

Seven O'Clock
ORDER FOR WORSHIP

*"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"
~ Luke 2:14*

MUSIC OF THE SEASON Lynn Meeks, Organist
(A Time to Quietly Prepare Our Hearts and Minds for Worship)

WELCOME Rev. Will Waller

OPENING VOLUNTARY *Birthday of the King* Emily Meeks-Littley, Trumpet

ACOLYTE MINISTRY

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Lindsey Jenkins, Liturgist

L: Welcome to this night, a celebration like no other.

P: This is the night of the Holy Birth!

L: Let the love of Jesus be born in your hearts and spirits.

P: Open our hearts to receive this blessed gift, Loving God.

L: Rejoice, good friends, the Good News is here!

P: Christ our Savior is Born! Hallelujah! Amen.

***LIFTING OUR VOICES IN SONG** *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* No. 240

OFFERTORY *In the Bleak Midwinter* Katie Meeks, Flute

***THE DOXOLOGY** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* No. 94

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!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GIFT OF SONG *Mary, Did You Know?—Larson* Dea McClure, Katie Meeks/Flute Duet

LIFTING OUR VOICES IN PRAYER

CALL TO PRAYER *Away in a Manger* No. 217

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.

PASTORAL PRAYER**SERMON**

Rev. Waller

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

L: Tonight, we light the final candle in our advent wreath. We've anticipated Hope, welcomed Peace, joined in Joy, and been lavished in Love. On this Holy Night, we light the Christ Candle which shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

P: In Jesus Christ, our hope is fulfilled; our love is consummated; our joy is complete; and our peace is sealed.

L: Joy to the world, the Lord is come,

P: Let earth receive her king! Hallelujah! Amen!

GIFT OF SONG*O Holy Night*

Solo

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

No. 15-16

(At the direction of the ushers, you're invited to come forward to partake in Holy Communion by intinction. After receiving a piece of bread, please place it in the chalice of juice and eat it.

A gluten-free station is located at the center of the Communion Rail. Christmas hymns are to be sung during Communion and are found on your bulletin insert.)

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.

SCRIPTURE

John 3:14-21

CAROL OF LIGHTSilent Night, Holy Night*

See Insert

***SPREADING THE LIGHT**

(For those candles that are to be lit, bend your candle towards theirs and partake of their light. For those with small children, screw the "flame" part of the candle to turn it on. As you sing, lift the Light of Christ high. As you depart, walk out with your lit candle, a visible representation of your call to be the Light of the World in the world.)

GLORIOUS BENEDICTIONJoy to the World (vs. 1)*

No. 246

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven
and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Welcome to Christmas Eve at Rocky Mount United Methodist. God has called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light. Because of Jesus, we give.

Our offering tonight goes fully to Stepping Stone Mission here in Rocky Mount. Globally, nationally, and locally, everyone has been feeling the crunch of inflation this year, with food prices skyrocketing. Therefore, the work of Stepping Stone is even more critical. In order to meet the hunger needs of the clients who come for a daily hot meal, we are giving all of tonight's offering to our ministry partner, Stepping Stone. Rocky Mount UMC has been a proud supporter and active participant with Stepping Stone for decades. Servants from RMUMC go twice a month to feed local residents. The mission of Stepping Stone is:

- To reach out to those in need.
- To provide food to those who are unable to obtain such provisions for themselves.
- To refer persons in need to additional resources in the community.
- To spread and share the knowledge of Jesus Christ and God's love for all people.

The mission bullet points align with our own mission: "to know Jesus and share His love."

May God bless you in this New Year and may God continue to bless the ministry of Stepping Stone Mission.

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Will Waller, Pastor
Lynn M. Meeks, Director of Music/Diaconal Minister
Jeanne Banks, Pianist
Valerie Latimer, Administrative Assistant
Jennifer Ardis, Nursery Attendant
Rebecca Dillon, Children's Church Coordinator
Brad Hodges, Custodian
Lindsey Jenkins, Liturgist
Miles Gibson and Silas Gibson, Acolytes
Rodney and Pat Cundiff, Ushers
Bobby and Glenda Thompson, Greeters

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever circling years shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

What Child Is This

What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the
mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains. Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing; come, adore
on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields
as they lay; in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's
night that was so deep. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright round yon virgin mother
and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep
in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight; glories stream from
heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia! Christ the Savior is born, Christ
the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light; radiant beams from
thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us
sing, Alleluia to our King; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!