

**Christmas Eve**  
**Little Prairie United Methodist Church**  
**December 24, 2025, 4:30 pm**



***Love is Born***

2980 130<sup>th</sup> ST E, Dundas, MN 55019  
507.663-6150  
[www.littleprairieumc.org](http://www.littleprairieumc.org)

**Our vision:**

Creating a welcoming community that worships well, disciples well and serves well;  
transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

**WELCOME AND GATHERING**

**Gathering Music**      *"The Coventry Carol" Traditional*

*"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" by Felix Mendelssohn & Chas. Wesley*

*"O Come, All Ye Faithful" by John Reading*

*Played by Irie French, Trombone, Tom Hollenhorst, Euphonium, & Luann Alderks, Piano*

**Prelude**      *"O Holy Night" by Adolphe Charles Adam arr. by Mark Hayes*

*Luann Alderks, Piano*

**Welcome**

*Pastor Penny Bonsell*

**Call to Worship**

Beloved, on this evening we gather to enliven the story once again of God who came to dwell among us as a vulnerable baby.

**We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.**

We remember the stable, the animals, and the manger that witnessed the arrival of Emmanuel, God with us.

**We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.**

We recall the angels who announced the Messiah's birth to the shepherds, those most unlikely witnesses of God's glory.

**We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.**

In our remembering and enlivening, we gather today as people of God's promise, witnesses to God's glorious presence among us in the vulnerable, forgotten, and tucked away places of the world.

**We gather to rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits, the day that has already come and will yet be. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

*Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, June 2025.*

**Opening Hymn**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem (UMH #230, vs. 1,2 &4)*

*Introduction Jeff Sartor, Performed by the All Men's Choir of Little Prairie*

**The Advent Wreath - Lighting of the Christ Candle**

*Keilen//Larson Family*

First Reader: This evening, we gather to remember with the prophet Isaiah: For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this (Isaiah 9:6-7).

**All: We gather to once again bask in the glory that visited a stable and a manger, shepherds watching their flocks, and a young couple cradling the newborn Messiah.**

Second Reader: We light the Christ candle as a sign of the glory that came among us in unexpected places and to unexpected people, that we may be people who seek and follow the glory of the Christ child here and now.

**Special Music** *The Little Drummer Boy"/"Peace on Earth" by Ian Fraser, Henry Onorati, Larry Grossman, Katherine K. Davis, Harry Simeone & Alan Kohan  
Sung by Jef Olson and Larry Alderks*

## Opening Prayer

We have waited for a long time for your hope, your joy, your love to shine in the darkness of this world, Almighty God. Even now, in our gathering here, we await you. In our hearts, we still hope that your light will blaze forth, banishing the shadows of this world and guiding all the people back to you.

**Yet you did not come into this world in a show of power and glory. You did not shine forth for all of creation to behold. A tiny spark –a newborn baby, visible to parents and curious animals. A host of angels –away from the populated areas, singing to migrant workers. A sparkling star –guiding foreigners to see what neighbors could not.**

Open our hearts, merciful God, to the sparks of your presence still in this world. Open our eyes, that we might behold your presence in the least likely of places, and among the least likely of people.

**God with us, kindle your spark within us, that together we may shine forth your light, we might banish the shadows of this world, we might be the continuation of the Christmas miracle: Emmanuel is in this world, God is with us, now and evermore. Amen.**

*Written by Rev. Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, pastor at First Church Congregational in Rochester, NH. Reposted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2018/12/christmas-opening-prayer.html>.*

**Hymn**

*O Come All Ye Faithful (UMH #234, vs. 1, 3 & 6)*

***All***

## THE WORD

### Scripture and Carols

#### **Luke 2:1-5**

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. (Luke 2:1-20)

**Hymn**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (UMH #211, vs. 1 & 2)*

***All***

#### **Luke 2:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Hymn**

*Away in the Manger (UMH #217, vs. 1&3)*

*All*

**Luke 2:8-11**

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

**Hymn**

*Joy to the World (UMH #246, vs. 1, 2 & 4)*

*All*

**Luke 2:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

**Hymn**

*Angels We Have Heard on High (UMH #238 vs. 1-3)*

*All*

**Luke 2:15-18**

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

**Hymn**

*The First Noel (UMH #245 v. 1&2)*

*All*

**Luke 2:19-20**

<sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**Hymn**

*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (UMH #240 vs. 1&2)*

*All*

## **Matthew 1:1-2, 9-11**

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>9</sup> They set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

**Hymn**

*What Child Is This (UMH #219 v.1&3)*

*All*

**Message**

*Love is Born*

*Pastor Penny Bonsell*

## **THE RESPONSE**

**Offering:**

*"Pacem" Choral Setting by Patrick M. Liebergen  
Sung by The Little Prairie Choir, Flute: Kylie Gray*

## **Prayers of the People & Prayers of Thanksgiving**

We have waited for your hope, your joy, your love to shine in the darkness of this world, Almighty God. Even now, in our gathering here, we await you. In our hearts, we still hope that your light will blaze forth, banishing the darkness of this world and guiding all the people back to you.

**Yet you did not come into this world in a show of power and glory, yet, as a tiny spark –a newborn baby, visible to parents and curious animals in a stable.**

Open our hearts, merciful God, to the sparks of your presence still in this world, that we might behold your presence in the least likely of places, and among the least likely of people.

**God with us, kindle your spark within us, that together we may shine forth your light in the midst of shadows in this world. May we be the continuation of the Christmas miracle: Emmanuel is in this world, God is with us, now and evermore. Amen.**

**Special Music**

*"Light in the Stable" Sung by Jeff Sator*

And the prayer Christ gives us . . . .

**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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory forever. Amen.**

**Lighting of Candles:** *"Silent Night, Holy Night"*  
*Mel Henrichs, Hammered Dulcimer*

**Hymn:** *Silent Night, Holy Night (UMH #239)* *All*

## **SENDING**

People of the promise, go now to carry the story and the glory of all you have witnessed, that the world might know that good news has come to dwell among us now and forever.  
**Go in love, joy, and peace and hope. Merry Christmas! Shalom! Amen.**

**Postlude:** *"Silent Night" by Franz Gruber arr. Mark Hayes* *Luann Alderks, piano*

## **INFORMATION**

Pastor: Penny Bonsell, Administrator: Sara French, Music Director and pianist: Luann Alderks, Certified Lay Minister and Youth Director: Theresa Siemers, assistants Maddy Heinz-Kline and Kory Larson, Technology Administrator: Jesse Steed, Admin Council Chair: Kevin Larson, Admin Secretary: Sue Rollins, SPRC Chair: Deb Little, Treasurer: Lori Noreen, Finance Committee Co-Chairs: Kevin Larson and Mel Henrichs, Trustees Chair: Tom Stowe, Missions and Lay Servant: Karen Nelson, Soundboard Technician: Tom Hollenhorst

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Sundays, Worship at 9:30 am**

**Tuesdays, 8:30 am:** Breakfast Club, at L&M

**Wednesdays, 9-10:30 am:** Pastor Penny is at James Gang coffee shop

**Saturdays 9-11 am** Soul Sisters (see Theresa for details)

We are providing an on-going donation bin for CACand Wallflower House in our entrance way.

See our website for more details at [www.littleprairieumc.org](http://www.littleprairieumc.org).



**Website**



**Online Giving**