

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
JANUARY 31, 2021**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

A PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God, we trust that you are in the holiest of holies. We also trust that you can make all places holy. Guide our understanding of your presence, so we will find comfort wherever it is available. Guide our hearts so that we may be drawn toward places that will challenge our beliefs about what is holy.

WORDS OF WELCOME

SENTENCES OF ADORATION

OPENING HYMN: *O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above your deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;

Yet in your dark streets shines forth the everlasting light;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in you tonight.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray,

cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today!

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell.

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

CALL TO WORSHIP

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:

O God, we come to the holy places and can feel like imposters. You see our shame and care about the way we feel when we have been hurt. We seek forgiveness. We seek relief. Guide us toward grace, mercy, hope, and abundance. Help us hold the hands of those who want to come into and through the holy places you inhabit. Amen.

ASSURANCE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 18:15 – 20

New Testament: Mark 1:21 - 28

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SPECIAL MUSIC:

SERMON: *Wow! There's Something Different About That Guy!*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL AND WORK

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

We are a community of faith.

**We share a vision of God:
a God whose spirit is love,
accessible to all yet beyond our knowing,
the source of all being,
the way leading to wholeness,
the spirit which pervades everything.**

**We search for the meaning of God and our own experience
revealed in those sacred stories which have been passed down to us.
We tell them again and again:**

**Of God the Creator, the Almighty,
who made everything that is,
and saw that it was good.**

**Of Jesus of Nazareth, who in history lived among us,
healed the afflicted, taught, suffered and died.**

He forgave those who crucified him.

**In the mystery of the resurrection
he continues to live more profoundly through the ages,
the Incarnation of Love, the Christ,
to whom his disciples have responded "My Lord and my God!"**

**He shows us the Way which leads
to the reconciliation of all things, saying
"Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me."
It is the Way of love, compassion, justice, forgiveness and peace.**

**Of the Spirit, the Breath, the Wind of God,
the Giver of Life, the Holy Wisdom,
who inspires the people of God
to cry out for justice for the powerless and oppressed,
to see the presence of God in every created thing,
and to respond with love.**

**Of the communion of saints: all the people of God,
living, dead and yet to be born,
who are empowered to recognize that they are,
and always have been,
brothers and sisters,
one family in God.**

**We are reborn in the Spirit,
followers of that Way shown by Jesus:**

**to love God with our whole being;
to love our neighbors as ourselves;
to treat others as we would have them treat us;
to strive for justice and peace;
to have respect and compassion for every person
and for the whole of creation;
to forgive those who do us harm;
to love one another as Christ has loved us.**

**We journey together on this Way
towards reconciliation with the whole creation.
We break bread together and pray together.
We reach out to one another
for strength beyond our own.**

This is our community. This is our faith.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: We know that we can demonstrate your love. This is why we name aloud those who need us to act as advocates: For healing of the body, we name those who suffer illness.

(Pause)

For healing of the spirit, we name those who suffer complacency or ambivalence.

(Pause)

For healing of the mind, we name those who question their intelligence or need companions in the work to take every thought captive.

(Pause)

For healing of war-torn countries, we name those places where holiness has been ignored in favor of control.

(Pause.)

For healing of the planet, we name the ecosystems that suffer when we are selfish consumers.

Pause for private intercessions

Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass.

We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

Unison: 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.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

SPECIAL MUSIC:

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Unison: We have entered this holy place without any trepidation. We now freely leave behind a piece of our treasure, in faith that courage will lead to more courage and we will be amazed by your willingness to provide for us and our willingness to give to those who have less. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

CLOSING HYMN: O SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD

O Spirit of the living God, pure light and fire divine,
burn brightly in your church once more, its life and faith refine.
Fill it with love and joy and power, with righteousness and peace;
till Christ shall dwell in human hearts, and sin and sorrow cease.

So shall we know the power of Christ the strength of love to save;
so shall we rise with Christ to life which soars beyond the grave;
and earth shall win true holiness, which makes your children whole;
and draws us on by grace to reach creation's glorious goal!

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Special thanks to **Darin Jellison** for sharing special music
and to **Wes Koser** for filming today's service.
Blessings!*