

# Order of Worship

## *Our Spirit Waits*

December 24, 2023 10:00 AM

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Welcome to this time of worship, as we gather in the name of Jesus Christ.

Please fill out the red attendance pad located at the end of each pew.

*\* At this sign you are invited to rise in body or spirit.*

**Prelude**

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

Wilbur Held

Annelisa Crabtree, organ

**Welcome**

Rev. Nilse Furtado-Gilliam

### **Lighting of the Advent Wreath - The Candle of Love**

Leader: When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" (Luke 1:34) And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth,

*"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name (Luke 1:46-49)."*

We, like Mary, hear God's call to be part of making God's dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, "How can this be? I am only..." Yet, like Mary, the "onlys" that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God's love transforms us into bearers of good news.

**People: We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.**

Leader: We light these candles as signs of our surprising hope, our just peace, our persistent joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives.

**People: Amen.**

**Hymn**

**Once in Royal David's City**

UMH 250

## Prayer of Confession

Leader: O Holy God of Promise,  
we so often place our trust in the things we can see,  
and touch, and easily believe.

**People: But you did not ask us to believe what is easy,  
you have asked us to believe what is true!**

Leader: Forgive us, Holy One, when we doubt the ways you work.

**People: Forgive us when we find it hard to believe an ancient story.**

Leader: Forgive us when we question how you chose to enter the world,  
born as one of us.

**People: Forgive our lack of faith and belief  
in ways which seem so impossible to believe.**

Leader: Help us to look in faith, open our belief, and set aside our doubts  
that you sent your Son, born of a virgin –  
the one who has come to set us all free.

**People: We offer these prayers in the name of your Son,  
Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.**

## Words of Forgiveness

Rev. Tracy McNeil Wines

Leader: In this very moment,  
God comes to us,  
bringing hope,  
bringing forgiveness,  
bringing grace as freely offered gifts to us.

**People: 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.**

## Anthem

**God with Us**  
Praise Band

Jason Ingram/Leslie Jordan

## Children's Message

### Scripture

**Luke 1:26-38**

The word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

**The Role of a Lifetime**

Rev. Wines

**Offering**

*You are invited to make your offering to support the ministry and mission of Clarendon UMC.*

*You may text to give at 84321 or go to the Online Worship page of our website  
and click "Make your online offering."*

**Sending Forth**

Rev. Wines

**Hymn**

**Mary's Boy Child**

**Benediction**

Rev. Wines

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*Prayer of Confession written by Rev. Jan Brooks, Cottonwood Falls Presbyterian Church., Words of  
Forgiveness adapted from words written by Thom Shuman and posted on Lectionary Liturgies.  
<http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.ca/>*

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*"Mary's Boy Child" words and music by Jester Hairston ©1956 Schumann Music (a division of Bourne Co.)  
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