

Calvary Church

A Reconciling Congregation



“For ... as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.”

- Isaiah 61:11

December 31, 2023

1st Sunday after Christmas

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

GATHERING

Gathering Song: “Joy to the World” (*tune: G.F. Handel / lyrics: Isaac Watts / arr. by Mervyn Warren / perf. by Whitney Houston, with the Georgia Mass Choir*)

Welcome & Announcements

(also available at allmeansall.org/announcements)

- **Story Circles:** allmeansall.org/story-circles
 - email Amy to sign up: aemmettrardin@gmail.com
- **Adult Ed Book Study:** *Poverty, by America*
 - virtual Lenten study to begin week of Feb 18 – timing TBD by participants
 - allmeansall.org/adult-ed
- **Bible Study:** taking book/theme suggestions!
 - Spring 2024 – timing TBD by participants
 - allmeansall.org/bible-study
- **Previous sermons:** allmeansall.org/sermons
- **Previous bulletins:** allmeansall.org/bulletins

Calendar

Today, Dec 31, 6 & 10 pm: Faith Calls at Midnight – An Interfaith Watch Night Service of Lament, Hope and Action (*virtual / Repairers of the Breach, et al*)

- breachrepairers.org/livestream

Tuesday, Jan 2, 12-1 pm: Midweek Prayer (*virtual*)

- allmeansall.org/midweek-prayer

Wednesday, Jan 3, 7:30-8:30ish pm: Spirituality on Tap

- Gojjo / 4540 Baltimore Ave
- allmeansall.org/spirituality-on-tap

Sunday, Jan 7: Epiphany Sunday

- **11:15 am-12:45 pm:** Hybrid Worship, with Communion
- **8-9 pm:** Online Advent/Christmas Retreat – Spiritual Reflection Group (*virtual*)
 - allmeansall.org/spiritual-reflection-group

Thursday, Jan 11, 7-8:30 pm: POWER W/SW Cluster *(virtual)*

Sunday, Jan 14

- **11:15 am-12:45 pm:** Hybrid Worship
 - guest preacher: Rev. David Brown
- **1-2ish pm:** 2nd Sunday Potluck

Visiting With Us?

We're glad you're here, for whatever reason you chose to join us! We strive to make our worship space (in-person and virtual) as welcoming and accommodating of different needs as possible. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact Pastor Tim.

Calvary Email List

If you're not on the Calvary email list and want to be, or think you are but aren't seeing emails from us, please contact the church office or sign up online. Our **Calvary Connections e-newsletter** goes out every Thursday night.

CENTERING & CONNECTING

Breathing Our Way In / Breath Prayer

Singing Our Way In: "Love Has Come" (*tune: trad. French carol / lyrics: Ken Bible*)

Love has come, a light in the darkness!

Love explodes in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;

hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!

Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come share in the wonder.

Love is God now asleep in the hay.

See the glow in the eyes of his mother;

what is the name her heart is saying?

Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers.

Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Call to Worship *(Susan Derber – adapted)*

One: At the threshold of a new year, we come to welcome hope for a new world. Let the darkness lift, to welcome a dawn of plenty –

ALL: with enough for everyone and every living thing, with people ready to share.

One: Let the day begin, with new energy for the struggle

ALL: to protect our children, to care for the vulnerable, to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

One: Let the light shine, to open a path to safety

ALL: for all who are seeking home and longing for life.

One: Let the sun rise on new talks and new resolve

ALL: to end the bombing and the terror, and to find just and peaceful solutions that will last.

One: At the threshold of a new year, we come to assert our resilience and practice active hope, to welcome a new world.

ALL: We come, following the One born among shepherds and angels, the One whose holy light shows us the Way. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Opening Song: “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” *(UMH #251, African American spiritual – adapted)*

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. *(refrain)*

The shepherds feared and trembled,
when lo! above the earth,
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed (dear Jesus') birth. *(refrain)*

Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God (made Love incarnate)
that blessed Christmas morn. *(refrain)*

Offering Ourselves & Our Gifts / Passing the Peace

One: The peace of God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

GROUNDING

Community Prayer *(Eric Milner White – adapted)*

Eternal God, you call us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through challenges unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go but only that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us. May your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Silent Prayer

Special Music

Scripture Lesson: Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the HOLY ONE, my whole being shall exult in my God; for God has clothed me with the garments of salvation, God has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

2:1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. **2** The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the HOLY ONE will give. **3** You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the HOLY ONE, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Choral Alleluia

Scripture Lesson: Luke 2:15-21

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 God has made known to us." **16** So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. **17** When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; **18** and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **19** But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. **20** The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. **21** After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

One: The word of God for the people of God.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Choral Alleluia

A Word on the Israel-Hamas War

Carol Sing

SHARING

Prayers of the People / Joys & Concerns

"Thanks be to God" or "God, hear our prayer"

Sung Response (*tune: UMH #294, Hugh Wilson / lyrics: John Pritchard*)

O coming Christ, to you we pray,
to you hearts open wide.
Your justice bring, to wounds healing;
in joy let all abide.

ENGAGING

Closing Song: "This Little Light of Mine" (*AAHH #549, African American spiritual*)

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, no! ...

Everywhere I go ...

All through the night ...

Benediction

Singing Our Way Out: "Let the Church Say Amen" (*Andraé Crouch*)

Let the church say, "Amen" (*repeat*)
God has spoken, let the church say, "Amen"

Calvary United Methodist Church

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Norris Person (accompanist): music@allmeansall.org