

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Candlelighting

ALL: Loving God, we rehearse this beloved story, year after year, because, in this world where people are hungry and creation is suffering, the story gives us hope—that all people will be fed and creation will be restored! We gather to worship in this season of hopeful expectation, knowing you are faithful to meet us here in song, prayer, and scripture. Nourish our hearts as we worship, and prepare us to serve the hungry around us. Amen

Sung Response: Light the Candle*

*Opening Hymn 88 O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Call to Reconciliation

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

God who cares for every sparrow and every child, the enormity of the world's hunger feels overwhelming. We do not know what to do about famine and starvation, so we look away and distract ourselves from suffering people and all creatures, great and small. We confess we neglect small acts of generosity because the problems seem so big. We confess we shrink back from true solutions because the sacrifices seem too great. May your hope compel us to make choices reflecting our love for our neighbors and creation. You take our feeble efforts and magnify your glory. May the world be fed with hope. Amen

Assurance of Pardon

*Passing the Peace

*Gloria Hymn #582 Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

Time with God's Children

Anthem O Come, Emmanuel

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading Micah 5:2-5a

Second Reading Matthew 14:13-21; Luke 2:7

Sermon

Hope Grows

*Hymn #105

People Look East

*Statement of Faith:

One: Let us affirm our commitment to and belief in the Christian discipline of hope.

One: Like the pleasing aroma of a hot meal, as it is placed on a table of fellowship,

All: we believe hope entices the people of God to come together in unity.

One: Like the dreams of harvest that inspire the farmer to plant seeds in the spring,

All: we believe hope emboldens us to plan and plant for the future.

One: Like the insects who collect pollen and unknowingly fertilize the food for all of creation,

All: we believe hope empowers us to follow our calling, allowing God to multiply our efforts when we are obedient to our calling.

One: Like the instinct of animals who store and save for hard times ahead,

All: we believe hope persuades us to anticipate and endure challenges that will arise.

One: And when anxieties and circumstances overwhelm us, or we are tempted to fall into despair,

All: we believe things can get better with compassion and imagination. This is hope. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Generous God, these gifts and offerings are a tangible expression of our hope in Christ. May they nourish those who hunger and spread your love and justice.

Bless our giving, inspire us to share with compassion, and help us trust in your abundant provision. Amen.

Prayers of the People concluding with The Lord's Prayer

*Hymn #121

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Charge

Sung Benediction

From the Manger, verse 1*

Postlude

*See song sheets in the pews.