TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH



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Greenville, SC 29601 Fax # 864/242-6442

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 15, 2024 10:00 AM - IN THE GYM

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME AND AFFIRMATION

Please stand as able

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy, God of might, God in our midst, we confess that we have sinned.

We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.

We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

We confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

We confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us. A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through + Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Joy to the World

#267

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all. **And also with you.**

Remain Standing

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

ADVENT HYMN



The desert shall bloom with flowers, The rivers flow freely again, The earth be abundant and fruitful, All glory shout out! Refrain The poor will be judged with justice, The lowly be lifted high, The hungry will laugh in gladness, In freedom cry out! Refrain PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Holy God, as we recreate the holy night of our Savior's birth, we thank you for the diversity of those who were there—each one, from the lowly to the wise, from the living creatures to the people, playing their part in the grand story of your love. May we, too, find our place in your story, and offer our hearts to you and our neighbors this Christmas season. We pray with thanksgiving that you are constantly coming among us.

Amen.

Please be seated

WORD

THE VERY FIRST CHRISTMAS

Innkeepers:

Welcome everyone to Bethlehem! Let us open our eyes and ears and listen to the story of when Christ was born.

HYMN

O Little Town of Bethlehem

#279

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.

O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

The Holy Family moves to the manger during the hymn.

PART 1: MARY AND JOSEPH

Mary and Joseph, a pitiful sight. So tired and dirty, they gave us a fright. Sickly or dying? What was the matter? "A room in the inn?" Impossible chatter! "Our rooms are all taken; not one empty bed. There'll not be a room in all Bethlehem," I said. But their eyes told a story of hunger and need. I couldn't avoid them, so I tried a good deed. I cleaned up the stable: I cooked up a meal. We helped all we could, at least, that's how I feel. For we noticed that Mary was expecting – and soon! So we prepared for delivery right under the moon. The child came so quickly. His face seemed so bright in a stable so cold and dreary that night. Joseph said softly. "It's Jesus, my friend." God sent him among us to bring to an end fear and hatred, and darkness and sin. So God sent us light, which began to break in

Hymn

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

#256

"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God. Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load. To God's people now proclaim that God's pardon waits for them! Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever.

For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here.

Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way.

Valleys, rise to greet the Savior; hills, bow down in humble favor.

Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain.

Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

PART 2: THE ANIMALS

My animals were calm, quieter than normal.

They often were noisy, and never too formal.

They always were eating, or else they were sleeping.

The stable required continuous sweeping.

But on Christmas night, they were strangely in awe at the sight of the babe and all that they saw.

It's as if they were aware that God had just hushed them, Had fed and watered and carefully brushed them.

They knew, I believe, that God had been able to work a miracle there in that stable.

Animals are invited to move to the center of the worship space during the musical interlude and surround the Holy Family.

HYMN Away in a Manger #277

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes. I love you Lord Jesus; look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

PART 3: ANGELS

We don't often see angels in flight.
But on that very first Christmas, they lit up the night.
They appeared to the shepherds and, wow, were they scared!
"Angels!" cried one. "Will any lives be spared?"
"Are they here to destroy us? Is our time on earth up?
Have we seen our last day? Have we drunk our last cup?"
But "Peace on earth; goodwill to all"
was the angels' sweet song; that was their call.
With a light show that dazzled all who did see,
the angels hallelujahed and sang out with glee.
"To Bethlehem, shepherds!" the angels directed.
"To see Jesus the Christ, whom God has perfected."
"Go worship the Lord and follow God's ways.
And you'll find Christmas joy for all of your days."

Angels are invited to move to the center of the worship space during the musical interlude and surround the Holy Family.

Hymn

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

#270

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled." Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies; with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord, late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! Refrain

Hail the heav'n born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. Refrain

PART 4: SHEPHERDS

The shepherds, I told you, were scared and were stunned. "Too much hard work or too much hot sun!"
That's what they thought; that's how they explained.
Perplexed and afraid, they loudly complained.
But the angels' song calmed them, and then they believed.
They rejoiced when they knew, and they were quite relieved.
They went to the stable and worshipped the Lord.
Then they left and began to spread the good Word.

Shepherds are invited to move to the center of the worship space during the musical interlude and surround the Holy Family.

Hymn

Go Tell It on the Mountain

#290

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere; 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 our Savior's birth. Refrain

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born; and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. Refrain

PART 5: WISE ONES AND STARS

The star that shone brightly led Wise Ones to seek a child, prophesied, to give strength to the weak. They came bearing gifts, in worship and love, praising God for these wonders from heaven above. The Wise Ones were scholars, come from afar seeking the child by the light of a star. If they brought him treasure, then maybe we, too, can share of our gifts as Christ comes into view. The child, come to save us, was born full of grace and loved and redeemed the whole human race.

Wise Ones and Stars are invited to move to the center of the worship space during the musical interlude and surround the Holy Family.

HYMN What Child Is This #296

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!

Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?

Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you; hail, hail the Word made flesh, 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. Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby; joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

All nativity participants are invited to return to their seats following the hymn during the musical interlude.

Please stand as able

He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love; hallelujah forever more.

He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light; hallelujah forever more.

He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace; hallelujah forever more.

He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy; hallelujah forever more.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Watching and waiting joyfully for Christ with the sure and certain hope that God frees us from the bondage of sin, we pray for the church, creation, and all in need.

Brief silence

Holy One, news of the Savior's birth was first heard by shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night. Continue raising up leaders as shepherds in your church who hear your call are inspired to lead your people in new and bold ways. Raise up disciples who are willing to follow you when the path seems unknown. As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Magnificent One, your creation is full of glory and wonder. At the first Christmas you surrounded the holy family with humble animals to provide comfort and peace. We give you thanks for the donkey, not especially brave or smart, but who is steadfast and stubborn just as your love is for us. As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Just One, you sent wise ones to bow prostrate before a vulnerable baby in a dirty stable. Let their courage in seeking a new kind of leader inspire us to lead and do justice in new ways. Grant us the resolve to lay down our riches at your feet. Clothe in your peace all who journey to this country from foreign lands, teaching us to welcome them as you welcomed the wise ones into your presence. As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Inclusive One, you are Emmanuel to all. We give you thanks that in this place, babies are born to all kinds of parents and are surrounded by the love of family and chosen family alike. Continue to fill our hearts with the knowledge that we are all your holy family and all types of families are holy. Your work of radical inclusion is often difficult. Sustain us with more joyful days such as these, when seemingly small things convey how life changing your gospel can be. As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Mighty One, you bring the powerful down from their thrones and lift up the lowly. Bring food to those of us who have too little and guide those of us who have too much to share freely. Provide warm and safe shelter to those of us who find ourselves without places to lay our head. Swiftly bring justice and equity to those who are oppressed and marginalized, reminding the world that in your kin-dom, there is always more room. As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Healing One, you blessed Mary with the miracle of pregnancy. When it be your will, and at your perfect time, bring your miraculous healing to those who are sick. Comfort the dying and grant the terminally ill the gift of Christian hope. Be with all who suffer alone this holiday season. We pray especially for those we name now on our lips or silently in our hearts ... As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Loving One, you let your face shine upon your people. Continue using this congregation to do your good work in the world. Strengthen outreach and worship ministries and sustain our youth, queer, and education ministries. As we watch and we wait,

hear our prayer.

Eternal One, through Christ, you have made a way for all people to know eternal life. We thank you for the witness of all the faithful who have gone before us to be with you. Fill us with the beautiful hope of eternal life as we await your coming. As we watch and we wait, **hear our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ is with you always.

And also with you.

Please share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

Please be seated.

ANTHEM

Dance at the Manger
Music by Lee Dengler, Word by Susan Dengler

Adult Choir

Come dance to the music of Bethlehem town as choirs of angels from heaven look down and fill all the world with a glorious sound that tells of the Child in the manger.

Come dance at the stable in Bethl'em tonight where never before has there been such as a sight. For all who behold it are filled with delight to worship the Child in the manger.

Set the world dancing for Love has come down to lighten each burden and gladden each frown.

All by sin no longer are bound, now worship the Child in the manger.

Come dance for the freedom and dance for the joy that's born within us because of this boy who lives among us, the grave to destroy.

Come join in the dance at the manger.

Come join in the dance at the manger.

Come dance!

Please stand as able

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. Refrain

From the hall of pow'r to the fortress tow'r, not a stone will be left on stone.

Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.

The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;

there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. Refrain

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:

God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.

This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. Refrain

Let us pray. Creator God,
you made the whole world,
even the farthest stars,
and you draw near to feed us.
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food
that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

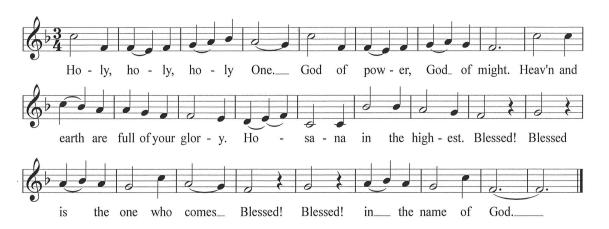
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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 and ever. Amen.

THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

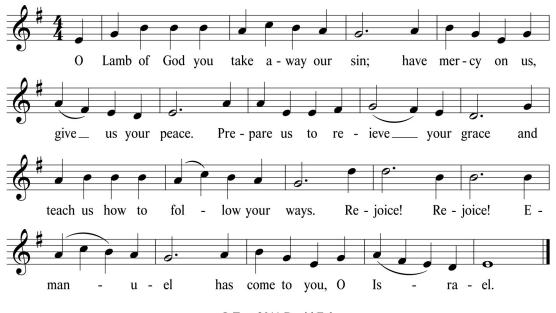
Please be seated.

COMMUNION

All, without exception, are welcome at the table of God's grace and love. Both wine and grape juice are available in the split chalice— wine in the larger section and grape juice in the smaller section. Christ's grace and forgiveness is found in the bread, wine, and the grape juice.

Gluten free wafers are available.

At the direction of the ushers, worshippers are invited to move to the front of the center aisle to dip the wafer into the chalice to receive Communion by intinction.



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O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#257

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh: in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way. Refrain

O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain

O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny; from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain

O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Refrain

O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer; O Sun of justice, now draw near Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight. Refrain

O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one: refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new. Refrain

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Refrain O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain

O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God in the highest: Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n! Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: Refrain

That Boy-Child of Mary

#293

Refrain

That boy-child of Mary was born in a stable, a manger his cradle in Bethlehem.

What shall we call him, child of the manger? What name is given in Bethlehem? Refrain

His name is Jesus, God ever with us, God given for us in Bethlehem. Refrain

How can he save us, how can he help us, born here among us in Bethlehem? Refrain

Gift of the Father, to human mother, makes him our brother in Bethlehem. Refrain

One with the Father, he is our Savior. heaven-sent helper in Bethlehem. Refrain

Gladly we praise him, love and adore him, give ourselves to him in Bethlehem. Refrain

'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled, that God the Lord of all the earth sent angel choirs instead; before their light the stars grew dim, and wand'ring hunters heard the hymn:

Refrain

Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe ws found; a ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round; but as the hunter braves drew nigh, the angel song rang loud and high: Refrain

The earliest moon of winter time is not so round and fair as was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.

The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt. Refrain

O children of the forest free, the angel song is true; the holy child of earth and heav'n is born today for you. Come kneel before the radiant boy, who brings you beauty, peace, and joy. Refrain

Please stand as able

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Generous God,
we thank you for the gift of life,
for the bread of salvation.
We thank you for coming among us,
for leading us into peace.
We thank you for showering us with mercy,
for sending us into the world.
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
as we feed the hungry in your name.

Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
He bless and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Once in Royal David's City

#269

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall; with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love; for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above; and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by, we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high; there his children gather round, bright like stars, with glory crowned.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace.

Know that God's story of hope and promise

is your story.

Christ is coming among us

even in the most unexpected places and ways.

Share the good tidings of great joy!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Drama participants are encouraged to keep their candy canes, crowns, halos, masks, and stars, or return them to the tables where they received them.

> Everyone is invited to gather in the Multipurpose Room for a festive Christmas Brunch.

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He Came Down

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That Boy-Child of Mary

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SERVING TODAY

Presiding Minister Susan Crowell

Patrick Preacher **Assisting Minister**

Pianist/Choir Director Jim Parham

Pageant Coordinator Angie McCormack

Narrators Tori Hilbourn, Drake McFadyen

The Holy Family Angie, Emily, and Javi Hager

Melissa Kolb **Prayers**

Dovie Dykes, Madelyn Fagala Acolytes

Communion Assistants Joshua Rhodes, Philip Wessinger

Nell Orscheln Praying for Possibilities

Instrumentalists

Guitar

Choir Trinity Adult Choir

Violin Mary Beth Ridenhour, Sadie Zhou

Cello. Heather Kleckley

Flute Jo Lewis, Amanda Mast

Clarinet Jenna Mast, Patrick Preacher

Alto Sax Jim Blalock

French Horn Clayton Dykes

Bass **Duke Barsody**

Paul Godfrey, Stephen Koenemann John Beckford Percussion

Mark Allen, Pattimarie Janssen, Lani Ludian Greeters

John Roberts, Maria Roberts

Ushers Richard Delap, Carol Elliott

Danny Fagala, David Potts

Video, Set, and Lighting Design Henry Wilcox

Dale Hamann

Donice Winslow

Chris Barsody

Anne Harmon

Audio Gregg Alley

CHURCH STAFF

Susan J. Crowell Senior Pastor

James C. Parham, III
Associate Pastor for Worship and Music

Patrick D. Preacher Queer and Justice Ministry Coordinator Pastoral Intern

Angie H. McCormack Youth and Children's Ministry Coordinator

> Kay M. Cook Office Manager

Henry W. Wilcox Accountant and Digital Media Manager

Karen M. Craig Administrative Assistant

> Roy L. Cook Facilities Manager

Beth C. Oswald Nursery Attendant

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Lani Wise Donna Potts Vice-President Secretary Mike Boliek Jenna Mast Youth Treasurer John Otten Danny Fagala Jeff Rehm Greg Hamluk Calvin Harmon Jimmy Reynolds Deirdre Hixson Kerry Sease

Chris Sorenson
Chris Wannemacher











Dean Hybl