



Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Service for the Lord's Day
December 17, 2023



WELCOME!

Whether you are a member or a visitor, worshiping with us in-person or online, you are welcome here.

Information about our church is found in the narthex or online: eastminsterchurch.org. At the welcome table or on our website, you can sign up for our weekly emails.

Masks are available at the welcome table for those who would like to wear them.

Children are always welcome in worship at Eastminster. Your child can sit with you in the pew or sit in the space created for children at the front of the sanctuary.

Hymn books and Bibles can be found under the pews.

This is a livestream worship service, and the camera and microphones are on the whole time. While the camera is most often focused on the front of the sanctuary, there is a chance that you will be captured on camera.



** Congregation is invited to rise in body or in spirit.
Bold text is read or sung by the congregation.*

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY
3rd Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

10:00 a.m.

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Opening Video

***Call to Worship**

L. Our God can part the sea.

*P. God can bring water from a rock,
and provide bread in the desert.*

L. Our God can walk on water.

*P. God can heal the sick,
and turn water into wine.*

L. Our God sets the stars in the sky.

*P. God hears our voice when we cry,
and is closer than our own breath.*

L. There is nothing our God cannot do.

P. Let us stand in awe. Let us worship God with wonder.

***Hymn #79** Light Dawns on a Weary World

***Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession**

Holy God,

Somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe.

We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts.

We praise those who have answers,

and assume that wonder is an answerless game.

Forgive us for closing that door to you.

Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children.

Teach us the ways of awe and wonder,

so that like Zechariah,

when we find ourselves speechless,

our first words will be words of praise.

With hearts open wide, we pray, amen.

***Silent Confession**

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Sung Response** *Doxology for a Weary World*

CRANHAM ("In the Bleak Midwinter")

Text: Anna Strickland (2023)

Music: Gustav Holst (1906)



Praise the one Cre - a - tor, praise the Liv-ing Christ



Praise the Ho-ly Spi - rit, praise both day and night



Praise when you are wea - ry, praise in times of joy



Praise, my soul, with all your strength and your heart and voice

***Passing of the Peace** (*Share the peace of Christ with the person next to you*)

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Children's Sermon

Advent Wreath Lighting

Sung Response #314 Christ, Be Our Light

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the
dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your
church gath - ered to - day.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading Luke 1:57-80

Sermon We allow ourselves to be amazed

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Time of Reflection

*Affirmation of Faith

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.*

Pastoral Prayer & 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.*

***Hymn #100** My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

***Charge & Benediction**

***Postlude**

Participants in today's service:

Minister: Rev. Kristin Stroble

Worship Leader: Sara Weeden

Advent Wreath: Amanda Lanier, Lawson and Lehman Temples

Children's Message: Neil Myer

Pianist: Tamar Mikeladze

Worship Credits: The liturgy is by A Sanctified Art and used with permission; Hymns are printed and streamed with permission from One License #A-725831.

Ushers

Head Usher: Sue Kalvonjian; Ruth Hartwig

Greeter

Bruce Augenstein

Video Producer

Heather Myer

Flowers

Today's flowers are given by Tom and Linda Hardenbergh in memory of Karen Craft.

Church Leadership and Staff

Rev. Kristin Stroble	Pastor
Rev. Shirley Paxton	Parish Advisor
Neil Myer	Director of Christian Education
Bridgette Redman	Office Administrator
Tamar Mikeladze	Organist

This Week at Eastminster:

December 17 through December 24, 2023

SUNDAY, 12/17

Worship	10:00 a.m.
Fellowship	11:00 a.m.
Intergenerational Education	11:15 a.m.

MONDAY, 12/18

Staff Meeting	10:30 a.m.
Trivia at Royal Scot	7:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, 12/19

UKirk Board	6:15 p.m.
Faith Formation Mtg.	7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, 12/20

Men's Bible Study	8:00 a.m.
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Bible Study Holiday Gathering	10:30 a.m.
Community Connections	7:00 p.m.
SUNDAY, 12/24	
Family Friendly Christmas Eve Service	10:00 a.m.
Fellowship	11:00 a.m.
Traditional Christmas Eve Service	5:00 p.m.
Fellowship	6:00 p.m.

Advent

This year we are asking the question "How does a weary world rejoice?" Joy is often a companion to many other emotions. We can feel joy as well as grief, anticipation, anxiety, disappointment, exhaustion. Joy is rooted in the truth that we belong to God. This Advent we will hold space for our weariness and our joy. The world needs our joy and in this weary world, I pray that we find ways to rejoice.

Join us TODAY after worship (and a brief fellowship time) in the Green Room. We all bring different perspectives and insights to what we see. All ages are invited to a time of Visio Divina (Divine Seeing). We will spend some intentional time exploring some of the images that have enhanced our Advent worship series "How does a weary world rejoice?"

Welcome Kits for RDC

We have a few more cards that need picked up for this month's items for the welcome kits we give to new arrivals in Lansing. Please return your items by Sunday, December 31st.

Advent House

Advent House has requested that during the winter months we return to soups and salads. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex. We need people to bring soup, items for sandwiches, and to help assemble the sandwiches on Saturday, January 13th.

Housewarming Celebration for Tamar and Alex Mikeladze

Please join us on **Sunday, January 14** during Fellowship Hour as the Deacons host a housewarming celebration of Tamar and Alex Mikeladze recent and long-awaited move to their new home. As a way to show our appreciation to both of them, we are collecting monetary donations ahead of the celebration to present them with a gift card from the congregation. Please consider donating any amount within your budget by writing a check to Beverly Bonning (memo line: Tamar's housewarming) or placing cash in an envelope with your name, the purpose, and depositing it in the black lock box outside of Bridgette's office. All donations are welcome.



CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

This year, coming together to reclaim Advent and Christmas can be humbling and fulfilling. As we excitedly await the birth of Christ, it's important to remember the reason for the season: the newborn Servant of All, the perfect gift. With Christ at the center this holiday season, we can follow in his example of servant leadership by serving our brothers and sisters in faith. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we are able to support those in our community and give them the gift of hope. Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering help the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions provide critical financial assistance to eligible church workers and retired pastors and their families in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Christmas Joy Offering also supports the education and development of our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.