

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Emily Cowser

Liturgist: Bonnie Anderson

Pianist: Merle Korizek

"The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish."

- Eugene Peterson, *The Message* translation of John 1:14

*\*Please stand if you are able*

PRELUDE

"The Holly and the Ivy"

Traditional English folk carol

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Sing to the Lord a new song;

**ALL: sing to the Lord, all the earth!**

One: Sing to the Lord and bless God's name;

**ALL: tell the good news of salvation from day to day.**

One: Declare God's glory among the nations,

God's marvelous works among all the peoples.

**ALL: For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.**

One: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.

**ALL: Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;**

**the world, and those who live in it.**

One: Let the whole creation sing for joy

at the presence of God, who is coming.

**ALL: God is coming indeed,**

**to judge the earth with righteousness,**

**and the peoples with equity and truth.**

**Praise the Lord!**

\*HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

GtG #133

O come, all ye faithful,

joyful and triumphant;

O come ye; O come ye

to Bethlehem!  
Come, and behold him,  
born the King of angels!

O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ, the Lord!

True God from true God,  
Light from light eternal,  
born of a virgin,  
mortal he comes;  
very God, begotten, not created!

O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels;  
sing in exultation;  
sing, all ye citizens  
of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory  
in the highest!

O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ, the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;

Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing!

O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ, the Lord!

\*CALL TO CONFESSION

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**ALL: Holy Incarnate God, by the light of your goodness and mercy, our failing to see your true light is clear: we have not loved you, we have not loved our neighbors, we have not loved ourselves. Our feet have not brought good news to the poor nor have our voices defended Earth and its creatures and plants. Forgive us, blind us with your holy honesty, so that we may more clearly see your will, and walk with sure steps into the way of wholeness and peace. Amen.**

*(a moment of silent confession)*

\*DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

\*THE PEACE

\*“Gloria Patri”

GtG #581

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.

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:1-19

Bonnie Anderson

*Adam and Eve disobey God's command and disrupt  
the order and goodness of creation*

\*CAROL

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

GtG #121

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and  
dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.

Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep,  
the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the king,  
and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.

No ear may hear his coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive  
him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in;  
be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us; abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!

SECOND LESSON

Genesis 22:15-18

Mark Goodman

*God promises that, through Abraham,  
all the people of the world will be blessed*

\*CAROL

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

GtG #88

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Wisdom  
from on high,  
who orderest all things mightily:  
to us the path of knowledge show;  
and teach us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come,  
thou Lord of might,  
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times didst give the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Root of Jesse, free  
thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell thy people save  
and give them victory  
o'er the grave.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way  
that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring,  
come and cheer  
our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds  
of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
fill the whole world  
with heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

John Coefield

*The people who walk in darkness receive the promise of the Messiah*

\*CAROL

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

GtG# 123

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 all,  
from heaven’s all-gracious King”:  
the world in solemn stillness lay,  
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies  
they come,  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o’er all the weary world:

Above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o’er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the heavenly hymn  
have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;

And we at war on earth hear not  
the tidings that they bring;  
O, hush the noise  
and cease the strife  
to hear the angels sing!

And you, beneath life's  
crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow,

Look now, for glad and  
golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing:  
O, rest beside the weary road,  
and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on,  
by prophets 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 give back  
the song  
which now the angels sing.

FOURTH LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-9

Karen Witte

*The Messiah will come from the root of Jesse to restore the peace of creation*

\*CAROL

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

GtG# 129

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming



from tender stem hath sprung,  
of Jesse's lineage coming,  
by faithful prophets sung.

It came, a floweret bright,  
amid the cold of winter,  
when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,  
the rose I have in mind;  
with Mary we behold it,  
the virgin mother kind.

To show God's love aright  
she bore for us a Savior,  
when half spent was the night.

This flower,  
whose fragrance tender  
with sweetness fills the air,  
dispels with glorious splendor  
the darkness everywhere.

Enfleshed, yet very God,  
from sin and death he saves us  
and lightens every load.

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

John Warren

*An angel appears to Mary and announces that she will bear a holy child*

\*CAROL

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

GtG #119

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,

God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful all ye nations, rise;  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail the incarnate deity,  
pleased in flesh with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heaven-born  
Prince of Peace!  
Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth.

Hark! The herald angels sing,

“Glory to the newborn king!”

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

Kathy Chambers

*Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, where Mary gives birth to her child*

\*CAROL

“Away in a Manger”

GtG #115

Away in a manger,  
no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus  
laid down his sweet head.

The stars in the bright sky  
looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep  
on the hay.

The cattle are lowing;  
the poor baby wakes,  
but little Lord Jesus,  
no crying he makes.

I love thee, Lord Jesus;  
look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side  
until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus;  
I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever  
and love me, I pray.

Bless all the dear children  
in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven  
to live with thee there.

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

Dianna Goodman

*Angels appear to shepherds in the fields and announce  
the birth of the Messiah*

\*CAROL

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

GtG #113

Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-11

Carol Gneckow

*Magi from the East come seeking the Messiah and offer gifts  
to the baby Jesus*

\*CAROL

"We Three Kings of Orient Are"

GtG #151

We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain,  
moor and mountain,

following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never  
over us all to reign.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!

Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a deity nigh;  
prayer and praising gladly raising,  
worshiping God Most High.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,

guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
sounds through the earth  
and skies.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!

NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

Pastor Emily

*The Word of God becomes flesh and lives among us, full of grace and truth*

\*CAROL

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

GtG #122

Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright  
'round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight;  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia:  
Christ the Savior is born;  
Christ the Savior is born!”

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!  
Wondrous star, lend thy light;  
with the angels let us sing  
Alleluia to our King:  
Christ the Savior is born;  
Christ the Savior is born.

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH      *Adapted from The Westminster Confession of Faith*  
**ALL: The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him humanity's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof; yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the humanhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very human, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and humankind.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE OFFERING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY                      "The Gift of a Son"  
Paul Edwards

*Offering plates are located in the back of the sanctuary. You may also give online at [fpchelena.org/giving](http://fpchelena.org/giving) or by mailing a check to First Presbyterian Church 535 N. Ewing St., Helena, MT 59601.*

\*DOXOLOGY    "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"                      GtG #606

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.

\*OFFERING PRAYER

\*HYMN

“Joy to the World”

GtG #134

Joy to the world,  
the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let every heart  
prepare him room,

And heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven  
and nature sing.

Joy to the earth,  
the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods,  
rocks, hills, and plains

Repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins  
and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his  
blessings flow

Far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.



He rules the world with truth  
and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness

And wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

\*CHARGE

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"  
Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

## **Announcements**

### **Doors Locked During Service**

Session decided to lock the main entrance doors during the worship service. The doors are locked from 10:15 to 11 a.m., and unlocked again between 11 a.m. and noon.

### **Church Office Closed Dec. 25-Jan. 2**

The church office will be closed Thursday, Dec. 25, through Friday, Jan. 2. Pastor Emily will be out of town the evening of Dec. 28 through Saturday, Jan. 3, but will be available by cell phone in case of emergencies. You may also call Commissioned Pastor Dianna Goodman at 406-431-8964. If she is not available, contact Butch Plowman at 406-558-9240. You may also get in touch with your shepherd.

### **Warm Hearts Drive Begins**

The Warm Hearts drive has begun will conclude at the end of January, to be gifted on Valentine's Day. The drive collects new blankets (bedding), new towels (washcloths, hand towels & bath towels.) Your donations will serve Family Promise, God's Love, Good Samaritan Ministries, Helena Community Offender Reentry Program, Rocky Mountain Development Center, The Friendship Center, and YWCA. Warm Hearts is an ecumenical ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Associates of Helena "to witness and share the mission of Jesus who calls us to love God with our whole hearts and love our neighbor even as God loves us."

## **Undecorating Party January 11!**

Please plan to stay after the service on January 11 to help take down the holiday decorations. We'll grab cookies and coffee, and share some good fellowship!

### **You're Invited!**

**Sunday, Jan. 4**

Worship Service w/Communion 10 a.m.  
Social Time 11 a.m.

### **Staff**

Ministers—Every Member

Organist—Ann Swisher

Pastor—Rev. Emily Cowser

Treasurer—Leo Potter

Director of Music & Media—Les Cramer

Office Coordinator—Julie Young

### **FPC Elders**

**Patti Borsberry**  
(Worship Chair)

**John Bryan**  
(Christian Ed Chair)

**Jim Meyer**  
(Administration Chair)

**Jeff Chaffee**  
(Personnel Chair)

**Butch Plowman**  
(Building & Grounds Chair)

**Barb Leland**  
(Friendship Chair)

**Carol Gneckow**  
(Mission & Outreach Chair)

**John Gneckow**, Clerk of Session

### **FPC Deacons**

BJ Burns

Bonnie Anderson

Vicky Bryan

Kathy Chambers

Ward Stiles, Vice-Moderator

Art Bumgardner, Moderator

Jill Cook

Rena Bumgardner

Ria Caussyn

Carole Massman



#### **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)**

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**Pastor Emily Cowser**

**Phone:** 406-442-4775

**Email:** [pastor@fpchelena.org](mailto:pastor@fpchelena.org)

*Weekly Sermon on HCTV Cable Channel 189, Wednesdays 6 p.m. & Saturdays 9 a.m.*