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INVITATION

THE CHALLENGE AND BLESSING
OF LIVING LIKE JESUS

Hebrews 12:2

December 31, 2023

*"We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the author who
initiates and perfects our faith."*

Hebrews 12:2

1st SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 31, 2023

WE GATHER TO GLORIFY GOD

PRELUDE

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Dorothy Fine
J. S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stephanie Templin Ashford

(Please sign and pass the fellowship pads at the end of the pew)

OPENING PRAYER

CALL OF WORSHIP

From the stillness of the blessed night of Jesus' birth.

We come before You, O God, in praise and thanksgiving.

From the astounding news sung to the shepherds.

We thank You for the gift of Your Son.

Let our hearts keep the joy and peace of Christmas always.

Let our spirits rejoice in God's presence with us.

Fill us with Your love, O God.

Pour your peace upon us that we may be bearers of Your Good News.

*HYMN NO. 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

WE ARE RENEWED THROUGH GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Ever Present God, the long-awaited day of Christ's birth has come and gone. The angels have returned to heaven. The shepherds are back in the fields. And we have gathered again for worship wondering what's next.

Forgive us for the moments when our faith wavered, when we've grown impatient, and when stopped noticing the Spirit's moving. We confess that, at times, we have allowed the distractions of the world to overshadow the significance of Christ's presence with us. We have not fully understood the magnitude of your love and the impact it should have on our lives.

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we ask for your guidance and strength. Help us to live in the light of your love, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and to share the good news of his birth with those around us. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, that we may more fully live into the image of Christ.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, hear the good news of the Gospel:
There is nothing - not one thing - that can separate us from God's love:
not our fear, not our cowardice, not even our stubbornness.
For nothing is as great as the mercy that is found in our loving God.
In the name of the Resurrected Christ,
I declare to you that our sins are forgiven.

Alleluia! Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI NO. 581

GLORIA PATRI

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, amen.***

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

*HYMN NO. 109

Blest Be the God of Israel

MERLE'S TUNE

CHILDREN'S SERMON

(Place prayer cards in the basket as the deacons come forward.)

Bailey Heckman

WE HEAR GOD'S POWERFUL WORD

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:21-38 (p. 59)

Bailey Heckman

SERMON

*HYMN OF NO. 545

Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace

LAND OF REST

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

How Brightly Beams the Morning Star

Dorothy Fine
by Philipp Nicolai

*DOXOLOGY HYMN NO. 606

OLD HUNDREDTH

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

WE ARE SENT OUT TO BE THE CHURCH

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

Dorothy Fine
ANTIOCH

**Please stand in body or spirit.*

JANUARY CALENDAR

January 7 – 9 am & 11 am Worship Services - Epiphany and Communion

January 14 – 9 am & 11 am Worship Services

January 15 – MLK DAY OF SERVICE 9 am – 1 pm

January 28 – Jazz Worship Service - 9 am Worship Service Only in Fellowship Hall



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