



**Come to Believe † Come to Belong**  
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS  
December 28, 2025

**PRELUDE**

Rob Aaron

*“Come to believe, Come to belong, Come to receive, the promise of God”*

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*Amen*

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Amen*

If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Therefore, let us confess our sins in the presence of God and of one another.

*(Silence for self-reflection)*

Most merciful God,

**We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. *Amen.***

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore declare unto you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*Amen.*

## GATHERING SONG

*"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"*



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

# KYRIE ELEISON (*Lord, Have Mercy*)

Leader

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have

For the reign of God, and for

mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through-out the world, for the u-ni-ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord.

For your

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo-ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your

word, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Lord, have

Help, save, and de-fend us, O God.

mer - cy. A - men.

*Refrain*

Now the feast and cel - e - bra-tion, all of cre - a - tion

sings for joy to the God of life and love and free-dom;

praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!

1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has

freed and u - nit-ed us to be one great peo-ple of God. *Refrain*

2 Pow - er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and

glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er. *Refrain*

3 For God has come to dwell with us, to make us peo-ple of

God; to make all things new. *Refrain*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray: O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, Now and forever. *Amen.*

## CHOIR ANTHEM

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### FIRST READING

Isaiah 63:7-9

<sup>7</sup> I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. <sup>8</sup> For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior. <sup>9</sup> In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

Psalm 148

<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

**praise him in the heights!**

<sup>2</sup>Praise him, all his angels;

**praise him, all his hosts!**

<sup>3</sup>Praise him, sun and moon,

**praise him, all you shining stars!**

<sup>4</sup>Praise him, you highest heavens,

**and you waters above the heavens!**

<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD!

**For he commanded and they were created.**

<sup>6</sup>And he established them forever and ever;

**he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.**

<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD from the earth,

you great sea creatures and all deeps,

<sup>8</sup>**fire and hail, snow and mist,**

**stormy wind fulfilling his word!**

<sup>9</sup>Mountains and all hills,

**fruit trees and all cedars!**

<sup>10</sup>Beasts and all livestock,

**creeping things and flying birds!**

<sup>11</sup>Kings of the earth and all peoples,

**princes and all rulers of the earth!**

<sup>12</sup>Young men and maidens together,

**old men and children!**

<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD,

for his name alone is exalted;

**his majesty is above earth and heaven.**

<sup>14</sup>He has raised up a horn for his people,

**praise for all his saints,**

for the people of Israel who are near to him.

**Praise the LORD!**

## SECOND READING

Hebrews 2:10-18

<sup>10</sup>For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. <sup>11</sup>For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, <sup>12</sup>saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise."

<sup>13</sup> And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

<sup>14</sup> Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. <sup>16</sup> For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*

*When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way, still you're there right beside me*

*And nothing will I fear as long as you are near, please be near me to the end.*

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*

### GOSPEL

Matthew 2:13-23

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

**Glory to You, O Lord!**

<sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” <sup>14</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup> “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

<sup>19</sup> But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, <sup>20</sup> saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.” <sup>21</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

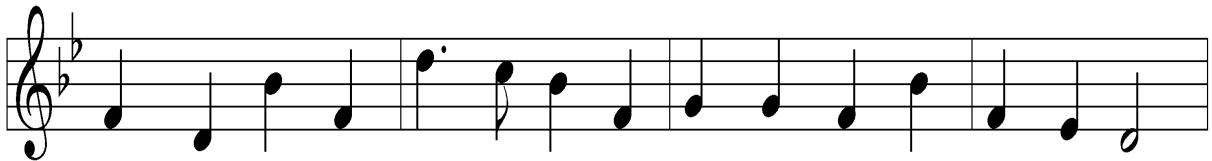
The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ!**

**SERMON**

Pastor Gary Heltsley

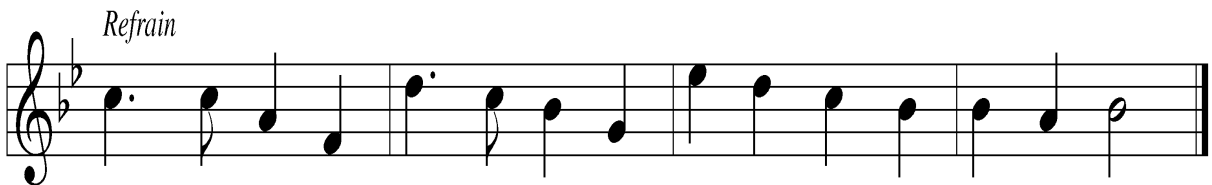
**HYMN OF THE DAY**    *“Angels from the Realms of Glory”*



- 1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
- 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
- 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
- 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais-ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry; now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 God with us is now re - sid-ing, yon-der shines the in - fant light.  
 seek the great de - sire of na-tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
 ev - er - more your voic - es rais-ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, the new-born king.



## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. *Amen.***

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P) With joy and gratitude for the gift of Jesus, let us draw near to our heavenly Father in prayer, asking his mercy for the Church, the world, and all who need his loving-kindness.

*A brief silence*

Holy God, thank you for Jesus. He shares our life, and shares your life with us. He grew in wisdom and understanding, and gives us the Holy Spirit. He takes our sin, and gives us his pure, holy grace and love. He is your unfailing Light in the darkest days and places we endure. Thank you.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Bless this congregation, so that people gladly come here to encounter you in Word and Sacrament, in fellowship, learning, and service. Make us wise in the ways of charity and faithfulness, so that all may find your precepts to be sweeter than honey. Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

We pray your favor upon this New Year and upon our hopes for a better future. We pray for all who find no release from the sorrows and cares of the previous years. Give us wisdom and strength to seek your will for our common good. Draw us toward that eternal New Year that you alone shall bring.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

These are perilous times, dear Lord! Guide, strengthen and protect our military and first responders. May they accomplish all that is in accordance with your will. Return them swiftly to their loved ones. Bring them healing, hope, and renewed opportunities to serve you in the world.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Be the light and salvation of everyone who calls on you in times of trouble. We pray especially for those we name out loud or silently in our hearts (*allow time for silent and spoken prayers*). Grant them health, wholeness, and hope. Refresh their spirits, and bind us all together in cords of mutual care and compassion.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

The generations rise and fall and pass before you, O Lord. We entrust our beloved dead into your merciful care. Comfort those who grieve, and whose hope falters. Bring us into your Kingdom, where you reign in unity with your Son and the Holy Spirit, God forever.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

P) Thank you for hearing our prayers, dear Lord. We entrust them, and our lives, into your merciful care. *Amen.*

The peace of the Lord be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

### **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**

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray together -

**All that we have comes from your hand. We bring what you have already given us—bread and wine for your table, and gifts for the work of your kingdom. Most of all we give you thanks for your greatest gift to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.***

## DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

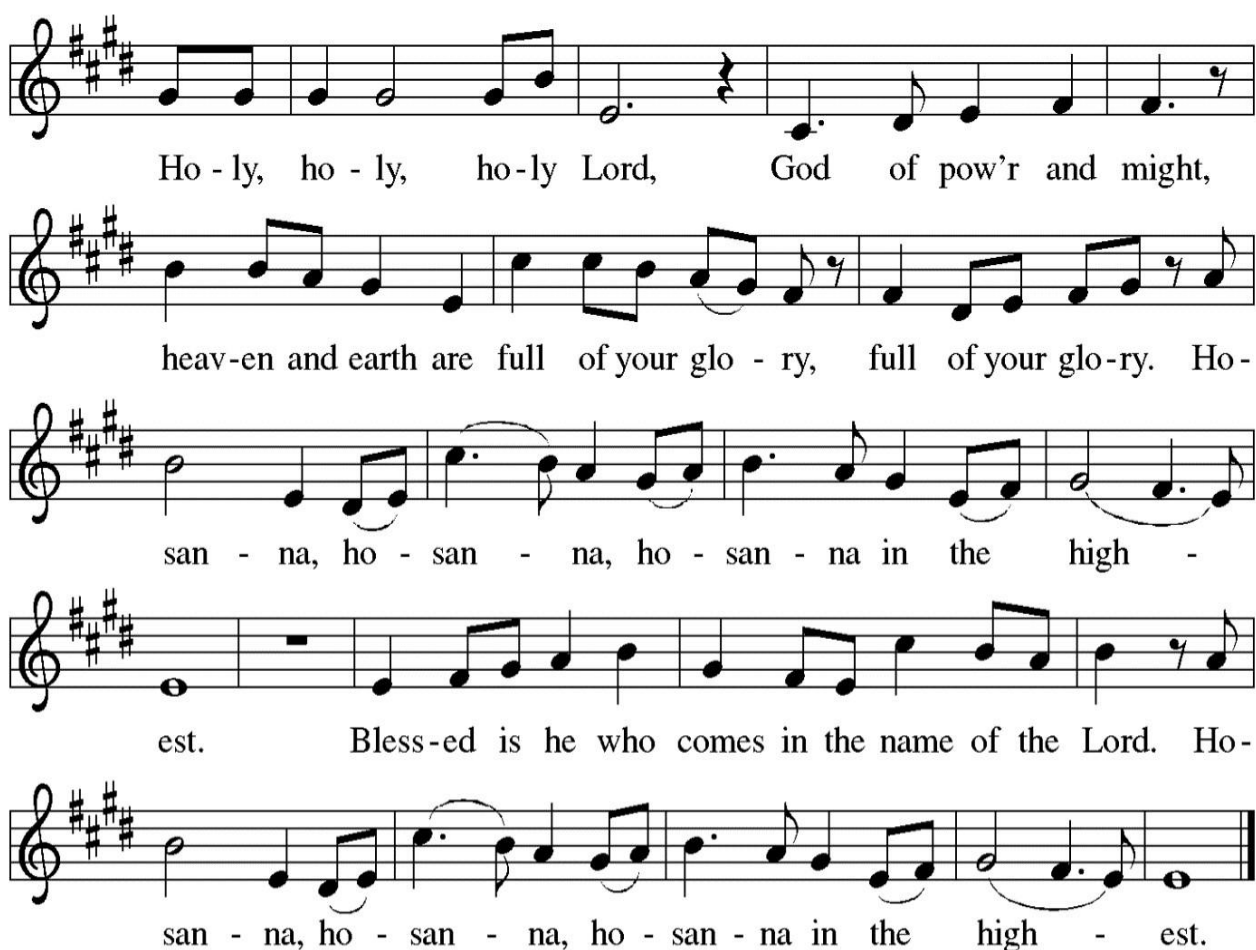
Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right...*(pastor continues, concluding with)*, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -  
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION



### THE LORD'S PRAYER *(Sung)*

*Our Father, which 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*

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION** – We believe and teach that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine/juice, which are his body and blood. All who trust in Christ are welcome at the Lord’s Table (*the red liquid is wine; the white liquid is grape juice*).

***“Lamb of God”***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;***

***Have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;***

***Have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;***

***Grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.***

***“What Feast of Love”***



1 What feast of love is of - fered here, what ban - quet come from heav - en?  
 2 What light of truth is of - fered here, what cov - e - nant from heav - en?  
 3 What wine of love is of - fered here, what ho - ly drink from heav - en?



What food of ev - er - last - ing life, what gra - cious gift is giv - en?  
 What hope of ev - er - last - ing life, what won - drous word is giv - en?  
 What stream of ev - er - last - ing life, what pre - cious blood is giv - en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav - en.  
 This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heav - en.  
 This, this is Christ the king, the sweet - est wine of heav - en.



Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man - na giv - en!  
 Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is giv - en!  
 Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is giv - en!

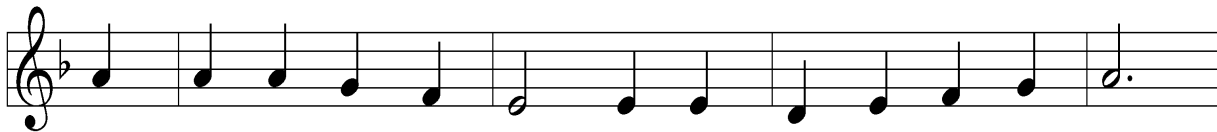
*"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!  
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.  
cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.  
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!  
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!



"Good Christian Friends Rejoice"



- 1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;
- 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;
- 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say:      Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss:      Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave;      Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
 He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day!      Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this!      Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save!      Christ was born to save!

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in His grace. *Amen.*

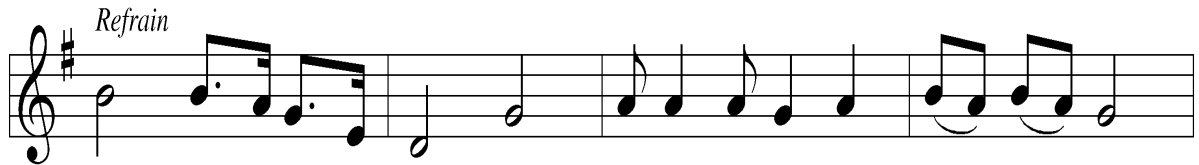
Let us pray together...**We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you, and in fervent love toward one another, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

## BLESSING



## SENDING SONG

### *“Go Tell it on the Mountain”*



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



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 lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;



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.

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, serve the Lord!

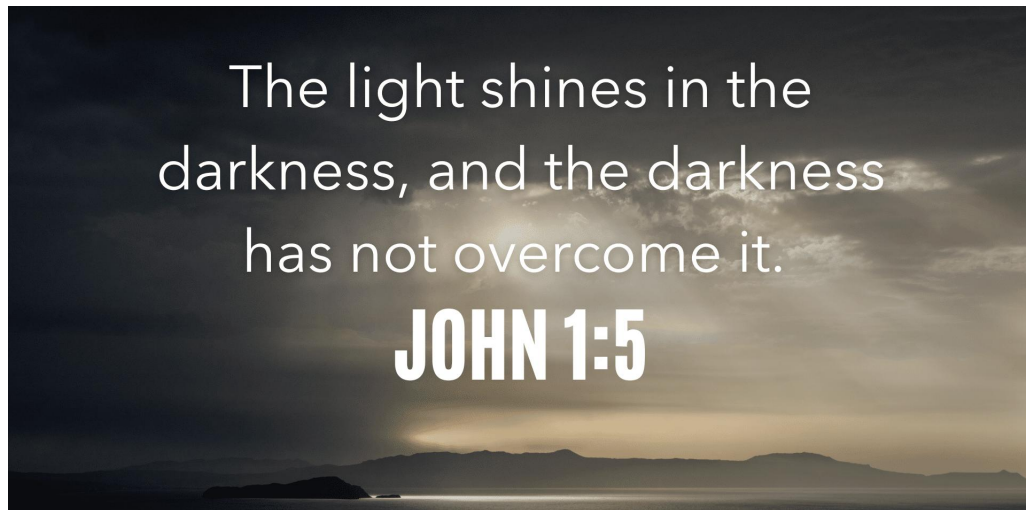
**Thanks be to God!**

Pr. Gary Heltsley – presiding ~ Rob Aaron – piano

**READINGS FOR JANUARY 4, 2026**

Jeremiah 31:7 ~ Psalm 147:12-20 ~ Ephesians 1:3-14 5

*John 1:1-18*



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