

Christmas Day Gathering

December 25, 2022



PRELUDE | *The Holly and the Ivy* (All songs found on the [Advent Resource Page](#))

WELCOME | Announcements

CALL TO WORSHIP | Psalm 98

Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

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The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

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He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

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Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

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Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody!

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With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

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Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it!

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Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together

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before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity..

SONG #1 | *Joy to the World*

SONG #2 | *Little Drummer Boy*

ADVENT WREATH | The Nativity from Luke 1 and 2, Isaiah 12

Everything was ready! The moment God had been waiting for was here at last! God was coming to help his people, just as he promised in the beginning to Adam and Eve. Just like the prophets said too, remember?

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Isaiah said it like this:

A little baby will be born. A Royal Son.

His name will be Emmanuel, which means "God has come to live with us."

The Prince of Peace.

Yes, Someone is going to come and rescue us! But he won't be who anyone expects!

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He will be a King, but he won't live in a palace. And he won't have lots of money! He will be poor. And he will be a Servant. But this King will heal the whole world.

He will make everything the way it was always meant to be!

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But how would he come? What would he be like? What would he do?

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Mountains would have bowed down. Seas would have roared. Trees would have clapped their hands. But the earth held its breath. As silent as snow falling, he came in.

And when no one was looking, in the darkness, he came.

And there, in a stable, amongst the chickens and the donkeys and the cows, in the quiet of the night, God gave the world his wonderful gift. The baby that would change the world was born. His baby Son.

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Mary and Joseph wrapped him up to keep him warm. (He was a little baby after all!) They made a soft bed of straw and used the animal's feeding trough as his cradle.

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And they gazed in wonder at God's Great Gift, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. They named him Jesus, "Emmanuel"—which means "God has come to live with us." Because, of course, he had.

The wait is finally over. God is here.

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Behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people.

For unto you is born this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

HYMN/CAROL | *What Child Is This?*

SCRIPTURE READING | Isaiah 12

You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

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"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation."

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With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

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And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.

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"Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth.

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Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

SONG #4 | *O Come All Ye Faithful*

SONG #5 | All Glory Be to Christ

REFLECTION / POEM

THE CENTER | *Chaz Holsomback*

The center
In a newborn baby
Gravity and grace
Pulling everything in—
To an infinitesimal point,
A concentration of love
Condensed to a moment
An eternity wrapped in cloth
Stained with blood and soil
A straw bed, a mud floor
A dingy rag to clean the mess
None of us saw this coming
This secret center, hidden in plain sight
Less a surprise, more an offense
This pride killer, this life giver
Who now cries for warmth
Hungry, scared, and cold
An eternity wrapped in cloth
Condensed to a moment
A concentration of love
To an infinitesimal point
Pulling everything in
Gravity and Grace
In a newborn baby
The center

What is at the center of your life? Your heart? Our world? History and humanity?

COLLECT & COMMUNION

COLLECT | *Christmas Day Nativity*

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ:

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Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer,

may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge;

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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Through the body, blood, and life everlasting of Jesus.

Amen.

SONG #6 | *Come and Stand Amazed*

SONG #7 | *Go Tell It On the Mountain*

BENEDICTION | Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,

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he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

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whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

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so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.