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## Order of Worship

December 15, 2024

### Reflection

The story of Christmas is the story of God's relentless love for us.

– C.S. Lewis

### Prelude

*As worship begins, please silence your electronic devices.*

### Call to Worship

*Adopted from Isaiah 40*

Minister: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned,

**People: That she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.**

Minister: A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

**People: "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.**

Minister: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,

**People: And all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."**

Minister: Our King and Savior now draws near:

**People: Come, let us adore him!**

Song                    *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
    All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
    And glory shone around,  
    And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread  
    Had seized their troubled mind,  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
    To you and all mankind,  
    To you and all mankind.

"To you in David's town this day,  
    Is born of David's line,  
The Savior, who is Christ, the Lord,  
    And this shall be the sign,  
    And this shall be the sign.

"The heav'nly Babe you there shall find  
    To human view displayed,  
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
    And in a manger laid,  
    And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith  
    Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, who thus  
    Addressed their joyful song,  
    Addressed their joyful song.

"All glory be to God on high,  
    And to the earth be peace:  
Goodwill henceforth, from heav'n to men,  
    Begin and never cease,  
    Begin and never cease!"

### Prayer of Adoration

All glory to you, great God, for the gift of your Son, light in darkness and hope of the world, whom you sent to save us. With singing angels let us praise your name and tell the earth his story, that all may believe, rejoice, and bow down, acknowledging your love through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath      *The Angels' Candle*

*Isaiah 12:1-6*

Reader: We light the third candle of Advent, the Angels' Candle. We light these candles to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the world.

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

**All: Thanks be to God!**

Doxology

*Old Hundredth*

Praise God whose light fills all the earth

Whose love we see in Jesus' birth

Whose Spirit forms one family

Whose grace brings peace and harmony. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

**Heavenly Father, this morning we come to you rejoicing in Jesus your Son, because we have found forgiveness & fullness of life in Him. Father, we also come asking for your grace, because we are fully aware that we have failed you in more ways than we know. We have disobeyed your good commands; we have been deaf to your call; we have failed to love others with your love; and our hearts have been cold to your love. Forgive us, Father – and in your sanctifying grace, keep fashioning us to be more and**

**more like our Savior. Make our lives beautiful in Him,  
and for Him, we pray. Amen.**

Private Confession

Song      *Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed (At the Cross)*

Alas and did my Savior bleed  
And did my Sov'reign die  
Would He devote that sacred head  
For sinners such as I

Was it for crimes that I have done  
He groaned upon the tree  
Amazing pity grace unknown  
And love beyond degree

Chorus:

At the cross at the cross  
Where I first saw the light  
And the burden of my heart rolled away  
It was there by faith I received my sight  
And now I am happy all the day

Well might the sun in darkness hide  
And shut His glories in  
When Christ the mighty Maker died  
For man the creature's sin

Thus might I hide my blushing face  
While Calvary's cross appears  
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness  
And melt mine eyes to tears (Chorus)

But drops of grief can ne'er repay  
The debt of love I owe  
Here Lord I give myself away  
'Tis all that I can do (Chorus)

Words of Pardon and Comfort            *2 Corinthians 5:21*  
God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in  
him we might become the righteousness of God.

Song

*Go, Tell it on the Mountain*

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and everywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching  
O'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold throughout the heavens  
There shone a holy light. (Refrain)

The shepherds feared and trembled  
When lo above the earth  
Rang out the angel chorus  
That hailed our Savior's birth (Refrain)

Down in a lowly manger  
The humble Christ was born,  
And brought us God's salvation  
That blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)

*(Children through Kindergarten are dismissed for  
Children's Church; they will return for Communion.)*

Prayer of Intercession *Concluded by 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 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.**

High Desert Highlights

*See 'Church Life' on p. 16*

Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

*If you have a financial gift, you may place it in the offering plate, located on the information table. Donations can also be given electronically; see [highdesertpca.com](http://highdesertpca.com) for more information.*

Scripture

*Matthew 2:1-12*

Sermon

*Rev. Dan Rose*

*“Go, Tell it on the Mountain”*

*O Come, Let Us Adore Him: Songs Fit for a King*

Song

*Heaven Has Come to Us*

Unto us from on high  
Reaching down into the deepest night  
To the world hope has come  
In the dark the Light of Life has dawned

Chorus:

What a myst'ry oh what love  
Oh how can it be that Heaven has come (to us)

Unto us meek and mild  
God eternal born a helpless child  
Set aside Heaven's throne  
Veiled in weakness came unto His own (Chorus)



Unto us grace has come  
Here to seek and bring the sinner home  
Lived to die rose to reign  
Son of Man the Lamb for sinners slain (Chorus)

Heaven has come to us  
Heaven has come to us

### Celebration of the Lord's Supper

*This is a time for all people to seek the Lord. For Christians, the Lord's Supper (also called Communion or The Eucharist, which means 'thanksgiving') is a time to meet with their Savior by faith, to be strengthened and renewed by Him as they eat the bread and drink the elements. All baptized Christians who trust in Christ alone as their Savior and Lord, belong to a church that embraces the gospel, are at peace with their fellow neighbor, and seek strength and grace to live more faithfully to Christ, are invited to participate.*

*If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer (see Prayers on page 15) and to consider more deeply your relationship to Jesus Christ.*

*We also ask that children who have not yet publicly professed their faith in Christ refrain from partaking until doing so. Both wine (red) and grape juice (white) are offered. Gluten-free bread is also available.*

### Words of Institution

#### Memorial Acclamation

Minister: Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of the faith:

**All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!**

Minister: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

**All: Therefore, let us keep the feast.**

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

#### Song

#### *I Stand Amazed*

I stand amazed in the presence  
Of Jesus the Nazarene,  
And wonder how He could love me,  
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

#### Chorus:

O how marvelous! O how wonderful!  
And my song shall ever be:  
O how marvelous! O how wonderful!  
Is my Savior's love for me!

He took my sins and my sorrows,  
He made them His very own;  
He bore the burden to Calvary,  
And suffered and died alone. (Chorus)

When with the ransomed in glory  
His face I at last shall see,  
'Twill be my joy through the ages  
To sing of His love for me. (Chorus)

Song

*What Child is This?*

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 Christians, fear, for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spears shall pierce him through,  
the cross he bore for me, for you.  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
Come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise a song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby  
Joy, joy for Christ is born,  
The babe, the Son of Mary.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Gracious God, Jesus is the center point of history, and his presence is our new beginning. Center our lives on your lavish grace that not only saves but renews us to be like Jesus. May our godly living be a fitting testimony of thanksgiving that draws others to the joyful reign of Christ the King. Amen.**

Song

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,  
Opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;  
Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day!

All Thy works with joy surround Thee,  
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,  
Stars and angels sing around Thee,  
Center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
Singing bird and flowing fountain  
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving,  
Ever blessing, ever blessed,  
Wellspring of the joy of living,  
Ocean depth of happy rest!

Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,  
All who live in love are Thine;  
Teach us how to love each other,  
Lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the happy chorus,  
Which the morning stars began;  
Father love is reigning over us,  
Brother love binds man to man.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us Sunward  
In the triumph song of life.

Benediction

Postlude

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## **Prayers**

*Prayer for Those Searching for Truth:* Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

*Prayer of Belief:* Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

*Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin:* Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the Pioneer and Perfecter of my faith. Amen.

*Prayer of Commitment:* Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Amen.