

# University Presbyterian Church



Sunday, December 21, 2025  
10:30 a.m.

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, December 21, 2025  
Service for the Lord's Day  
10:30 a.m.

### **AS YOU PREPARE FOR WORSHIP**

*In order that people may listen to the music or pray in silence without distraction, please refrain from conversation after the music begins and kindly silence all cell phones. Also, please do not bring any food or beverage, other than water, in the sanctuary. Thank you.*

*Children of all ages are welcome to remain in worship. A playroom is available near the sanctuary for young children who are accompanied by their parents.*

*Prayer Requests: If you have a prayer request which you would like the pastor to include in "Prayers of the People," please fill out the yellow prayer request slip found in the pew racks and place it in the offering plate when passed.*

### **THE GATHERING AROUND THE WORD**

Prelude	Lo, How a Rose Is Growing	Michael Burkhardt
	<i>Es ist ein Ros</i>	

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Wreath <sup>1</sup>	Josephine Hesse and Ian Unson
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Watch and wait for Christ's coming! Light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, remembering the promises of God with prayer.

Out of love for the people of God, the Lord speaks through the prophet Isaiah, as found in the seventh chapter, verses 10-14: The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

Let us pray. God of hope, Prince of peace, Jubilee Judge, and Lord of love, your goodness is beyond our wildest imaginings. You give us more than we can think to ask, coming to us with impossible possibility in the union of flesh and spirit. Teach us to love this world and all people as you love us in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come.**

\*Hymn #117      While Shepherds Watch their Flocks      Este's Psalmes  
*Winchester Old*

**\*Prayer of the Day<sup>2</sup>**

**In this season of love, hope and family, grant us joy and peace this day. You offered signs to Joseph and Mary long ago- signs that their son would be the Messiah, Emmanuel. May your light shine on us here, that we might understand the signs in our lives. We come with open hearts and minds to hear of your love coming into the world. We come to hear of a young woman with child, a father with trust in God, a match you made in heaven to shepherd a tiny boy to his destiny. Holy God, show us your peace as we make ready for your light in the world!**

**THE CONFESSION AND PARDON**

The Invitation

As we get close to the end of our waiting for the birth of Jesus, we come to Jesus and God, confessing our human shortcomings.

The Prayer<sup>2</sup>

**We lay our burdens before you, O Lord, with our lives open and ready to receive your light and love. Lead us toward your Son, Jesus, Emmanuel, as we continue to wander with you in faith. Thank you for the many signs of your love, sent in your infinite wisdom. May we have the faith of Mary and**

**Joseph, and may we be your attendants, anxious for the coming of your light once again.**

*There follows a moment of silent personal confession*

The Pardon<sup>2</sup>

The king of love comes for all! With tears wiped away and replaced with joy, delight in preparing for the imminent arrival of the Son of God. We are all called by God, forgiven, cleansed and made free.

\*Hymn #581      Glory Be to the Father      Henry W. Greatorex

**Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end. Amen, Amen.**

\*Sharing the Peace and Greetings

*As God's forgiven people we extend the peace of Christ to one another saying, "the peace of Christ be with you."*

\*Sung response    Hymn #822

**Shalom to you now, shalom my friends.  
May God's full mercies, bless you, my friends.  
In all your living and through your loving,  
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.**

## **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

Prayer for Illumination<sup>3</sup>

Gracious God, illumine these words by your Spirit that we might hear what you would have us hear and be who you would have us be, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen



## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

Once He Came in Blessing

Michael Burkhardt

*Gottes Sohn ist Kommen*

\*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\*Prayer of Dedication

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People and 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.**

\*Hymn #119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

*Mendelssohn*

*Felix Mendelssohn*

\*Benediction

Postlude

The King Shall Come

Michael Burkhardt

*Consolation*

\*Please stand or rise in spirit as you are able and feel so led.

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3 Written by John Wurster for The Presbyterian Outlook.

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## Participating in Worship:

The Rev. Dr. Christine James, Pastor

Rebecca Kroetsch, Choir Director

Gregory White, Organist

Lee Ann Grace, Liturgist

Kathryn Hallborg, Scott Horton & Amy Maundrell, Greeters

Val Macer, Live streamer

## *Next Week:*

*Dennis Erickson, Liturgist*

*Nick Casseri, Greeters*

*Val Macer, Live streamer*

## **This Week...**

Sunday, December 21	9:00 am	Choir
	10:30 am	Worship Service
	11:30 am	Fellowship
	11:30 am	Hand bells
Tuesday, December 23	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
Wednesday, December 24	Church Office Closed	
	7:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday, December 25	Christmas Day	
	Food Pantry & Church Office closed	
Sunday, December 28	9:00 am	Choir
	10:30 am	Worship Service
	11:30 am	Fellowship Time & Cake

## **TO ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS ~ANNUAL REPORTS:**

Annual Reports are due on **January 7<sup>th</sup>**.

## **University Presbyterian Church's Vision Statement**

Let us be **BREAD:**

**B**eaming Christ's love to our neighbors and beyond

**R**esounding praise of God in worship with music while caring for one another and growing our faith

**E**nriching our neighborhood through creative use of our building

**A**cting with energy to foster a growing, vibrant, and welcoming church family

**D**eveloping diversity by engaging and welcoming all of God's beloved people

## **University Presbyterian Church Officers and Staff**

Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Christine James

Organist

Gregory White

Choral Director

Rebecca Kroetsch

Treasurer

James W. Smyton

Clerk of Session

Pat Cookfair-Casseri

Stephen Ministry Referral Coordinator

Kathryn F. Hallborg

Administrative Assistant

Peg Kovach

Facilities Manager

Aaron Vivian

Custodian

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Services are live-streamed on YouTube at: <https://tinyurl.com/upcbuffalo>