



PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
OF THE ROSES

*Reaching Out with Nurturing Love to All People*



## *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

December 22nd, 2024

Worship 10 am

**First Time Here?** Thank you for coming!

Please pick up a Welcome Bag in the narthex. Please join us for fellowship & coffee in Bowen Hall after service today.

**Assistance needed?**

Large print bulletins, a hearing loop and hearing assist devices are available from the sound system tech.

**Tip for the Service-**

\*Asterisk means please stand if able.

The **BOLD** is spoken by the congregation.

**Children with you?**

Activity materials for young worshipers are in the entry way and the kids table in the back of our Sanctuary.

Sunday school begins after the Gathering of the Children in the worship service.

***CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP***

PRELUDE "Noel Pour Hautbois" - Trad French Carol arr. By Richard Warner

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(If you are a visitor, have a prayer request, or want to update your contact info, please fill out the connect card and place it in the offering plate.)*

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Bill Nakata

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

\*INTROIT

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

M. Praetorius

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING *Love* (Matthew 1) Church & World co.

Reader One: Children of God, we come, tired of waiting, burdened by the weight of watching. We surrender to God's holy "not yet," embracing the stillness. We come.. God-with-us is present in our longing.

**All: As we gather today, we remember the promised gifts of the Messiah. In the lighting of four candles, we set our gaze upon beacons that sustain us through sleepless nights and restless days. We bear this light together.**

Reader Two: We call this candle Hope. *(Light the first candle.)* We call this candle Peace. *(Light the second candle.)* We call this candle Joy. *(Light the third candle.)* We call this candle Love. *(Light the fourth candle.)*

**All: Beloved Sustainer, in a world where care is mocked by the powerful, we stand as those who know the life-giving force of your love.**

\*CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsively)*

Come and experience the wonder of God's presence.

**We are family! The family of God!**

The grace that came to us with God's son, our savior,

brings us into community and wholeness, not just once a year, but 24/7.

**Our God has loved us and been with us before our beginnings and after our endings. May we be open to receiving eternal hope, joy, peace, and love. Let us worship God!**

\*HYMN #121 "O Little Town of Bethlehem" arr. Louis Henry Redner

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.

How silently, how silently, the  
wondrous gift is given!

So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.

No ear may hear his coming,  
but in this world of sin, where meek  
souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.

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

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

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;  
O come to us; abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER *(in unison)*

**Living God, moved by the coming of Christ into our lives, we seek to be your people. Order our lives with repentance and with compassion for all. We often fail to live faithfully for you and in harmony with one another. Help us to comprehend the great love with which you opened**

**yourself up to our world, so that we may risk opening ourselves in love toward all your people. Let the peace of Christ guide us and let Christ's message of hope in all its richness live in our hearts and show through our lives. Amen**

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION (responsively)

The good news in Christ is that when we face ourselves and God with an awareness of our need, we are given grace to grow and courage to continue on our journey. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**Thanks be to God for the precious gifts of loving forgiveness and merciful grace!**

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #581

*Gloria Patri*

CALL FOR OFFERING

Carole Michel

*(including collection of the Christmas Joy offering)*

OFFERTORY "No Room" by John Peterson arr. By Fred Bock



\*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*(click to donate)*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION HYMN #288 *Spirit of the Living God*

***Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me, Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.***

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Micah 5: 2-5a

Carole Michel

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM

"A Christmas Blessing"

Philip Stopford

The Chancel Choir

May the joy of the angels  
The gladness of the shepherds  
The worship of the wise men  
And the peace of the Christ Child be yours  
Be yours this Christmas.

## GATHERING OF THE CHILDREN-

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2: 1-20

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word! **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

“Ponder Christ’s Birth”

Rev. Dr Cindy Alloway

\* HYMN #115

Away in a Manger

James R. Murray

1. 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.

2. The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

3. 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.

## PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

God of Wonder, we come before you in anticipation of what is to come; We are excited; we are fearful; we are relieved; we are uncertain. In all these emotions, you are here with us, God of No Limits. We give you thanks for the boundless gifts you have given us: This universe which you have created with its infinite mystery; this earth that sustains us with its resources and beauty; this created life, with all its relationships, of which we are a part; for all these acts of love, we give you thanks.

**God of Love, we give you thanks for your Church. The community of those who came before, are here now, and are yet to come. Help us to work together in the building of your kingdom here on earth so we may live in justice, peace and harmony with all.**

God of Many Blessings, we call to mind all the ways in which you have blessed us individually. With family and friends that fill us with belonging, with studies and ministries that challenge and excite us, with good mental health and happiness. In silence, O God, we give you thanks for other blessings that you have laid before us....

**God of Wisdom and Understanding, as we give thanks, we also hear the words of Scripture, urging us to bring all the concerns of our hearts to you....**

And so, we come with prayers of petition and intercession: for a time when all this world so badly needs peace and harmony. When hunger and oppression might end if we share our resources with equity. When those who suffer might know freedom from pain. In our individual lives, O God, we name and offer the sighs of our hearts. Hear them now as we lift up silently these prayers to you..... God of Patience and God of Surprises,

**Teach us, in this time of waiting, to be open to let go of all those things that hide your presence from us. Catch us by surprise, catch us with awe and wonder at the complexity of creation. Fill us with the gift of your grace and your love.**

In this time of Advent and all the days to come. In the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus, your wonderful gift to us, we pray the words he taught us to say: **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 #140      "Once in Royal David's City"      Cecil Fran Alexander, 1848

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. Jesus is our childhood's pattern;  
day by day like us he grew;  
he was little, weak and helpless;  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feels for all our sadness,  
and he shares in all our gladness.

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

**\*BENEDICTION**

May you be strengthened as you go forth to carry God's love, as Mary did.  
A love that is radical, powerful, brave, and life-affirming.

POSTLUDE

"NOEL"

Louis Claude Daquin

PREACHER: *Rev. Dr. Cindy Alloway* LITURGIST: *Carole Michel*

MUSIC: *Carol Menke, Althea Wright, along with the Chancel Choir*

AUDIO VISUAL TECHNOLOGY TEAM: *Phil Goede, Damaris Hamilton, DJ Maxwell-Kellam, Josh Lim, Norm Smith, Nico Wycoff and Steve Yeager*

**CHURCH OF THE ROSES 2500 Patio Court, Santa Rosa, Ca 95405**

*Office Hours: Tues./Wed. 9am-3pm, Thursdays 9am-12pm*

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- ❖ **No MHS Breakfast--- closed Dec. 23 and return on Jan 6.**
- ❖ **The office will be closed at noon on 12/24, 12/31 and all day 12/25, 12/26 and Jan 1.**
- ❖ **The Preschool will be closed Dec. 23 and return on Jan 6.**



*Please join us:*

*Christmas Eve, Tues. Dec. 24 7pm,  
for a lovely candlelight service.*

*Sacred Space, Sat. Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> @ 5pm  
Contemporary Service, acoustic guitar music*



***PRAYER REQUESTS- Please include in your prayers-  
Those mourning the death of their loved ones-***

Please pray for the family and friends of Margaret Kram as they grieve her passing on Wednesday Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Please pray for the family and friends of Marilyn MacLean as they grieve her passing on Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Darren Adams

Donald Adams

Dennis Baker

Greg Basham

Jeff Basham

Jim Bauer

Bill Beaumont

Barbara Blinn

Diana Burdick

Joyce Cairns

Marjorie Cortez

Diana

Eldon Davis

David Dews Jr.

Yvonne Draper

Robert Flandermeyer

Wendy Galde

Cathy Guy

Michele Hare

Julie Harris

Phil Henry

Jennifer

Wendy Jones

Rusty Jump

Carolyn Kenworthy

Colby Lundmark

Vivian Mazeski

Marilyn MacLean

Carol Menke

Gene Michel

Jessica Morse

Lesley Pillsbury

Nita Pinney

Elizabeth Schulz

Bob Simmons

Marie Slack

Bill St. John

Lynne Vandercook

Darlene Volkmann

Jill & Roger White

Rich Wells

Helen Wikle

Betty Witchey-Ryer

**Those serving in our military**

James Kuntz (Sorani), US Navy on the USS Scranton. Sgt. David A. Dickens, USAF Jason Morse, Coast Guard Commander Ian Alloway Culver, Col. David Trowbridge, M.D. with the Air Force Reserve. Private Caleb Thorstad, US Marine's Camp Pendleton



*“The flowers are dedicated in loving memory of Jeanne and Fred Recknagel. Who embodied the spirit of Christmas every day of their lives.*

*The Boden and Levin Families.*

