



PRELUDE

Guest Pastor:
Rev. Jim Harris

1st Sunday after
Christmas Day

December 31st, 2023

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3430384-01-1829



WELCOME,
ANNOUNCEMENTS,
and
CELEBRATIONS



Give Thanks

Let us quiet
our minds,
hearts, and
spirits as we
begin to focus
on the
presence of
God as we
bring the *Light
of Christ* into
our midst.



Bringing In The Light of Christ

“O God, Our Help In Ages Past”

CALL to WORSHIP



CALL to WORSHIP

Leader: Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,

People: **You may now dismiss your servant in peace.**

Leader: For my eyes have seen your salvation,

People: **Which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:**

CALL to WORSHIP

Leader: A light for revelation to the
Gentiles,

People: **And the glory of your people
Israel.**

“Once in Royal David’s City” UMH 250

WORDS: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.



“Once in Royal David’s City” UMH 250

WORDS: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

Once in Royal David’s city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed;
Mary, loving mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child.

“Once in Royal David’s City” UMH 250

WORDS: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall.

With the poor, the scorned, the lowly
lived on earth our Savior holy.

“Once in Royal David’s City” UMH 250

WORDS: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

Jesus is our childhood’s pattern;
day by day, like us he grew;
he was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.

“Once in Royal David’s City” UMH 250

WORDS: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

OPENING PRAYER

**Almighty God, you have
poured upon us the new
light of your incarnate
Word: Grant that this
light, enkindled in our
hearts, may shine forth
in our lives; through
Jesus Christ our
Lord, who lives and
reigns with you, in the
unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for
ever.
Amen.**





Young Disciples' Message



Passing of the Peace

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Lord, open our hearts and
minds by the power of your
Holy Spirit, that, as the
Scriptures are read and your
Word proclaimed, we may
hear with joy what you say
to us today.
Amen.**



Galatians 4: 4-7

⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under the law,

⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the
full rights of sons.

⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son
into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you
are a son, God has made you also an heir.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858



PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: ¹Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord, O my soul!

People: ²I will praise the Lord
as long as I live; I will sing praises
to my God while I have being.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: ³Put not your trust in princes,
in mortals, in whom there is no help.

People: ⁴Their breath departs,
they return to the earth; on that
very day their plans perish.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: ⁵Happy are those whose help is
in the God of Jacob...

People: whose hope is in the Lord,
their God...

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: ⁶who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them...

People: who keeps faith for ever; ⁷who
executes justice for the oppressed; who
gives food to the hungry.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: The Lord sets
the prisoners free...

People: ⁸the Lord opens
the eyes of the blind.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: The Lord lifts up
those who are bowed down...

People: the Lord loves the righteous.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: ⁹The Lord watches over the
sojourners...

People: and upholds the widow
and the orphan; but the Lord brings
the way of the wicked to ruin.

PSALM READING

Psalm 146 UMH 858

Leader: ¹⁰The Lord will reign
for ever, your God, O Zion, from
generation to generation.

People: Praise the Lord!

Luke 4: 16- 21

New Living Translation


When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come." He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. Then he began to speak to them. "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!"

Glory Be to the Father

70

WORDS: Lesser Doxology, 3rd-4th cent.



**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.

TODAY'S MESSAGE

“To Be Continued”



“Away in a Manger” UMH 217

WORDS: Anonymous MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.



“Away in a Manger” UMH 217

WORDS: Anonymous MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

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

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

“Away in a Manger” UMH 217

WORDS: Anonymous MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

The cattle are lowing,
the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus,
no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus,
look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle
till morning is nigh.

“Away in a Manger” UMH 217

WORDS: Anonymous MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

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.

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

UMH 882



I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven
and earth.

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

UMH 882



I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

UMH 882



On the third day he
rose again; he
ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right
hand of the Father,
and will come again to
judge the living and
the dead.

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

UMH 882



I believe in the Holy
Spirit, the holy
catholic church, the
communion of saints,
the forgiveness of
sins, the resurrection
of the body, and the
life everlasting.
Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE





Pastoral Prayer

Tithes and Offerings

worship
through
giving



“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” UMH 94

WORDS: Thomas Ken, 1674; adapted by Gilbert H. Viera, 1978

MUSIC: Geistliche Kirchengesange, 1623; harmonized by Ralph Vaughn Williams, 1906

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Offertory Prayer



The Lord's Prayer

UMH 895

**Our Father, who art in
heaven, hallowed be thy
name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will
be done on earth as it is in
heaven.**



The Lord's Prayer

UMH 895

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.



The Lord's Prayer

UMH 895

**And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us
from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and
the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**



Let There Be Peace on Earth

431

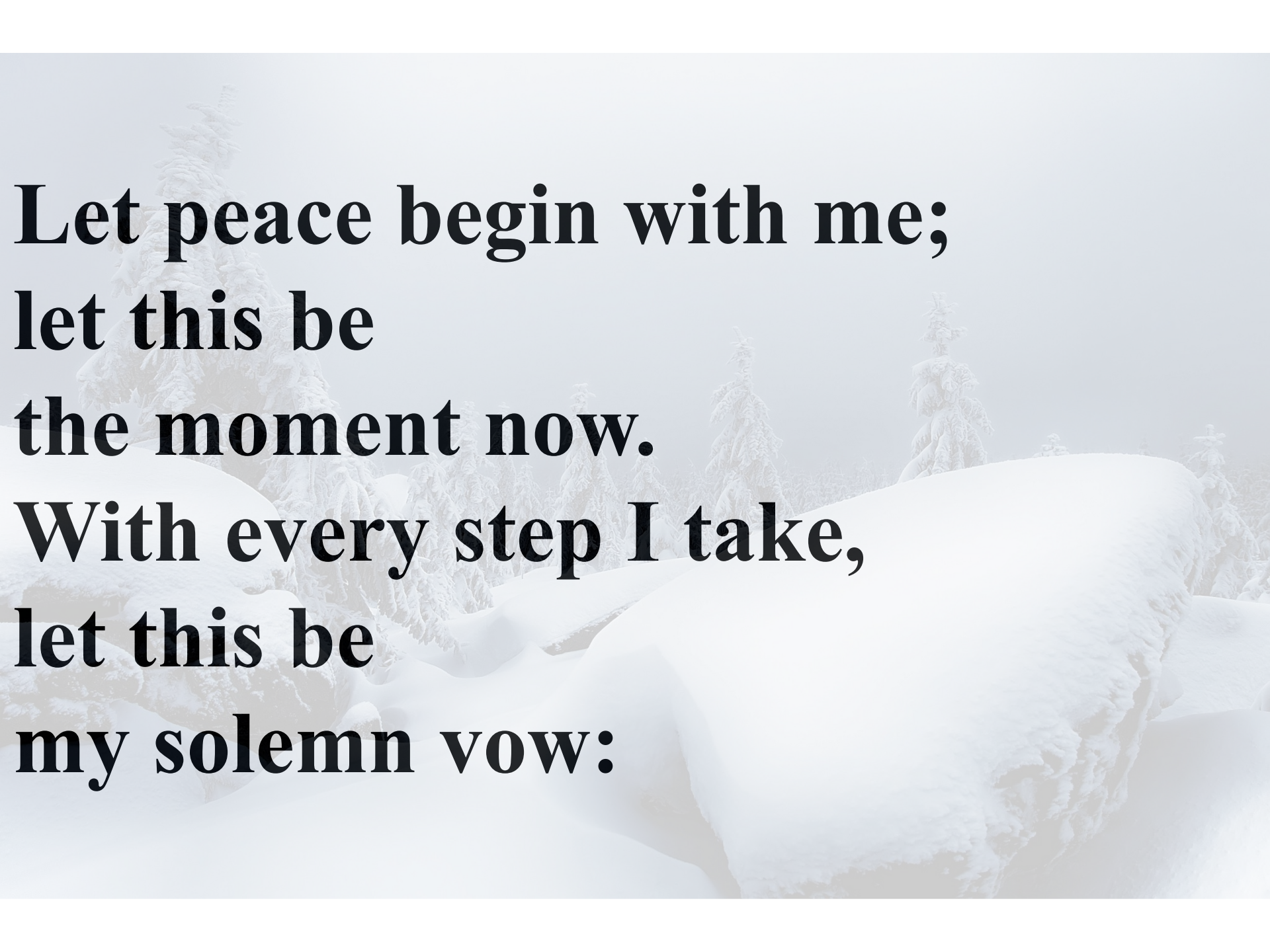
WORDS: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

**Let there be peace on earth,
and let it begin with me;
let there be peace on earth,
the peace that was
meant to be.**

A serene winter scene featuring a dense forest of evergreen trees heavily laden with snow. The ground is a smooth, undulating expanse of white snow, with some trees in the foreground appearing as soft, snow-covered mounds. The background is a hazy, light blue-grey, suggesting a misty or overcast day. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and quiet.

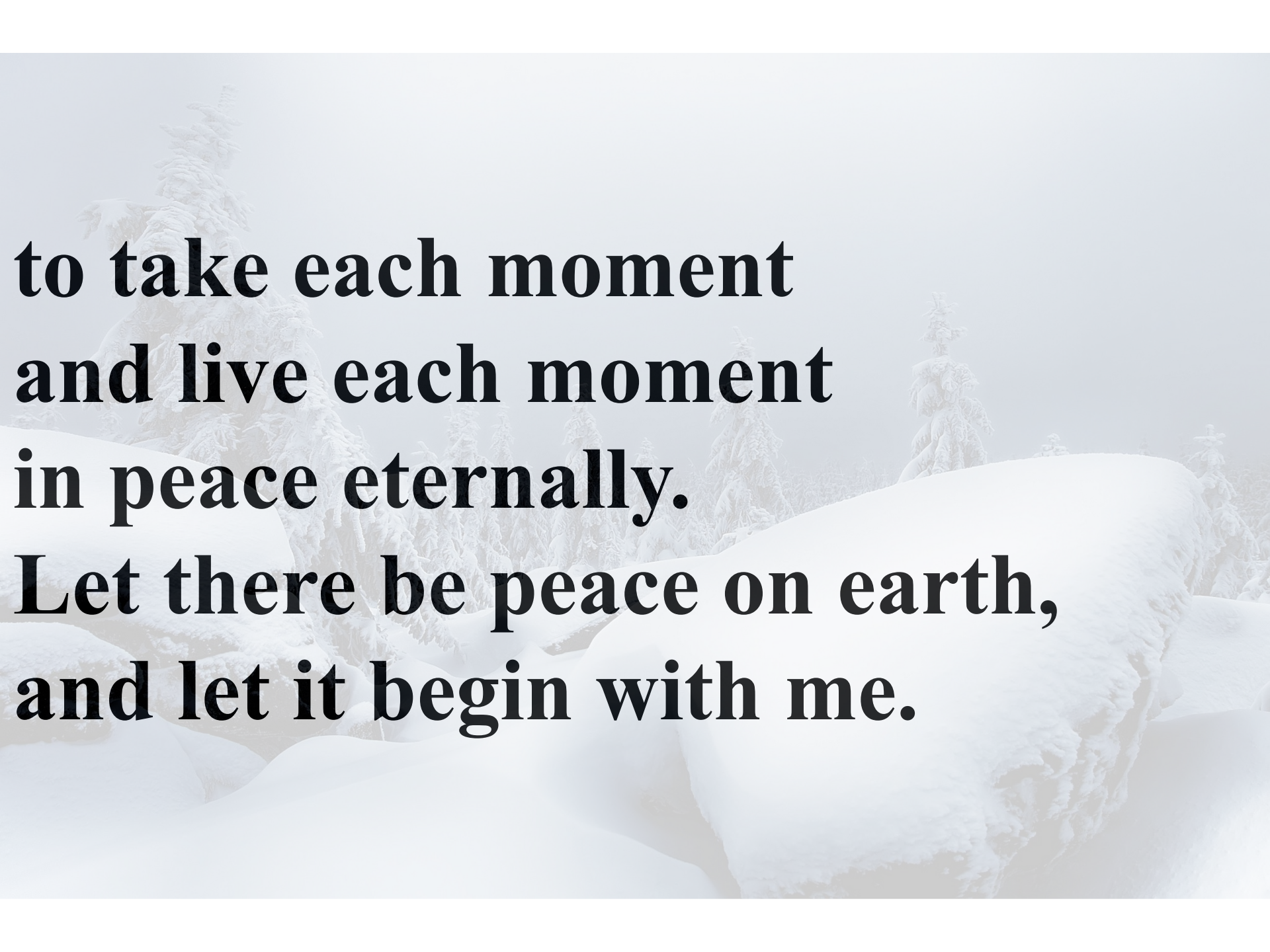
**With God our creator,
children all are we.**

**Let us walk
with each other
in perfect harmony.**

A serene winter landscape with snow-covered evergreen trees and a soft, hazy sky. The scene is peaceful and quiet, with the snow-covered ground and trees creating a sense of stillness. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image, in a bold, black, serif font.

**Let peace begin with me;
let this be
the moment now.**

**With every step I take,
let this be
my solemn vow:**

A serene winter landscape with snow-covered evergreen trees and rolling hills under a soft, overcast sky. The scene is peaceful and quiet, with the white snow contrasting against the dark green of the trees.

**to take each moment
and live each moment
in peace eternally.**

**Let there be peace on earth,
and let it begin with me.**

“Awesome God” TFWS 2040

WORDS and MUSIC: Rich Mullins, 1988

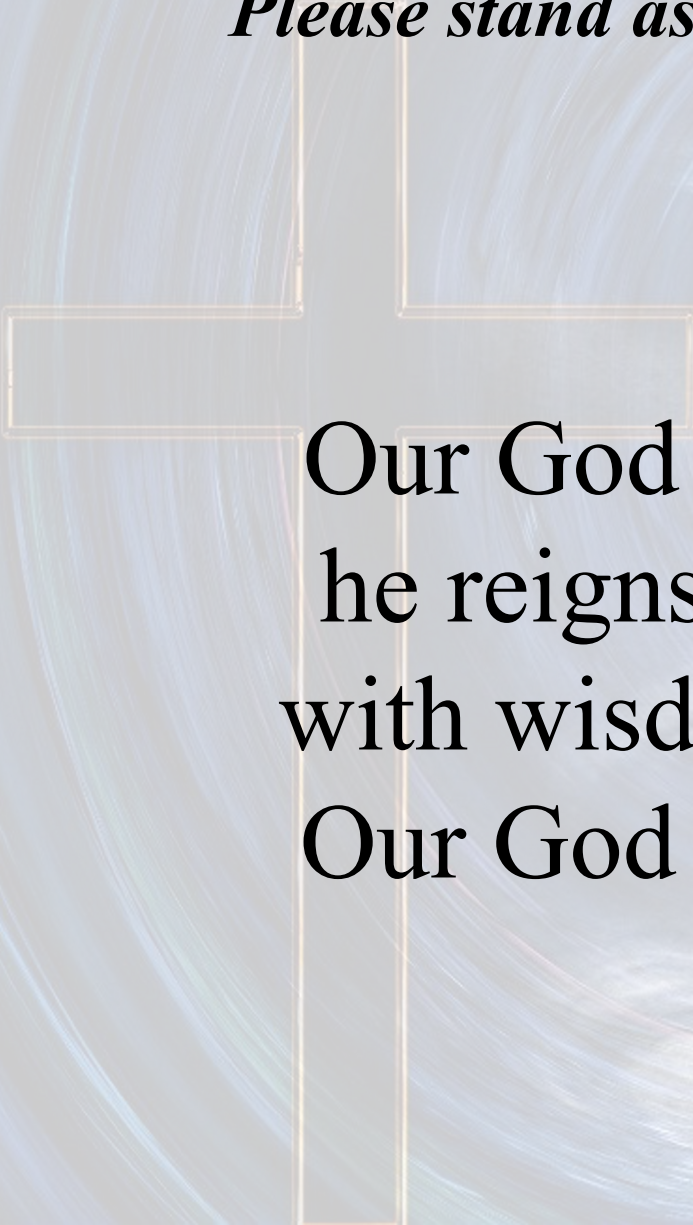
Please stand as you are able and comfortable.



“Awesome God” TFWS 2040

WORDS and MUSIC: Rich Mullins, 1988

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.



Our God is an awesome God;
he reigns from heaven above
with wisdom, power, and love.
Our God is an awesome God!

“Awesome God” TFWS 2040

WORDS and MUSIC: Rich Mullins, 1988

Please stand as you are able and comfortable.

Our God is an awesome God;
he reigns from heaven above
with wisdom, power, and love.
Our God is an awesome God!
Our God is an awesome God!
Our God is an awesome God!

Questions for Reflection

What have learned from today's message?

BLESSING AND BENEDICTION



Love. Grow. Serve.

This service has ended, and now
your service in the world begins!

Rectortown United Methodist Church

**serving God with
Prayer, Action, and Love
through Service.**