



December 29, 2024

“Will We Notice
the Extraordinary
in the Everyday?”

First Sunday of
Christmastide

Welcome!

We encourage wearing name tags.

Restrooms: main level (exit front left), lower level (at foot of entry stair/elevator)

The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

We gently settle into sacred time and space

Ring the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting “Go Tell it on the Mountain”

J.W. Work Jr.

We acknowledge the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome and Announcements

Opening Words from a Neighbor

***Carol (NCH #145) “Once in Royal David’s City”**
verses 1-4

SPP = *Sing! Prayer and Praise*

* = Sitting or standing

NCH = *New Century Hymnal*

***Prayer of Gathering** (*unison*)

O God of the Christ Child, we greet this morning with joy! You lift our spirits by coming to share in our human situation. We thank you for Christmas joy—for gifts shared, friendships renewed, hearts warmed by the love of dear ones, and greetings between strangers. May we continue to reverberate with your Christmas joy. Amen.

Acknowledging Our Need for God's Grace

Carol (NCH #153) "Who Would Think That What Was Needed"
all verses

Centering Ourselves *...as the singing bowl invites us into stillness*

Prayer of Confession and Longing (*unison*)

Incarnate God of Christmastide, we confess that we sometimes neglect to embody your love, which gives this holy season meaning. Help us to see beyond the baby in the manger to the child, adolescent and adult Jesus became. Guide us to test our lives by his teachings and example. Enable us to sense your love reaching out to us now, giving wisdom and power for our journeys. Through Jesus the Christ Child, we pray. Amen.

Musical Interlude *...to accompany our quiet prayers*

Assurance of Grace (*responsive*)

The peace of Christ be with you! And also with you!

A Time With Children and Youth

Sung Invitation *...as young people come forward*

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine...

Tibetan singing bowls took form in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE. In some Buddhist traditions, singing bowls accompany meditation and chanting. Since the 1970s, singing bowls have also contributed to spiritual practices in the United States.

Singing “Happy Birthday”

Gina Buberl (12/29), **Jessica** Buck (12/30), **Eddy** Hintze-Graf (12/31 – 7 yrs!)

Wondering Together

Blessing One Another

...with arms wide open

Young ones: God be with you

All: And also with you

Sung Affirmation

...as young people return to families

Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine...

No Children's Activity or Youth Group | Young ones are invited to stay in worship
(Children's Activity & Youth Group resume next Sunday)

Nursery | Families with infants & toddlers are welcome to utilize the downstairs nursery
(the worship service can be heard in the nursery)

Proclaiming God's Love

A Reading from the Gospels | NRSV (New Testament, p. 59)

Luke 2:21–52

Here ends the reading.

May God speak to us through these sacred words.

Morning Message “Will We Notice the Extraordinary in the Everyday?”

Responding To God's Love

Carol (NCH #131) “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”
verses 1, 3 & 4

As reparations for use of “This Little Light of Mine” and other Black spirituals, we support Walk West (St. Paul): a music learning community rooted in the African-American cultural experience, where people of all ages and backgrounds can gather, explore, and grow through music.

Prayers of the People

*We share aloud prayers for ourselves, others, and parts of the world
Please tell Pastor Clare if you prefer yours not be added to our printed Prayer Corner*

...God, in your love **Hear our prayer**

Prayer of Jesus (*unison*)

**Our Father and Mother who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name.**

Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

*We give by cash, check or electronically (scanning the QR code)
Blue electronic giving cards represent gifts made electronically.*



Offertory

“Do You Hear What I Hear?”

Regney/Shayne

*Offertory Response

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below – Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

O God, your love surpasses our understanding. Yet we trust your generous Spirit at work in our lives – revealing the extraordinary amidst the everyday. Use our gifts to expand your realm of Hope, of Peace, Joy and Love for all—in this Christmas season and far beyond. Amen!

Going Forth to Share God's Love

*Carol (NCH #154)

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”
all verses

*Benediction

*Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

...to those with us online and onsite: smiles, peace signs, handshakes

*Postlude

...as we pass the peace

Today Following Worship:

10:30am | All are welcome downstairs for refreshments and good company!

PRAYER CORNER

*For **our Jewish siblings** in the wake of Temple Israel being defaced with swastikas last week in Minneapolis. For those experiencing fear in the face of hateful actions... For all to have open minds and loving hearts amidst human diversity.

*For Sharon Neuenfeldt's brother, **Allen**, as his prostate cancer returns.



Holiday Office Hours

(Midweek deadline is Monday, Dec. 30th)

Tuesday, Dec. 31 | 8:30 – 3:30 pm

Wednesday, Jan. 1 | Office Closed

Thursday, Jan. 2 | 8:30 am – 3:30 pm

Mark your calendar...

Our Annual Meeting will be Feb. 2nd!

Annual reports due January 19th.



We Thank Our Poinsettia Sponsors...

Jill Greenhalgh and Rolf Dittmann

In gratitude for the Greenhalgh and Dittmann families.

Pastor Clare Gromoll

In gratitude for the loving people who are our church.

Paula and Walt Richey

In honor of Rev. Linda Tossey.

Sarah and Therese Thorson

In memory of Joselle Rosengren.

Fritz West

In memory of Cynthia Evans West and William and Jean West.

Mary Horak Binger

Kathleen Dennison

Andi Favilla

Sue Favilla

Extra poinsettias were purchased to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas.

If you'd like to take one home, please do! An optional donation of \$5-15

(memo: poinsettia) would help offset the cost.



Week at a Glance:

Gentle Tai Chi | **Dec. 30, 7 pm** | @ Church

Happy New Year's Eve! | **Dec. 31**

New Year's Day | **Dec. 31, Office Closed**

Pastor Clare working from WI | **Jan. 1—4**

Garden Gathering | **Jan. 2, 9:30 am**

The Food Pantries could use:

Individually wrapped snacks & treats!

The Food Sharing Pantry
It is fully stocked and ready for use!

St. Croix United Church
309 Third St N.
Bayport, MN
www.stcroixunitedchurch.org

The Pantry will continue to need support so please feel free to collect items, help us re-stock, or grab items you need!

Here is a list of most needed items for those interested:

Canned or Pouched Meats: Tuna, chicken, salmon, jerky, summer sausage
Grains: Pasta, whole grain pasta, rice, quinoa, couscous
Shelf Stable Items: Hot and cold kid-friendly cereal, ready-to-eat soup, beans, peanut butter, granola bars, crackers
Spices, cooking oil and condiments.

****Cardboard and plastic packages, please
(no glass or metal during winter)**



All are welcome
to join us
on Sunday mornings

Weekly Sunday Worship

Choir Rehearsal | 8:30 am

Worship | 9:30 am


Children's Activity & Youth Group (age 3 - gr 12) | 9:45-10:15 am

Fellowship | 10:30 am

Adult Faith Conversations | 11:00 am

Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Lori Mildon (flute), Cheri & Bob Schwartz (greeter), Sharri Kinkead (liturgist), St. Croix United Choir, Kathy & Bob Iverson (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie, Mark Stephan (tech team), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Andi Favilla, Sharri Kinkead, Mary Binger, Kathleen Dennison, Arly Fuhr (decorations)



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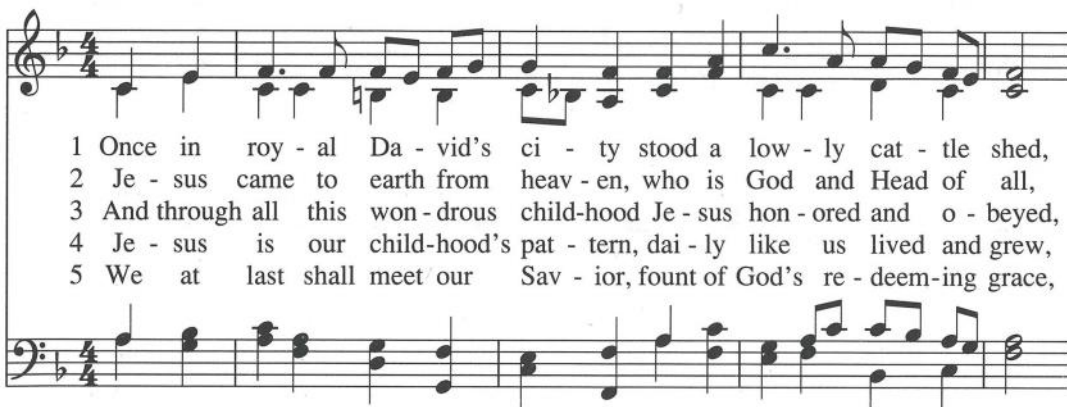
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Once in Royal David's City

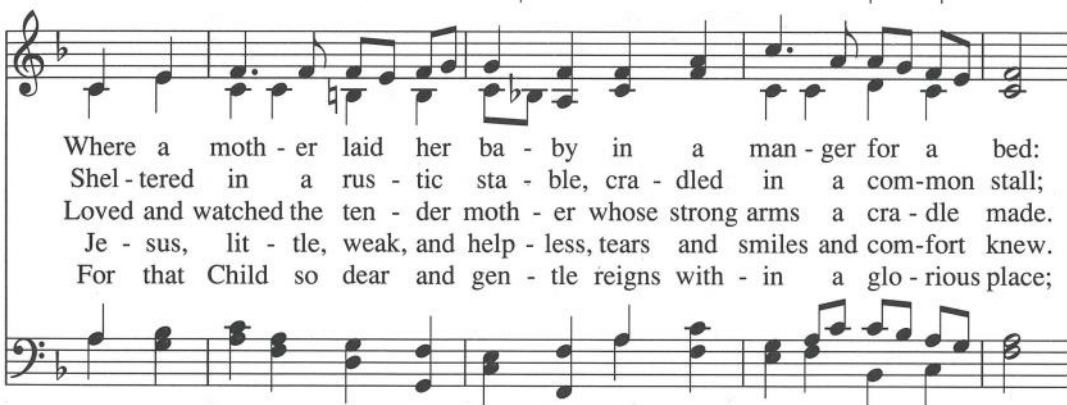
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Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.

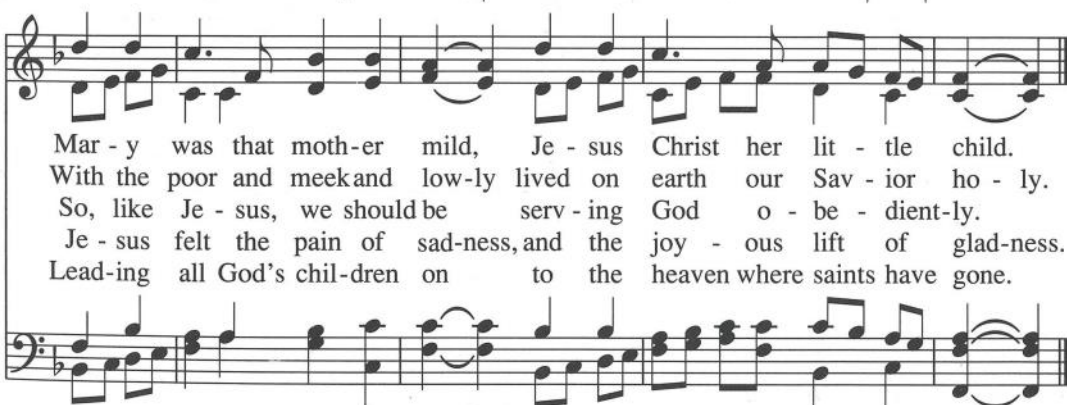
Luke 1:26-35; 2:1-7; 1 Thess. 4:13-18



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
2 Je - sus came to earth from heav - en, who is God and Head of all,
3 And through all this won - drous child - hood Je - sus hon - ored and o - beyed,
4 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern, dai - ly like us lived and grew,
5 We at last shall meet our Sav - ior, fount of God's re - deem - ing grace,



Where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for a bed:
Shel - tered in a rus - tic sta - ble, cra - dled in a com - mon stall;
Loved and watched the ten - der moth - er whose strong arms a cra - dle made.
Je - sus, lit - tle, weak, and help - less, tears and smiles and com - fort knew.
For that Child so dear and gen - tle reigns with - in a glo - rious place;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
With the poor and meek and low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
So, like Je - sus, we should be serv - ing God o - be - dient - ly.
Je - sus felt the pain of sad - ness, and the joy - ous lift of glad - ness.
Lead - ing all God's chil - dren on to the heaven where saints have gone.

Cecil Frances Alexander, wife of the bishop of Ireland, wrote a series of children's hymns commenting on the Apostles' Creed. This hymn, elaborating on the words "... born of the Virgin Mary," tells the whole life of Christ.

Tune: IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.
Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849
Harm. A. H. Mann, 1919

153 Who Would Think That What Was Needed

*Isa. 11:1-6; Matt. 2:1-11; Luke 2:8-14**John Bell and Graham Maule, 1990; alt.*

1 Who would think that what was need-ed to trans-form and save the earth
 2 Shep-herds watch and sag-es won-der, mon-archs scorn and an-gels sing;
 3 Cen-tu-ries of skill and sci-ence span the past from which we move,

might not be a plan or ar-my proud in pur-pose, proved in worth?
 such a place as none would reck-on hosts a ho-ly, help-less thing;
 yet ex-per-i-ence ques-tions wheth-er with such prog-ress we im-prove.

Who would think, de-spite de-ri-sion, that a child should lead the way?
 Sta-bled beasts and pass-ing strang-ers watch a ba-by laid in hay;
 In our search for sense and mean-ing, lest our hopes and hu-mor fray,

God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.
 God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.
 God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.

This song was written by The Iona Community in Scotland, which frequently develops hymn texts through a collaborative process, often employing traditional tunes from the British Isles such as "Scarlet Ribbons."

Tune: SCARLET RIBBONS 8.7.8.7.D.
 English traditional melody
 Arr. John Bell and others, 1990

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

Luke 2:8-14

Edmund H. Sears, 1849; alt.



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4 For lo, the days are hasten-ing on, by proph-et bards fore-told,



from an-gels bend-ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
 and still their heav-en-ly mu-sic floats o'er all the wea-ry world;
 who toil a-long the climb-ing way, with pain-ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev-er-cir-cling years comes round the age of gold;



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, great news of joy we bring.”
 A-bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hover-ing wing,
 Look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift-ly on the wing;
 When peace shall o-ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol-lemn still-ness lay to hear the an-gels sing.
 and ev-er o'er its Ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing!
 O rest be-side the wea-ry road, and hear the an-gels sing!
 and all the world send back the song which now the an-gels sing.



Edmund Sears, a Unitarian minister who served a number of congregations in the Boston area, wrote this Christmas hymn emphasizing the social implications of the Gospel for his congregation at Wayland, Massachusetts.

Tune: CAROL C.M.D.
 Richard S. Willis, 1850

Go Tell It on the Mountain

154

African-American spiritual
 Arr. John W. Work II, 1907

Luke 2:8-20; Isa. 18:3; 52:7

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hill and ev - ery - where.

Last time, end

Go tell it on the moun - tain, that Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

to Refrain

Be - hold through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 Rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 And God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

This is one of the few spirituals heard inside as well as outside African-American churches. It was adapted by John Wesley Work II, who is remembered as the director of the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University.

Tune: African-American spiritual
 Adapt. Joyce Finch Johnson, 1992