

# THE WAY OF PEACE

ADVENT 2024



SAINT LUKE'S  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 15, 2024 10:30 am



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## In Preparation for Worship

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” – Luke 1:78-79

### Prelude

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Saint Luke's Children

## Welcome and Announcements

### Lighting of the Advent Candle

The O'Gara Family

### Opening Hymn\* 96

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

## Prayer of Confession\*

Holy God,  
We want a faith that feels like more than words,  
but we lack your power to embody pure goodness.  
We hear your call to serve others yet feel too worn out to make the food.  
We hunger to taste justice but fear the burning spice of the meal.  
We want our place at your table but resist sitting beside a stranger.  
We have lost our appetites for mere thoughts and prayers,  
but we fail to match our intentions to our actions.  
Forgive us and restore us with the healing wholeness of your presence.  
Hear now the silent prayers of our hearts...  
(a moment of silence is kept for personal prayers)

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayers. Amen.

## Assurance of Forgiveness\*

### Song of Praise\*

Gloria

*Chancel Choir:* Glory to God in the highest! Sing glory to God! Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth!

*All:* Glory to God in the highest! Sing glory to God! Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth!

## Prayer for Illumination

### Scripture Reading

Luke 1:67-79

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

### Tell Us Our Story—Presentation of Chrismons

Catherine Anne Thomas

*Children are welcome to come forward for Tell Us Our Story. After Tell Us Our Story, parents will walk children across courtyard to Rm 117 (3 and under) and Rm 119 (PreK and K). 1st through 5th graders will gather in the narthex and walk with leaders to 252Kids and 252Preteen. Parents will pick up from The Dock and The Lighthouse. Of course, all children are always welcome to remain in worship with their families.*

### Anthem

Lo, How a Rose  
arr. Greg Scheer

Chancel Choir  
with Lindsey Sanders, soloist

Lo, how a Rose, e'er blooming,  
from tender stem hath sprung,  
Of Jesse's lineage coming as seers  
of old have sung;  
It came, a blossom bright, amid  
the cold of winter

When half spent was the night.  
O Flower, whose fragrance tender  
with sweetness fills the air,  
Dispel in glorious splendor the  
darkness everywhere;  
True man, yet very God, from sin  
and death now save us  
And share our every load.

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 to us a Savior  
When half spent was the night.

### Sermon

To Guide Our Feet

David Lower

### Affirmation of Faith

from A Sanctified Art

We believe in a God who knows our names, who counts the hairs on our heads, and carries the dreams in our hearts.

We believe that God's fingerprints are all over creation, and that God is forever speaking to us in a million different ways.

We believe that awe and wonder, goosebumps and laughter, telling stories and paying attention, are all ways that we can say thank you to our creating, sustaining, and loving God.

Therefore we commit ourselves to moving through this world with eyes wide open, with porous hearts, and grateful spirits.

We commit ourselves to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude, trusting that these things will forever draw us deeper into God's loving arms.

We believe. We stand in awe. Thanks be to God!

### 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.

## Moment for Joy Offering

David King

### The Offering

Who Would Think That What Was Needed

Chancel Choir

*Who would think that what was needed  
to transform and save the earth  
might not be a plan or army,  
proud in purpose, proved in worth?  
Who would think, despite derision,  
that a child should lead the way?  
God surprises earth with heaven,  
coming here on Christmas Day.*

*Shepherds watch and wise men wonder;  
monarchs scorn and angels sing;  
such a place as none would reckon  
hosts a holy helpless thing.  
Stable beasts and by-passed strangers  
watch a baby laid in hay;  
God surprises earth with heaven,  
coming here on Christmas Day.*

*Centuries of skill and science  
span the past from which we move,  
yet experience questions whether,  
with such progress, we improve.  
While the human lot we ponder,  
lest our hopes and humor fray,  
God surprises earth with heaven,  
coming here on Christmas Day.*

*All are invited to participate in support of God's work at Saint Luke's, in one of three ways:*

*1) Giving envelopes, available in each pew, may be placed inside the Friendship Pads or in the offering plate as they are passed.*

*2) Give online via [slpres.org/giving](https://slpres.org/giving),*

*3) Send a text message to 73256, starting with the keyword GIVETOSLPRES followed by the amount.*

### Closing Hymn\* 107

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

### Benediction\*

### Choral Amen\*

### Postlude\*

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus  
*arr. Jerry Westenkuehler*

### Please join us in the church lobby for fellowship and conversation!

For the latest Saint Luke's news and information, go to [slpres.org](https://slpres.org).

If you would like to share prayer concerns, or know someone who would (with their permission), you may submit prayer requests for inclusion in the Prayer Guide by sending them to [prayerrequest@slpres.org](mailto:prayerrequest@slpres.org).

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