

# **WORSHIP SERVICE DECEMBER 24, 2021**

**“THE INN”**

## **CHRISTMAS EVE**

**7:00 pm**

Worship Leaders: Rev. Effie McAvoy & Associate Minister Sandy Knapp

### **GREETINGS**

All through the season of Advent as we prepared for Christmas, we've been exploring how we as a church can “make more room in the inn,” becoming more hospitable to the needs of our community. On this Christmas Eve, we declare that The Inn is open for the business of compassion with room enough for all! The long-awaited Messiah has been born and on him the light shines. We have only to open the doors of our lives and say “welcome.” Our Advent journey has led us to this moment when the light shining through the closed doors of life becomes an open door to new possibilities, new relationships. What a poignant moment for us this year as the light—the hope, peace, joy and love—multiplies from one illuminated heart and hand to another.

**PRELUDE**            Delbert Collins

### **OPENING PRAYER**

**O Holy One, heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds and eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem. Through the telling of the Christmas story, let our temporal lives be caught up in the eternal in that same child, that we might join shepherds and all the heavenly host in praising the coming of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

BY:Vanderbilt Divinity Library

### **ADVENT LIGHTING**

Tonight we offer the Lights of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love to illumine the Door of Welcome. And we add the brightest light of all... the Light of the Newborn Jesus. It shines bright like the star that rose over Bethlehem. May this light also shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church. May this light awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality. There IS room in this Inn, a House for the Holy. Love comes to us at Christmas Love comes to heal our souls. Love brings an invitation that our hearts might be made whole. As we gather at the stable

in the darkness, glad and grateful for the sacred in our midst,  
for wonder and delight, Christ is born in us this night. Amen

## **MUSIC**

“Joy to the World”

UMH#246

## **CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

## **PASTORAL PRAYER**

## **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. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory now and forever. Amen.**

## **PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS**

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## **DOXOLOGY**

Sign Language & Adult Choir

## **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Lord, these gifts are not payment for services rendered. These aren't our dues necessary for us to belong to this church. We know you made us with a purpose, and so now we give ... on purpose, freely offering to you the best of who we are. Continue to work out your purpose in us. Make us your hands, outstretched, on purpose. Amen.

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

### **Isaiah 9:2-7**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have

broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

### **Luke 2: 1-7**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**MUSIC**                    **“O HOLY NIGHT”**  
Sign Language Choir

### **Luke 2: 8-20**

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to

Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the Lord has revealed to us." They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

**MUSIC**

"Silent Night"

UMH#239

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**POSTLUDE**