

**"It is Christmas in the heart that puts Christmas in the air."  
— W.T. Ellis**



**December 25, 2022**



## WELCOME

PRELUDE *Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine* arr. Shows

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Our Lord has brought us again to the glad season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

**May his Spirit be born anew in our hearts this day.**

Open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old.

**Open our lips that we, too, may sing with joyful hearts.**

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward all. Amen.**

## OPEN CAROL SING

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of stable, stars, and surprises, of light and hope and new life: open our eyes and hearts to your presence in our world; forgive our obsession with property and possessions; forgive our compromises and narrowness of vision. Forgive our self-centeredness and our lack of commitment to you and to others. Open us to your grace, that we might hear again the song of the angels, and respond with a song in our hearts, and in our lives. Amen.**

## SILENT CONFESSION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God's love and faithfulness have been at work in you. You are healed and forgiven.

**God is good all the time. We praise God for God's faithfulness and mercy. Amen.**

## SIGNS OF PEACE AND UNITY

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

## SCRIPTURE Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

## CHRISTMAS AFFIRMATION

**We believe in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God — the source of all light and life. We believe that God sent Jesus Christ, as the Word Incarnate, into this world so that all might be bathed in his light and know the true source of life. On the witness of the disciples, We believe that Jesus was crucified, died and was buried — then brought back to life that we might also have new life in him. We believe the Word of God still speaks today to those who have ears and hearts to listen. We believe, with the power of the Holy Spirit, that our lives can be a witness to God's living presence and grace. Amen.**

## PASSING OF THE FRIENDSHIP FOLDERS

## MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

## BLESSING OF OUR TOYS

## SCRIPTURE John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

SHARED MESSAGE

What do these Christmas Passages say about God, Humans, and the relationship between God and humans and all people?

Share your most meaningful Christmas experience.

OFFERING

You may also give your offering by text-Text UMCWC \$50 to 73256, by using the QR code on your screen, at [umcwc.org](http://umcwc.org), through the mail, by automated giving through Realm, or by dropping it off at our office.

OFFERING VIDEO *Star of Wonder*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The bread and wine we're about to share joins us to the people throughout history and across the world who have come to this meal in search of life. Just as Jesus' birth was for the whole world, this bread and wine is for everyone:

for the hungry, for the lost, for those who search and those who are found, for those who question and those who know peace.

**This bread and wine is for everyone.**

Let us pray...

...And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn, singing:

*(tune: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)*

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,  
God of power and might adored,  
heaven and earth cannot proclaim  
all the glory of Your Name.  
Loud hosannas now we sing!  
In the highest may they ring!  
Blest is your Anointed One,  
Christ, Emmanuel, Your Son.  
Sing hosanna at his birth!  
Glory on high and peace on earth!**

On the night before Jesus died, he had supper with his friends. ... ..in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen;  
Christ will come again.**

We pray, God of love, that you will send your Holy Spirit upon us... ..all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*(tune: It Came Upon The Midnight Clear)*

**Our Father Lord on heav'n's high throne,  
most holy be Your name.  
Your kingdom come. Your will be done  
on earth—in heav'n the same.  
Give us this day the food we need:  
forgiven may we be;  
into temptation do not lead; from evil set us free.  
Yours is the kingdom;  
unto You in grateful love we bow;  
and Yours the pow'r; Lord, let us view  
your mighty presence now.  
The glory Yours; Your praise be sung  
by angel hosts and men.  
In ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue forevermore! Amen.**

GIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Your Son, O God, is a gift that nothing can match.  
The greatest offering we can make is to live in a  
way that honors you. Thank you for food and  
fellowship and so many blessings. Bring a melody  
to our lips, that our days may be filled with songs of  
praise. Happy birthday, Jesus. Thanks for letting us  
be part of your family. Amen.**

HYMN *He is Born, the Holy Child* no. 228

BENEDICTION

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child.

**Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless us  
now and forever. Amen.**

POSTLUDE *Christmas Postlude* arr. Ellso.

**Bold text indicates congregational response.**

The flowers on the Lord's Table are given to the glory of God and in honor of their daughter, Catherine Grace Rounsley-Maxwell's birthday by Rev. Molly Dee Rounsley

**WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS**

Message: Rev. Dr. Truman Brooks  
Liturgist: Rev. Molly Dee Rounsley  
Message for Growing Christians: Kelly Lynn  
Organist: Steve Campitelli  
Live Stream Team: Tim Case, Holly & Todd Grimm,  
Jake Joslin, Heidi Krug, David Maxwell,  
Brad Rush, Zeke Smith, Cory Smith (leader)



(Artwork by Holly Gimm)

### Love Came by Julie Palmer

Love came, held safely within a gentle womb  
 All the truth, majesty, and creativity of a living God  
 Poured into a tiny heart  
 Making a quiet entrance in a dark and uninviting shack  
 Just one star shone anew as a handful of people were brought  
 Led by angelic voices, and open hearts  
 A young mother  
 A faith-filled father  
 Men of wisdom who searched for truth  
 And a group of humble herdsmen  
 They came to bow before a new life  
 And acknowledge that the rescuer had arrived  
 That the Word of God had come alive  
 And that the extraordinary transformation of heaven and earth  
 Had begun

### What Christmas Is As We Grow Older (excerpts) by Charles Dickens

Written 8 years after "A Christmas Carol," following the death of his father John Dickens, his infant daughter Dora, his sister Fanny, and her crippled son Henry Jr.

Welcome, everything! Welcome, alike what has been, and what never was, and what we hope may be, to your shelter underneath the holly, to your places round the Christmas fire, where what is sits open-hearted! In yonder shadow, do we see obtruding furtively upon the blaze, an enemy's face? By Christmas Day we do forgive him! If the injury he has done us may admit of such companionship, let him come here and take his place. If otherwise, unhappily, let him go hence, assured that we will never injure nor accuse him.

On this day we shut out Nothing! "Pause," says a low voice. "Nothing? Think!"

"On Christmas Day, we will shut out from our fireside, Nothing." "Not the shadow of a vast City where the withered leaves are lying deep?" the voice replies. "Not the shadow that darkens the whole globe? Not the shadow of the City of the Dead?"

Not even that. Of all days in the year, we will turn our faces towards that City upon Christmas Day, and from its silent hosts bring those we loved, among us. City of the Dead, in the blessed name wherein we are gathered together at this time, and in the Presence that is here among us according to the promise, we will receive, and not dismiss, thy people who are dear to us!...

We had a friend who was our friend from early days, with whom we often pictured the changes that were to come upon our lives, and merrily imagined how we would speak, and walk, and think, and talk, when we came to be old. His destined habitation in the City of the Dead received him in his prime. Shall he be shut out from our Christmas remembrance? Would his love have so excluded us? Lost friend, lost child, lost parent, sister, brother, husband, wife, we will not so discard you! You shall hold your cherished places in our Christmas hearts, and by our Christmas fires; and in the season of immortal hope, and on the birthday of immortal mercy, we will shut out Nothing!

### Light of the World Prayer

Jesus, the Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth, may we begin to see the world in the light of understanding you give us. As you chose the lowly, the outcasts, and the poor to receive the greatest news the world had ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart. May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of giving. Amen. — Karen L. Oberst



(Artwork by Bill Johnston)