Grace United Methodist Church December 7, 2025

Welcome and Announcements Laurie White

L: This is the day that the Lord has made!
P: We will rejoice and be glad in it!

Centering Bell

Music to Prepare Our Hearts "Carol of the Bells" Dr. Kristie Janczyk
Traditional Ukrainian. Arranged by Adam Bendorf. © 2012 by Adam Bendorf. All Rights Reserved. OneLicense #A-739344

Crossing the Threshold "I Believe" Ginny Hildebrand
By Mark Miller copyright © 2011, 2020 Choristers Guild, arr by Mark A. Miller. All rights reserved. Used by Permission, Worshipdesignstudio.com

L: The emptiness of loneliness
P: The emptiness of loneliness
L: The wounds inflicted
P: The wounds inflicted
L: The fear of the "other"
P: The fear of the "other"

All Sing
I believe in love, I believe in love,
even when, even when I don't feel it.

* Song of Worship "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" UMH 213
By Georg Weissel, 1642, trans. by Catherine Winkworth, 1855 ~ Public Domain Verses 1, 3

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold, the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here!

Redeemer, come, with us abide; our hearts to thee we open wide;
let us thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in us reveal.

Scripture Reading Isaiah 7: 1-14 Common English Bible

Anthem "Prepare the Way, O Zion" Chancel Choir
Music: Swedish Folk Tune, arr. by Sondra K. Tucker ©2000 Hope Publishing Co.; Words by Franz Mikael Franzen, adapt. by Charles P. Price ©1980, 1989 Charles Price CCLI #1365061

Gospel Reading Matthew 1:1, 16-25 Common English Bible

Sermon "Daring Right Relationship" Rev. Sharon Pajak

Litany of Belief

L: I believe that we have been taught to fear one another AND

P: I believe that we are capable of learning to love.

L: I believe we use the distance of technology to normalize cruelty and disrespect toward one another AND

P: I believe that we can reconnect with each other in grace, kindness, respect, and love

L: I believe that we have normalized lying and minimized it as a sin AND

P: I believe we are able to recognize and return to the power of truth.

L: I believe that we are afraid AND

P: I believe that we can lean on each other and God for courage to face anything.

L: We believe, even when we are discouraged.

P: We believe that there is always love around us if we only look for it and expect to find it.

L: We believe, even when we are discouraged.

P: We believe, that when we are discouraged, raising our voices for justice will bring about more love in the world!

A Season of Prayer

Invitation to Prayer

Prayer Song "Stillness" Cindy Haynes

By Lindy Thompson and Mark Miller ©2013 Mark A. Miller and Lindy Thompson; Used by Permission

A Time of Quiet for Personal Prayer

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer UMH 895

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, forever. Amen

We Share Our Gifts

Invitation to Stewardship

Song During Offering "In the Bleak Midwinter" Dr. Kristie Janczyk

Music by Cranham. Arranged by Jenifer Cook. © 2013 by Jenifer Cook. All Rights Reserved. http://thechurchpianist.com OneLicense #A-739344

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow UMH 95

By Thomas Ken, 1672 ~ Public Domain

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 Thanksgiving (Unison)

Loving God, you offered Jesus to a world yearning for a way to truly know you. Accept our offerings this day, knowing they are symbols of our lives. Help us, as you worked in Joseph's life, to overcome our fears. Open the doors to allow us to live in steadfast relationships of love for you and all your creation. Amen!

Holy Communion

Song During Communion — Dr. Kristie Janczyk

"For the Beauty of the Earth/This is My Father's World"

Music by Concrad Kocher. Lyrics by Folliott Stanford Pierpoint. Arranged by Lily Topolski. © 2012 by Lily Topolski. All Rights Reserved. OneLicense #A-739344

*Carol of Resistance — "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" — Projected

By Edmund H. Sears, 1849 ~ Public Domain

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
and we at war on earth hear not the love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise and cease the strife, and hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

*Blessing

*Handbell Benediction — "I Believe" — Joybells

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Music for Going Forth — "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" — Dr. Kristie Janczyk

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