's little child. Angels, pure and white, guard You through the night, Come from heaven above to guard the Lord of Love. Sleep, sleep, Lord of Love, now sleep.

Here mid the shepherd's great delight, Sleep, sleep, sleep God's little child. Bending low in fear by the Infant dear, Trembling there before the mighty Lord of Hosts Sleep, sleep, Lord of Hosts, now sleep.

Here now the Wise Men trav'ling are, Sleep, sleep, sleep God's little child. Guided from afar by that holy star, Shining e'er so bright above the Lord of light. Sleep, sleep, Lord of light, now sleep.

Here, too, we worship from afar, Sleep, sleep, sleep God's little child. Now we kneel in awe near Your humble stall. By the little Child who is the Lord of all. Sleep, sleep, Lord of all, now sleep. Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

People: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Pastor: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

People: We have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

Pastor: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

People: In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Pastor: O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true

Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth, we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy

Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen.

#### CLOSING HYMN

363 Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

2 Silent night, holy night! 3
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

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# Serving at Chapel

Preacher: Theodore Laesch

Liturgists: 5:00 p.m. Ellory Glenn

10:30 p.m. Theodore Laesch

Acolytes: 5:00 p.m. Nyla Hill

10:30 p.m. Bella Moss

Soloist: 5:00 p.m. Matt McEuen

Choir: 10:30 p.m. Choral Singers

Organist & Accompanist: Ryan Meyer

Instrumentalists: Lynda Christian, oboe

Craig Schlichtmann, clarinet

Nate Laesch, trumpet Jake Laesch, euphonium Ted Laesch, trumpet Zeke Laesch, french horn

# **Worship Schedule**

Christmas Day Worship – Wednesday, December 25, 10:00 a.m. New Year's Eve Worship - Tuesday, December 31, 6:30 p.m.

# Regular Weekend Worship Services:

Saturday, 5:00 p.m. - Sunday 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.