

# Celebration of Worship

December 28, 2025

9:30 A.M.

*We are followers of Jesus Christ, living and sharing  
the love of God through faith and action, welcoming all.*

## GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

### Prelude

### Words of Welcome and Announcements

### Reflection

Agnes M. Pharo

"What is Christmas?  
It is tenderness for the past,  
courage for the present,  
hope for the future."

### Ring of the Bell

### Call to Worship

Leader: Hope has come –

**People:** awakening us to new possibilities.

Leader: Peace has come –

**People:** turning our hearts from fear to wonder.

Leader: Love has come –

**People:** Transforming our lives, transforming our world.

Leader: We have come –

**People:** amazed and humbled by God's grace, to worship the  
newborn King!

### Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray

**All:** Exalted God, even as the heavenly host sang of your  
glory in the night skies over Bethlehem, even as the star  
shone in the heavens and sheep and cattle gathered in  
that light, so we gather, young and old together, to  
recount all that you have done for us in mercy and  
steadfast love. No tyrant's threat or deadly act can  
destroy the dreams and visions you have placed within  
us, for you have drawn us close. With all creation, we  
praise you and exalt your name forever and ever. Amen.

### Carol Sing

### Call to Confession

Leader: Even in a season of celebration and joy, there is grief and  
pain. Even as we celebrate God's goodness, we know that  
we have not always lived it. Even in all of this, Christ comes.

### Prayer of Confession

**All:** Holy God, you are the Light of the World. Yet, too often, we  
shroud your light with our indifference. There is much we  
must confess: When we turn a blind eye to suffering,  
forgive us. When we are silent in the face of injustice,  
forgive us. When we choose comfort over compassion,  
forgive us. When we neglect to offer grace and love,  
forgive us.

Gracious God, you entered into our broken world and made  
a home among the desperate and despairing. Give us eyes  
to see you in the faces of those whose vulnerability  
frightens us. Give us the will to care for our neighbors in  
need. Illumine the shadows of our lives with your light,  
which the most persistent darkness cannot overcome, and  
open our hearts to receive your grace.

### Moment of Silent Reflection and Confession

### Declaration of Forgiveness

Leader: Christ came into this world for us, imperfect humans,  
perpetual sinners, trying, learning, striving. He came to be  
tested, so that he might help us as we are tested, to forgive  
us all our sins.

**All:** Praise be to our merciful and faithful high priest!

### Sung Response

*Gloria Patri*

# 579

### Passing of the Peace

One: With thanksgiving, we rejoice in the reconciliation found in the  
forgiveness and love of Jesus Christ. Let us therefore be  
reconciled with our neighbors and share signs of Christ's peace.  
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**All:** And also with you.

## THE WORD

### Prayer of Illumination

Leader: Holy One, your Word comes to us: Jesus Christ, Immanuel.  
Holy Word, you cross every border meant to shut you out.  
Holy Wisdom, speak to us in the word read and proclaimed.  
Hearing, may we dream your dreams and faithfully follow  
wherever you lead. In your triune name we pray.

**All:** Amen.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Scripture Reading

*Isaiah 63:7-9*

### Children's Time

Stu's Corner  
*Sounding Joy*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Scripture Reading**      *Matthew 2:13-23*

**Sermon**      *"God's Steadfast Love"*      Rev. Susan Frost  
*"Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt..."*      *Matthew 2:13*

### **RESPONDING IN LOVE**

**Affirmation of Faith**      Taken from the Confession of 1967, 9.19

**All:** Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.

**Hymn**      *"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"*      # 37

**Sharing Joys and Concerns and Lighting of Prayer Candles**

**Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer** (Debts/debtors)

**Invitation to the Offering**

Leader: Our own lives bear witness to the abundance of God's love and mercy, for God has lifted us up and carried us in our need. In joyful praise, we offer to God a portion of all we have received.

Please place your offering in the plates at the exit doors,  
mail your gifts to the church, or click the WPC website "Give" button. Thank you!

**Sung Response**      *Doxology*      Screen

**Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving**

**All:** In this gifting season, O God, we are grateful for the gift of your dear Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Receive, we pray, these offerings we bring. May they be used in the service of your grace and truth dwelling among us. In Christ's holy name we pray. Amen.

### **MOVING IN GOD'S WAY**

**Hymn**      *"Joy to the World"*      # 40

**Charge and Blessing**

Leader: Go out and share the good news with a world bent low from suffering and fear. Jesus Christ has come to help us and to set us free! May God the Creator, Christ the Savior, and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate, guard your going out and your coming in, and be your strength and help in every time of need.

**All:**      **Amen.**

**Sung Response**      *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*      # 29 – verse 3

**Postlude**

## Announcements

.CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERING collections to provide emergency aid to retired pastors and scholarship aid to needy students of color continue through January 4<sup>th</sup>. Envelopes for your donation are in the chair racks or you can send a check to church.

.ANNUAL REPORTS from Committee Chairpersons and Treasurers are due in the church office by Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. You can submit your information by email to [ghubbard@websterpres.org](mailto:ghubbard@websterpres.org) as a Word or Excel file, or bring a printed copy to the church office.

## Calendar

### Sunday, December 28

9:30 A.M. Worship Service in the Sanctuary & Live-Streamed

9:45 A.M. SHINE Program for Children in PreK – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade in Room 3

### Tuesday, December 29 - Church office open 9 am to Noon

5:00 P.M. TOPS in Room 9/10

### Wednesday, December 31 - Church office open 9 am to Noon

6:30 A.M. Men's Breakfast/Bible Study at Golden Boys Restaurant

### Thursday, January 1, 2026 - Happy New Year !

### Saturday, January 3

9:00 A.M. Prayer Time on Zoom

12:00 P.M. Boy Scout Court of Awards

### Sunday, January 4

9:30 A.M. Worship Service in the Sanctuary & Live-Streamed

9:45 A.M. SHINE Program for Children in PreK – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade in Room 3

10:45 A.M. Adult Ed. in Room 9/10

“Undecorate” the Church

12:00 P.M. Church of God by Faith in the Chapel

## Lectionary Passages

	<u>December 28<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>January 4<sup>th</sup></u>
Old Testament	<i>Isaiah 63:7-9</i>	<i>Jeremiah 31:7-14</i>
Psalms	<i>Psalms 148</i>	<i>Psalms 147:12-20</i>
New Testament	<i>Hebrews 2:10-18</i>	<i>Ephesians 1:3-14</i>
Gospel	<i>Matthew 2:13-23</i>	<i>John 1:1-18</i>

## Memory Verse

*“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.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.”*

*Luke 2:15-16*