

SIGNS AND POWER



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**Pastor: Rev. Pastor Pablo R. Vargas
Music Director: Cavan O'Neill**

Christmas Eve Worship Service
Lay Worship Leader- Jim Shoemaker

Words of Welcome

Announcements

Centering Time (Preparing Our Hearts & Minds for Worship)

Responsive Call to Worship

Beloved, we have waited, watched, and witnessed the coming of the Christ child. As we gather today on the other side of Christmas, we might be tempted to ask, “What now?”

We continue to wait and watch for the day that all the earth awaits.

In this season of Christmas, we remember that though Christ has come among us, the good news of freedom for captives, flourishing for the poor, and power returned to the disempowered does not reign in so many places.

We continue to wait and watch for the day that all the earth awaits.

With Mary and Joseph, we listen for God to show us how to protect and advocate for the vulnerable among us.

We continue to wait and watch for the day that all the earth awaits.

As we gather to worship today, may God bind us together in love, empowering us to live as followers of the Christ child who declare good news wherever we go.

We gather today as people who wait, watch, and work for the day that all the earth awaits. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Opening Prayer

God of life, we pray to you for all people: for all women who have been excluded from a full-fledged life for the only reason that it has been always like that.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For all people who are oppressed and abused.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For all people whose freedom and dignity are denied by systems and authorities.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For all those who are driven away from their houses and their homes because of their conscience and their convictions.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For all those who are in search of the meaning of their life within their own culture and religion.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For all those who have to labor too hard for too small a salary.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For those many desperate women and men who are at the mercy of the rich and the powerful.

Empower us to take all iniquity away.

For

all those who suffer, we pray to you.

Empower us to take all iniquity away. Amen.

“We Three Kings”

UMH-254

Passing the Peace of Christ

Pastor Welcome and Prayer

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

UMH-238

Scripture Reading- Matthew 2:13-23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, 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.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.” ¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: ¹⁸ “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be

consoled, because they are no more.”¹⁹ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said,²⁰ “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.”²¹ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel.²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee.²³ There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

Leader: This is the Word of our Lord.
(Children are dismissed to “Godly Play”)

People: Thanks be to God.

Message: “The Reality of Life After Christmas”

-Rev. Pastor Pablo R. Vargas

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

UMH-28

INVITATION TO OFFER OUR GIFTS & SERVICE –

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)

Steadfast God of refuge and promise, even when the world makes no room, even when fear seems stronger than hope, you are with us. In the flight to Egypt, in the cries of grief, in the fragile beginnings of new life, you make a way. Receive these gifts, O God, as signs of our willingness to make room for your kingdom among us. Use what we bring—not just our treasure, but our time, our voices, our compassion—to heal what is broken, to protect the vulnerable, and to embody your saving love. In the name of Jesus, our Light in the shadows. Amen. (Matthew 2:13-23)

Closing Hymn

“Go Tell it on the Mountain”

UMH-251

Benediction

Stay Afterwards for some Coffee