FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 22, 2024
11:00 AM

As a courtesy to others, please silence your phone.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

RINGING OF THE BELLS

LIFE OF THE CHURCH — Rev. Timothy T. Boggess

PRELUDE — *He is Born* (Handbell Choir) — arr. Arnold Sherman

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES — Kim & Hans Schmeits

***HYMN 121** — *O Little Town of Bethlehem* — ST. LOUIS

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.

For Christ is born of Mary
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

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!

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God our Savior,
we ask for your mercy.
Though we know your story,
we resist the costs of following you.
We pass by those considered lowly in this world.
We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled.
Forgive us, we pray.
Help us to work for the justice you intend.
Make us messengers of the peace you bring.
As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

(a moment for silent reflection)

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God.

***SONG OF JOY 113** (refrain) *Angels We Have Heard on High* GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

ANTHEM *The Joy of Mary* Donald Neuen
(The Chancel Choir)

text from Luke 1: 46-50 (King James Version)

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
and my spirit doth rejoice in God my savior.
For he that is mighty hath done great things,
and holy is his name.

His mercy is on them that fear him,
from generation to generation,
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:26-45

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The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON *Mary Knew* Rev. Boggess

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER Janet Olshewsky

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors:
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY *The Rocking Carol* (Handbell Choir) arr. Kevin McChesney

***DOXOLOGY** *What Child Is This* GREENSLEEVES

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

from *A Declaration of Faith* (1977)

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** Janet Olshewsky

We affirm that Jesus was born of woman
as is every child,
yet born of God's power
as was no other child.
In the person and work of Jesus,
God's life and a human life
are united but not confused,
distinguished but not separated.
The coming of Jesus was itself
the coming of God's promised rule.
Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,
he brings about the relationship between God and humanity
that God always intended.

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

***HYMN 110** *Love Has Come* BRING A TORCH

Love has come: a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth 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, Emmanuel.

Love has come and 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!

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION** Rev. Boggess

The postlude concludes our worship today. It's the custom of this congregation to sit and enter into this moment with gratitude and celebration.

POSTLUDE *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* arr. Cynthia Dobrinski
(Handbell Choir)

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