

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Journey Through the Bible

Witnessing to the Light
John 1:6-18

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

Please note that all text in **bold** is spoken in unison.

† Worshipers are asked to stand in body or spirit.

December 31, 2023

10:30AM

WELCOME! What a delight that you are here! We hope you will experience the love of Jesus and the joy of community in this time of worship. If we can be of help to you, please let us know. We would love to assist you in finding ways to get involved and grow in your faith.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION (*You are invited to pray this prayer in silence.*)

God of creation, as we gather this joyful morning, let our alleluias rise from willing lips, from lives opened to Your gift of life, and from hearts filled with Your love through Jesus Your Son. Alleluia and Amen!

PRELUDE

LIFE AT ST. ANDREW'S

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

based on Isaiah 12

One: Sing praises to God on high, for glorious are God's works.

Many: Sing praises to the ends of the earth.

One: Shout and sing for joy, O people of God,

Many: For great is the Holy One in our midst.

All: We will praise the One who comes to dwell among us.

† **HYMN 56**

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Chorus: Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.

And by the light of that same star, three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest; o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
And there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three, fell reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence, their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with His blood our life hath bought.

† INVITATION TO CONFESSION

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Mighty God, we live as if the light had never defeated the darkness in the world or in us. We confess that we ignore the Messiah You sent to be among us, to be in us. We've kept the birth of Jesus confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for His birth each moment in our waiting hearts. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Your coming and not celebrating what You are doing. Fill our hearts with the joy of Your saving love so that all the earth rings with song and Your light breaks forth in our lives.

† ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Glory to God in heaven!
And on earth, peace!

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

TIME FOR CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11

Pew Bible p. 641
Large Print p.1122-1123

This is the Word of God for the people of God!
Thanks be to God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

THY WILL

HERMS, WEISBAND, & SCOTT

I'm so confused; I know I heard You loud and clear.
So I followed through; somehow I ended up here.
I don't wanna think I may never understand that my broken heart is a part of Your plan.
When I try to pray, all I got is hurt and these four words:
So Thy will be done, Thy will be done, Thy will be done.

I know You're good, but this don't feel good right now.
And I know You think things I could never think about.
It's hard to count it all joy, distracted by the noise,
Just tryin' to make sense of all Your promises.
Sometimes I gotta stop, remember that You're God and I am not.
So Thy will be done, Thy will be done, Thy will be done.

Like a child on my knees, all that comes to me is:
Thy will be done, Thy will be done, Thy will be done.

I know You see me, I know You hear me, Lord.
Your plans are for me, goodness You have in store.
I know You hear me, I know You see me, Lord.
Your plans are for me, goodness You have in store.
So Thy will be done, Thy will be done, Thy will be done.

SERMON

Witnessing to the Light

† HYMN 36

In the Bleak Midwinter

CRANHAM

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter a stable-place sufficed the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there, cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss, Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE 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 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 THE OFFERING

[Give Online](#)

† HYMN 592

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

DOXOLOGY

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. Amen.

† PRAYER OF DEDICATION

† HYMN INSERT

Love Came Down at Christmas

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, Love divine; Love was born at Christmas, star and angels gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine; Worship we our Jesus: but wherewith for sacred sign?
Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine, Love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.

† BENEDICTION

† SENDING SONG

Lift Up Your Heads

TRURO

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me Thy inner presence feel; Thy grace and love in me reveal.

You are encouraged to sit and enjoy the postlude after the sending song.

POSTLUDE

The flowers today were given to the glory of God by Bob and Judy Fisher.

The red rose on the communion table today was given to the glory of God and in celebration of the birth of Jesse Scott Stiles, on December 27, to Rachel and Chris Stiles.

Please use the **C O N N E C T** cards in the pews to let us know about prayer requests or areas of interest. If you are a visitor, please also include your contact information and help us get to know you better! You can place completed cards in the offering baskets.

The nursery is located near the sanctuary and is available for children ages 0-5. Children's activity bulletins and large print bulletins, Bibles, and hymnals are available on the sanctuary tables.

The church office will be **CLOSED** on Monday, January 1, 2024.

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS: The new deacons, elders, and officers of St. Andrew's will be ordained and installed during worship on January 7, 2024. We are grateful for these servants who lead by example and are willing to do so much for our church family and our community.

Join us in giving **HEARTFELT THANKS** to Lauren Sanchez and Janet Myers for their musical leadership during Thomas Furlow's leave of absence. We are grateful for their hard work, careful planning, and rehearsal from September to December.

We thank Rev. Paul Alexander for leading us in worship today.

St. Andrew's Prayer List

MEMBERS: Greta Ott, Family of Brad Walker, Bob Fisher, Shelley Plunkett, Lee Plunkett, Barbara Abel, Dalton Abel, Kay Long

FRIENDS AND FAMILY: Pat Richard, Mar'curia Rice, David Cobble, Karen Thompson Butler, Madeline Johnson, Val Rayzor, Mary Kennedy, Mickey Shuffield, Thomas Fisher, Jack Dillard, Erin Lenhart, Jerry Linn, Janie Niederstadt Verderame, Rachel Lawrence, Esmee Foster

St. Andrew's Calendar

Sunday, December 31, 2023

10:30AM Worship

3:00PM Boy Scouts

Monday, January 1, 2024

OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, January 2, 2024

10:00AM PW Coordinating

10:00AM Staff Meeting

5:30PM Fellowship Meeting

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

8:15AM SOP Soup Kitchen

5:30PM Handbell Rehearsal

Thursday, January 4, 2024

8:30AM MOW Cooks

10:00AM MOW Delivers

Friday, January 5, 2024

OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, January 6, 2024

OFFICE CLOSED

Sunday, January 7, 2024

9:15AM Sunday School

10:30AM Worship

11:30PM Choir Rehearsal

12:00PM Confirmation Class

3:00PM Boy Scouts

5:00PM Youth Group

CHURCH STAFF

Tara Thompson, Pastor

Thomas Furlow, Music Director

Joyce Stillwell, Admin Assistant

Rachel Stiles, Admin Assistant/Organist

Patricia Williamson, Pianist

Hours: Monday - Thursday, 8:30AM - 4:30PM

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