

# Hillsdale First United Methodist Church | December 28, 2025

- **IN-PERSON 9:30 am** in the Sanctuary
- **LIVESTREAM** online at **9:30 am on Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/HillsdaleFirstUMC>
- on **YouTube** <https://www.youtube.com/@hillsdalefirstumc-45nmanni2>
- on **our church website** <https://hillsdalefirstumc.com/>

Please stand as you are able during parts of the service indicated with an asterisk. \* | Congregation responses indicated in **bold print**.

## Gathering

### Prelude

*Now Is Born the Divine Christ Child*

arr. F. Bock

### Greeting

### \*Call to Worship

*Through the cold, dark night we kept our watch,*

**waiting and hoping for a sign of his coming.**

*And then, at just the right time, God was with us, full of grace and glory.*

**The season of waiting is done. With joy we proclaim, “Jesus Christ is born!”**

### \*Hymn

*He Is Born*

228

He is born, the holy Child,  
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!  
He is born, the holy Child,  
sing we all of the Savior mild.

1. Thru long ages of the past,  
prophets have foretold his coming;  
thru long ages of the past,  
now the time has come at last!

He is born, the holy Child,  
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!  
He is born, the holy Child,  
sing we all of the Savior mild.

2. O how lovely, O how pure  
is this perfect child of heaven;  
O how lovely, O how pure,  
gracious gift to humankind!

He is born, the holy Child,  
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!  
He is born, the holy Child,  
sing we all of the Savior mild.

3. Jesus, Lord of all the world,  
coming as a child among us,  
Jesus, Lord of all the world,  
grant to us thy heavenly peace.

He is born, the holy Child,  
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!  
He is born, the holy Child,  
sing we all of the Savior mild.

Words: Trad. 19th cent. French carol; trans. anon. Public Domain  
Music: 18th Cent. French carol; harm. by Carlton R. Young, 1988  
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### \*Prayer of the Day

*Great God, who fills heaven and earth,*

*you saw fit to cause your Deity to dwell in the man Christ Jesus.*

*Though he was fully human, he was fully divine, and the glory of the Godhead dwelt in him.*

**Help us to open our hearts to that same glory,  
so that we might know the joy of Christ’s nativity in our lives and in our world,  
in this Christmas season, and all year long.  
In the name of Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.**

### \*Sung Response

*Angels from the Realms of Glory*

220, v5

**All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son.  
Evermore your voices raising to th’eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Words by James Montgomery, 1816. Music by Henry T. Smart, 1867. Public Domain

## Proclamation

### The Apostles' Creed

881

I believe in God the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;  
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:  
    who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
        born of the Virgin Mary,  
        suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
        was crucified, dead, and buried;  
the third day he arose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
    and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
    the holy catholic\* church,  
    the communion of saints,  
    the forgiveness of sins,  
    the resurrection of the body,  
    and the life everlasting. Amen.

(\*universal)

### Sung Response

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

224, v3

***Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye need not fear the grave: News, news! Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!***

Words: 14th cent. Latin; trans. By John Mason Neale, 1855. Music: German melody; harm. by Gary Alan Smith, 1988. Words Public Domain.  
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### Old Testament Reading – Isaiah 63:7-9

<sup>7</sup>I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD,  
the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,  
because of all that the LORD has done for us  
and the great favor to the house of Israel  
that he has shown them according to his mercy,  
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

<sup>8</sup>For he said, "Surely they are my people,  
children who will not act deceitfully,"  
and he became their savior  
<sup>9</sup> in all their distress.  
It was no messenger or angel  
but his presence that saved them;  
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;  
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

### Song

*God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*

v1,3,5

1. God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,  
for Jesus Christ our Savior was born upon this day,  
to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;  
O tidings of comfort and joy.
3. From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came,  
and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same,  
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;  
O tidings of comfort and joy.
5. Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,  
and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;  
this holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Words and music: traditional English carol, 18th century. Public Domain

## Sermon Text – Luke 2:8-14

<sup>8</sup> Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

**Response to the Scripture** *This is the Word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God!*

## Message

*A Baby Changes Everything*

Jeff Kunkel, Guest Speaker

## Response

### \*Hymn of Response

*What Child Is This*

219

1. What child is this who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

2. Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.

3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
come, peasant, king, to own him;  
the King of kings salvation brings,  
let loving hearts enthrone him.  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

Words by William C. Dix, 1865. Music: 16th Cent. English Melody. Public Domain

## Prayers of the People

### 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

### Sung Prayer Response

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

230, v4

***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!***

Words: Phillip Brooks, ca. 1868. Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1868. Public Domain

## Offertory and Church Family News and Notes

*We invite you to sign the attendance pads and pass them to others in your pew.  
An offering plate is located at the back of the sanctuary for you to use for your giving.*

### \*Song of Dedication

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

221, v4

***What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.***

Words by Christina Rossetti, 1872. Public Domain

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

*Loving Lord, you gave the greatest gift of all  
when you sent our Lord Jesus into the world to be our Redeemer.  
We now joyfully bring our gifts before you, in the hope that they will bring glad tidings of your love  
to places near and far, so that all the people who walk in darkness will see the great light of Christ,  
and know that there is no reason for despair.*

**May our giving be a blessing to us, and may our gifts be a blessing to others,  
reaching into places of brokenness and pain with the redeeming power of Christ.  
In his name we pray, amen.**

## **Sending**

### **\*Hymn**

*Away in a Manger*

217

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

2. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;  
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever, and love me, I pray;  
bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Words by anon. Music by James R. Murray, 1887. Public Domain

### **\*Dismissal**

### **Postlude**

*Joy to the World*

G.F. Handel, arr. J.N. Beck

*After the pastor and liturgist have recessed and the altar candles are extinguished,  
you may stay seated or quietly leave your seats during the postlude.*

### **Prayer Requests | Prayers for anyone in need of God's comfort and peace.**

**Continuing:** Colleen Fadden; Pat Bowditch

*(Please contact the office to add or remove a request from our list.)*

### **MEETINGS AND EVENTS THIS WEEK**

- |           |         |                     |                                  |
|-----------|---------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Worship | 9:30 am | Sunday, December 28 | In person – Sanctuary and Online |
| • Worship | 9:30 am | Sunday, January 4   | In person – Sanctuary and Online |

**MISSIONS** | The Missions Team focus in January will be Share the Warmth Warming Center of Hillsdale County. We welcome your contributions and prayers on behalf of this local nonprofit that operates from November through April to provide overnight shelter, hot meals, shower, and laundry to the unhoused in our community.

## **Hillsdale First United Methodist Church**

45 N. Manning St., Hillsdale, MI 49242 | 517-437-3681 | [www.hillsdalefirstumc.com](http://www.hillsdalefirstumc.com) | [facebook.com/HillsdaleFirstUMC](https://facebook.com/HillsdaleFirstUMC)

Jeff Kunkel, Guest Speaker

Debbi Wyse, Guest Accompanist

Jan Tesch, Liturgist

Pam Laurell, Church Administrator | Jeff Kornak, Facility Supervisor