

Lacey United Methodist Church
2023 Christmas Eve Service ~10PM

Prelude *Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine*

Welcome

***Call to Worship** **Judy Mihalkovitz**

Come, faithful watchers, and behold, your salvation is here!

We greet the Wondrous Light, our Messiah, Christ the Lord.

We have waited and watched, longing for God to show up and save us from the suffering and pain in our world. **We greet the Wondrous Light, the fulfillment of our shocking hope.**

We have waited and watched, longing for peace to reign among us, a peace that removes unjust barriers, frees us from sin, and binds us together as neighbors, family, and friends.

We greet the Wondrous Light, the bringer of our just peace.

We have waited and watched, longing for joy that is persistent in the face of the grief, lament, chaos, and oppression that weigh on us day in and day out.

We greet the Wondrous Light, the source of our fierce joy.

We have waited and watched, longing to encounter the love that transforms us, the Love that is now here among us, first as a babe in a manger, then as a teacher, a friend, and our Savior.

We greet the Wondrous Light, Love Incarnate who has come to save us and transform us. Amen.

***Carol** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* *v. 1,3* **UMH 234**

First Lesson: Genesis 3:8-15; 17-19, 22:15-18

Diane Collins

***Carol** *Angels We Have Heard on High* *v. 1,3* **UMH 238**

Second Lesson ~ Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 **Sally Potter**

Christmas Wreath Lighting

Sally Potter & Trevor Potter

Carol *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* **UMH 240** *Vs. 1,3*

Third Lesson: Luke 1:26-35 **Judy Mihalkovitz**

Carol *The First Noel* **UMH 245** *Vs. 1,2*

Fourth Lesson ~ Luke 2:1-16 **Rich Rosfjord**

Message: "He Pitched His Tent with Us"

Carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem* *v. 1,2,3* **UMH 230**

Fifth Lesson: Matthew 2:1-11

Eric De La Cruz

Christmas Offering Duet *What Child Is This?*
Offered by Diane Collins and Ed Weisbrot

Doxology

UMH 95

Christmas Offering Prayer

Giving God, as we recount the story of your gift of a Savior on that night long ago, we remember there were some who said, "There's no room", and others who responded, "Come, we'll make room." As we bring our gifts to your altar, which group will be the best fit for each of us? Help us give with a heart of abundance and not one of scarcity! On this holiest of nights, let us dwell with those whose chorus is, "Come, we'll make room," remembering your abundant love for us. In the name of our Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Judy Mihalkovitz

God of Light, we confess that we have gone astray and have left Your light. We follow the dim lights of the world of success and fortune. We follow the dim lights that call us to be more religious by following rules. We follow the fading light of personal salvation. Forgive us for not seeking the true Light of Your love for all the world. Forgive us for not following the ways of Jesus, who commanded us to love one another. Call us to be light-bearers of love, compassion, and justice, in which the Mystery of Your Love is revealed. In the name of Jesus the Messiah, we pray. Amen.

(Time for Silent Confession and Reflection)

Words of Assurance

Judy Mihalkovitz

Even now—yes, even in this very moment, God comes to us, bringing hope, bringing forgiveness, bringing grace as freely offered gifts to us. May we open our hearts to the God who is with us, and receive the gifts which have been offered to us. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Celebration of Holy Communion

The Lord's Prayer

The Breaking of the Bread and The Sharing of the Cup

The Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your abundant and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs from under your table; but you are the same Lord whose

character is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us, amen.

The Reception

*As you come up to receive communion, please bring your offering gift for those in need and place it in the basket.
After you receive communion,
please take a candle from an usher and return to your seat.*

Prayer of Gratitude **Judy Mihalkovitz**

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sixth Lesson: John 1:1-14 **Eric DeLa Cruz**

Candle Lighting

The ushers will light the candle of the individual at the end of the row, please light the candle of the person next to you, as you share the light of Christ.

***Carol** **Silent Night** **UMH 239**

Dismissal with Blessing

***Postlude** **Joy to the World** **UMH 246 vs. 1,4**

Pastor: Rev. Jonathan Campbell

Liturgist: Judy Mihalkovitz

Guest Musician: Maggie Realley

Head Ushers: Sherry Exel & Rick Waddell

Lacey United Methodist Church

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