

St. Mark's Presbyterian Church
First Sunday after Christmas Day – December 29, 2024

Responsive Call to Worship

We gather to celebrate the birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

With each candle we light, we commit ourselves to seeking hope, peace, joy and love.

We light the Christ candle to shine into the world, reminding us of the new life promised through Jesus' birth.

(Light the Christ candle)

May the warmth and light of Christ comfort all people, bringing courage to the weary and strength to the oppressed.

Holy One, by the power of your Spirit, help us to shine your light brightly to the world. Affirm within us the conviction to show hope, peace, joy and love throughout our lives. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Hymn 143 Infant holy, Infant lowly

**1. Infant holy, infant lowly,
for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ, the babe, is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing,
nowells ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all!
Christ the babe is Lord of all!**

**2. Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story,
tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you;
Christ the babe was born for you.**

Prayer of Praise *(minister)*

Hymn 144 Twas in the moon of wintertime

**1. Twas in the moon of winter-time
when all the birds had fled,**

that mighty Gitchi Manitou
sent angel choirs instead;
before their light the stars grew dim,
and wandering hunters heard the hymn:
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,
In excelsis gloria."

2. Within a lodge of broken bark
the tender Babe was found,
a ragged robe of rabbit skin
enwrapped his beauty round;
but, as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel song rang loud and high:
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,
In excelsis gloria."

3. The earliest moon of wintertime
is not so round and fair
as was the ring of glory
on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt
with gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,
In excelsis gloria."

4. O children of the forest free,
the kin of Manitou,
the holy child of earth and heaven
is born today for you.
Come kneel before the radiant boy,
who brings you beauty, peace and joy.
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,
In excelsis gloria."

Prayer of Confession (congregation)

Oh God, we are grateful we can come to you confessing those areas where we have fallen short of what we know you want of us. We have been selfish and self-centred even in the season of giving. We have looked for what is wrong rather than what is admirable in our fellow human beings. Forgive us.

- silent confession -

The Lord's Prayer (Debts/Debtors)

**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, the power, and the glory. For ever
and ever. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon (minister)

Hymn 164 O little town of Bethlehem

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

**Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by:**

**yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;**

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

**2. For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.**

**O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.**

**3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!**

**So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings born of heaven.**

**No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**

**4. 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;
oh come to us, abide with us,
our Lord, Emmanuel.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 148 **p. 590 NT & Psalms**

¹ Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens!

Praise him from the skies!

² Praise him, all his angels!

Praise him, all the armies of heaven!

³ Praise him, sun and moon!

Praise him, all you twinkling stars!

⁴ Praise him, skies above!

Praise him, vapors high above the clouds!

⁵ Let every created thing give praise to the Lord,

for he issued his command, and they came into being.

⁶ He set them in place forever and ever.

His decree will never be revoked.

⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth,

you creatures of the ocean depths,

⁸ fire and hail, snow and clouds,

wind and weather that obey him,

⁹ mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars,

¹⁰ wild animals and all livestock,

small scurrying animals and birds,

¹¹ kings of the earth and all people,

rulers and judges of the earth,

¹² young men and young women,

old men and children.

¹³ Let them all praise the name of the Lord.

For his name is very great;

his glory towers over the earth and heaven!

¹⁴ He has made his people strong,

honoring his faithful ones—

the people of Israel who are close to him.

Praise the Lord!

Scripture Lessons

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 p. 214 pew Bible (NIV)

Colossians 3:12-17 p. 349 New Living Translation

Luke 2:41-52 p. 103 New Living Translation

Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon New clothes for a new year?

Prayers of the People (*minister*)

Hymn 138 While shepherds watched

**1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.**

**2. 'Fear not,' said he, for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind;
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you, all human kind.**

**3. 'To you, in David's town, this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,
and this shall be the sign:**

**4. 'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'**

**5. Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:**

**6. 'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace,
good will henceforth from heaven to earth
begin, and never cease!'**

Offering & Offertory

*Doxology 830 Praise God from whom all blessings flow

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Prayer of Dedication (congregation)

Oh God, we are awestruck at your gifts to us. You have given us everything we have and it is a privilege to be able to give some back. Bless these gifts. Amen.

Hymn 811 Standing at the portal

**1. Standing at the portal
of the opening year,
words of comfort meet us,
hushing every fear,
spoken through the silence
by God's loving voice,
tender, strong and faithful,
making us rejoice.**

Refrain:

**Onward then, and fear not,
children of the day;
for God's word shall never,
never pass away.**

**2. "I, your god, am with you:
do not be afraid;
I will help and strengthen;
do not be dismayed,
for I will uphold you
with my own right hand;
you are called and chosen
in my sight to stand."**

Refrain:

**Onward then, and fear not,
children of the day;
for God's word shall never,
never pass away.**

**3. God will not forsake us
and will never fail;
God's eternal covenant
ever will prevail.
Resting on this promise,
what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient
for the coming year.**

Refrain:

**Onward then, and fear not,
children of the day;
for God's word shall never,
never pass away.**

Choral Blessing

**Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will be with you each hour of every day.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.**

Benediction

Three-fold Amen

Piano Postlude