

ORDER OF SERVICE

December 15, 2024 • 10:00 AM • Third Sunday of Advent



PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God of hope, you call us from the exile of sin with the good news of restoration; you build a highway through the wilderness; you come to us and bring us home. Comfort us with the expectation of your saving power, made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRELUDE "Coventry Carol" Linda Clugston, *organ* & Shelley Ockwell, *piano*

INTROIT "The Holly and the Ivy" Chancel Bell Choir

WELCOME AND GREETING Neil Trainer

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Mary McGrady & David McGrady

SONGS OF PRAISE "O Come, All Ye Faithful" #41, vv. 1, 3
"It Came upon the Midnight Clear" #38, vv. 1-4

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Emily Mitchell

Prince of Peace, your prophets of old called upon the people to prepare for your coming.

Like them, we have not kept watch for you.

We have occupied ourselves with our own concerns. We have not waited to find your will for us.

We have not noticed the needs of the people around us.

We have not acknowledged the love that has been shown to us.

Forgive us for choosing to walk in darkness rather than in the light of your Presence.

Help us to wait to know your will. Help us to look out for the needs of others.

Help us to work and watch for your coming, even now as we sit and pray in silence.

(silence for personal prayer and reflection)

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 sins,

as we forgive those who sin 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.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

DOXOLOGY

BLESSING & DISMISSAL TO SUNDAY LIFT

OFFERING "Christmas Carol Fest III" Chancel Bell Choir

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 1:1-17 NIV Gretchen Scheumann

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON "Jesus: Son of Exile" Neil Trainer

SONG OF RESPONSE "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" Art Nelson & Jamie Kang, *trumpets*

PASTORAL PRAYER Emily Mitchell

SONG OF SENDING "How Great Our Joy"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Angels We Have Heard On High" Linda Clugston, *organ* & Shelley Ockwell, *piano*



Longest Night Service Tonight

// Join us for worship at 7 pm

All are welcome this evening for our annual Longest Night Service. We'll have selected readings, instrumental music, and time for contemplation and prayer. For some, this season reminds us of the darkness in our own lives and in the world. During the service, we will bring our whole selves to God and be reminded of the love and faithfulness of the God who comes near to us in Jesus and who is with us still today.

This service is in-person only; it will not be live-streamed.

Messy Middle Christmas Caroling

// Wednesday Evening at Crista

Join us for caroling at Crista on Wednesday, December 18; all ages are welcome. We'll begin at the upper campus – the memory care and assisted living center – at 4:45 pm; and then move to the lower campus, Cristwood Park, at 5:30 pm, for more singing. Stay for hot cocoa at the end. You may participate in either caroling event, or both of them! Contact [Pastor Emily](#) for more information.

"Messy Christmas" a Success

// Another great time together!

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers who helped put on "Messy Christmas" on Wednesday!

Join us for the first Messy Church of 2025 on January 8th from 5:30 to 7 pm in the Activity Center, and please continue to pray for God's favor on our all-ages worshiping community.



Below is a repeat from the Stories of Faith column from the Friday, December 2, 2022 email.

Waiting for Christmas

// by Neil Trainer

When I was about 10 years old, I begged my parents for Christmas lights to put on our house. They finally caved and bought one single string of colored outdoor lights. Just as important, they let me climb on the roof over our porch to hang them! My grandparents had promised to come for the holidays, so I was eager to surprise them with our new lights.

When the night of their arrival came, I left the porch dark and waited with my face pressed against the front window looking for headlights. Each car that wasn't theirs left me disappointed. But when they finally arrived, I ran to the light switch by the front door and waited impatiently. As they slowly came up the stairs with their suitcases, I flipped on the lights, flung open the door, and shouted, "Merry Christmas!"

My waiting had begun with remembering their promise, and my waiting was satisfied by responding to their presence. I think of that often when I reflect on the meaning of Advent. Advent is a season of waiting. We're not just waiting for Christmas Day. We are also waiting for Christ to come again.

I want to use these days to remember God's promises, including those not yet fully realized: promises of healing, joy, hope, reconciliation, and more.

I need to remember that from my childlike view, God can move even slower than my grandparents did. I also want to recognize and respond when I see that God is already present now. Jesus, the light of the world, opens the door for us to enter God's presence. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. With me. With you.

Advent Devotionals Available

// Pick one up at the Welcome Desk

There are still a dozen copies of Frontier Fellowship's Advent devotional, *Grace to Come*, available at the Welcome Desk! Stop by and pick one up the next time you're in church.



Happy Birthday!

- Promise Rose Juengel.....Dec 15
- Kelley NeubauerDec 15
- Connie GraebnerDec 16
- John Claus.....Dec 20
- Kristi TrainerDec 20
- Al LutzDec 22
- Yoko WeaverDec 25
- Josh Logan.....Dec 27
- Ruth ParkDec 27
- Scott Christie.....Dec 28
- Johnny LangenheimDec 28
- Ethan WeschlerDec 29
- Lenore ZissermannDec 29



Upcoming Events

- Longest Night svc, 7 pm .. Tonight!
- Caroling at Crista,
 - 4:45 pm and 5:30 pmDec 18
- Choir Rehearsal, 7:15 pm....Dec 18
- Paper Bag Pageant.....Dec 22
- Christmas Eve svc, 7 pm....Dec 24
- Messy Church, 5:30 pmJan 08
- The Sanctuary Course*,
 - 11:30 am Jan 12