

**First Sunday of Christmas
January 1, 2023**

Gathering
God invites us to enter His presence

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Preparation for Worship (*Time for Silent Preparation*)



Call to Worship (*Responsively*)

Jim Fox

Let us go, in heart and mind, to see what has come to pass.

Let us go with the shepherds:

Let us go to find the Savior!

Let us go with the wise ones:

Let us go to find God's promise, born for us!

Let us go with the poor and humble:

Let us go to find our King, born in a lowly manger.

Let us go with all the world, with all the peoples of the nations.

Come, let us worship; come, let us adore him:

Christ the Lord!



Invocation

Jim Fox

Emmanuel, God with us,
you are our heart's delight.
Because of your amazing love,
you came to earth,
you became one of us,
you reached out to us while we were lost,
you rescued us from death,
you brought us salvation.
Your love is so high and wide and deep
that it, and only it, could reach this suffering world.
You came to bring an end to our sadness,
to dry our tears, to still our fears, to give us hope.



Hymn 152

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Confessing
God invites us to be honest with Him

Call to Confession

Jim Fox

Today we celebrate that Jesus, our Lord,
came to earth as a human, just like us but without sin.
He came so that we who sin may be freed from sin.

With the peace that comes from knowing Jesus came,
let us confess our sins and be forgiven.

Prayer of Confession *(Responsively)*

Jim Fox

When we allow darkness to overcome the light,
forgive us, Lord.
When we reduce Christmas to plastic and tinsel,
have mercy on us, Father.
When hardness of heart keeps us from seeing and hearing and touching,
let your grace consume us, O God.
When the wars around us are of no concern,
forgive us, Lord, and move us to compassion for those who suffer.
When our caring is not extended to action,
move us to seek justice for our brothers and sisters.
We come to confess our sinfulness before you and before each other.
We are but dust without your love. Remove all barriers that divide us, and let there be no obstacle to our love for you and for one another.
Amen.

Time for Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Jim Fox

As we hear the ancient prophecies of the coming of the Messiah,
we long for the day when death will be swallowed up
and every tear will be wiped away.
As we wait expectantly
for Christ's promised return,
we live in the assurance of God's gracious forgiveness.

Leader: This is the Promise of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

! O Come, Messiah, Come Again

*O come, Messiah, come again,
And rid the world of death and sin.
Return, Thou risen Savior and King.
That heav'n and earth at last may sing
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Has come to thee, O Israel!*

Offering

Thankful of the gifts God has given us, we offer ourselves to Him

Offering

Offertory

! Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men*

! Prayer of Dedication

Almighty God, you have given us everything.
Not only did you create us, but you provide for our every need.
We give thanks to you, Lord, for you are good.

Your love endures forever.

When we turned away from you, you reached down to us.
You lifted us up and freed us through the gift of your Son.
We give thanks to you, Lord, for you are good.

Your love endures forever.

You are with us always. You watch over our coming and our going.
Your Holy Spirit guides us and leads us every step of our lives.
We give thanks to you, Lord, for you are good.

Your love endures forever.

For your abundant grace we give you thanks.
Gratefully we offer the gifts you first gave us.
We give thanks to you, Lord, for you are good.

Your love endures forever.

Use our time, our talents, and our tithes for your glory.
May it bless others with hope, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

! Hymn 241

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Proclaiming

God speaks to us through His Word

Old Testament Reading *Ezekiel 36:24-30*

²⁴ “For I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. ²⁵ I will also sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will place my Spirit within you and cause you to follow my statutes and carefully observe my ordinances. ²⁸ You will live in the land that I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and make it plentiful, and I will not bring famine on you. ³⁰ I will also make the fruit of the trees and the produce of the field plentiful, so that you will no longer experience reproach among the nations on account of famine.


New Testament Reading *Revelation 21:1-4*

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

³ Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.

Sermon *"God With Us: The Second Coming"*
 Rev. Tim Latham

Responding
We respond to God's Word

 **Hymn 551** *Soon and Very Soon*

Sacrament of Communion

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God!

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise!

Invitation to the Table

Leader: For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you
 proclaim the Lord's death until He comes Again!

**People: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come
 again!**

 **Profession of Faith**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten of the Father before all worlds;
God of God, Light of light,
very God of very God;
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made.
Who, for us and our salvation,
came down from heaven,
and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

Commissioning

God sends us out into the world as His witnesses



Hymn 1

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee



Benediction & Blessing

*This morning's Prayer Partners are
Carolyn Thompson, Don Titus*



Postlude

***Note:** *As an added safety measure during worship, the downstairs entrance doors will be locked after the first hymn (approx. 10:40). Please plan your arrival time accordingly.*