



Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

3rd Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2013

*Let all who enter enjoy the fellowship of friends until the bells call us to worship.
Let us then, in oneness of spirit, turn our reverent attention to the worship of God.*

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

*Holy God, your prophets have long spoken
of the one who would come to save us.
Now the promise is fulfilled;
now your kingdom has come near.
Send us as messengers of your way,
to go and tell all the world
of the wonders we have seen
and the good news we have heard;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Prepare the Way, O Zion

Dale Wood

BRINGING THE LIGHT

ADVENT CANDLE-LIGHTING

Harry Wright, Donna Vint, Linda & Bella Eckel

We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us – in the children, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations – or our memories – push joy to the side? Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

**Loving God, we open ourselves to you,
 trusting that this is how you made us:
 you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.
 Show us the creative power of hope.
 Teach us the peace that comes from justice.
 Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained,
 but must be shared.
 Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
 that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 146

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
 whose hope is in the Lord their God.

**Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;
 who keeps faith forever.**

The Lord sets the prisoners free, opens the eyes of the blind,
 and lifts up those who are bowed down.

**The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.
 Praise the Lord!**

Let us worship God!

*SONG OF PRAISE

Prepare the Way, O Zion

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*CALL TO CONFESSION

*ADMITTING OUR BROKENNESS

**God of majesty and glory,
 we are thirsty for your grace.
 You made a way for us in the wilderness,
 and still, in our foolishness, we go astray.
 We hide our eyes from your presence.
 We do not listen to your word.
 We are lifeless when we ought to dance
 and speechless when we ought to sing.
 Forgive us, O Lord.
 Speak peace to our fearful hearts,
 strengthen our weak hands,
 and make firm our feeble knees
 as we seek to follow in your holy way. Amen.**

*DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

*THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

*SONG OF RESPONSE

Glory Be to the Father

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TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Ann Fayles

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

Page No. 615

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 11:2-11

Page No. 844

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

Kirk Forthman

MESSAGE

Waiting to Hear

Tracy L. Evans

SONG OF FAITH

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

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SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

The Lord's Prayer

Hymnal, p. 35

THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Noël nouvelet

Wilbur Held

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

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DEDICATION PRAYER

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING SONG

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

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*TAKING LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

Rejoice in God always, and again I say, rejoice,
for God has created you with the capacity for joy.

**We will find what makes us joyful,
and make that our gift to the world.**

Trust in God's good will for all of creation
and open yourself to God's gentle, transforming love.

**We will welcome new possibilities in our lives.
We will offer ourselves to God's goodness.
We will go forth in hope, and peace, and joy.**

*POSTLUDE

Noël

Louis-Claude Daquin

*Those who are able may stand.

We invite anyone who wishes to consider membership in this church to contact the pastor or a member of the session. You may also indicate interest in membership by checking the appropriate column in the ritual of friendship booklet. Membership in this church is a step made by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of church letter.

Lectionary Readings for December 22: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25.

The Urban Mission item of the month for December is **powdered milk**. Please place your donations in the box by the church information table.

Hearing-assistance devices and **large print hymnals** are available from the ushers.

Ushers for today's service are Paul and Erica Phelps.

You're invited to an **open house** at Rev. Tracy Evans' home on Tuesday, December 17, 5:00 to 7:00 P.M., 3918 Mayfair Drive. Maps are available at the Information Table. Please note that Tracy has two cats and a dog.

Please join us for our **Christmas Eve** service at 7:00 P.M. (musical prelude beginning at 6:45) on December 24. This service of nine lessons and carols will conclude with the traditional lighting of candles and singing of *Silent Night*. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors.

SUNDAY

December 15

- 9:30 A.M. – Sunday School
- 10:30 A.M. – Fellowship and Refreshments
- 10:55 A.M. – Worship Service
- 12:00 P.M. – Deacons meeting

MONDAY

December 16

- 7:00 P.M. – Fellowship & Hospitality meeting

WEDNESDAY

December 18

- 3:15 P.M. – Kids' Club
- 5:00 P.M. – Children's Choir
- 7:00 P.M. – Chancel Choir

THURSDAY

December 19

- 10:00 A.M. – Bible Study in Library

SUNDAY

December 22

- 9:30 A.M. – Sunday School
- 10:30 A.M. – Fellowship and Refreshments
- 10:55 A.M. – Worship Service
- 5:00 P.M. – Memorial Youth Group