

SJUMC Online Worship Guide

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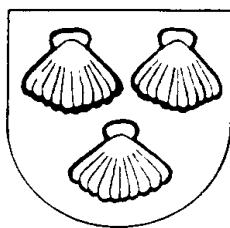
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December 21, 2025
9:30 am
“Signs and Faithfulness”
ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Administrative Assistant: Kenna Haj | | Bell Choir Director: Laural Clark |
| Director of Music Ministry: Kelli Young | | Organist: Clarice Snyder |
| Pastor: Rev. Patricia Abell | | |



Saint James United Methodist Church

Marriottsville, MD410-442-2020

stjamessec@verizon.net

Gathering

Prelude

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" (Jefferson Tune) arr. by Anne Krentz Organ

Offered by Clarice Snyder and Susan Day, flute

(Advent Reflections for Piano and Solo Instrument)

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Welcome

Rev. Patricia Abell

Introit

"The First Noel"

Handbell Choir

English Melody, arranged by D. Linda McKechnie

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Lighting of the Advent Candle

ONE: ...God calling Mary and Joseph to faithfulness despite the fear of disgrace.

All: With Mary and Joseph, we choose to wait, watch, and listen for the way of Love instead of responding in fear to the world's judgment.

Call to Worship

Jan Petrosch

ONE: Beloved, God calls to us—like Joseph—through angels and messengers, inviting us to listen for the Spirit's guidance in the midst of half-truths and distractions.

ALL: We listen faithfully for the day that all the earth awaits.

Sometimes, angels surprise us (as they did Mary) with good news too fantastical to believe and yet too real—realer than real—to ignore.

We listen faithfully for the day that all the earth awaits.

For generations, God has sent signs of God's coming kingdom in unexpected places—the birth of a child, the wisdom of the lowly, the faithfulness of a carpenter.

We listen faithfully for the day that all the earth awaits.

Come! Let us worship God who calls out to us, inviting us to faithfulness as we watch, wait, and work for the day when the whole world knows the abundant love and grace of Emmanuel, God-with-us.

Come! Let us worship as we listen faithfully for the day that all the earth awaits.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, May 2025.

*Opening Hymn

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 1-4)

UMH 211

1. O come O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

2. O come thou Wisdom from on high
And order all things far and nigh
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

3. O come O Come great Lord of might
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times once gave the law
In cloud and majesty and awe

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

4. O come thou Root of Jesse's tree
An ensign of thy people be
Before thee rulers silent fall
All peoples on thy mercy call

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

Prayer for the Day

Jan Petrosch

O Christ, we long for your coming. Hasten that day when those who seek you in every nation will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit at the table in your kingdom. Hasten the day when your kingdom will come in all its glory, and suffering and pain and sickness and oppression and death will be overcome forever. Hasten the day when we will be resurrected as a great multicultural family and live in peace, harmony, joy, and love together in your kingdom.

Written by Christine Sine on Godspace. Re-posted on the re:Worship website at <https://reworship.blogspot.com/2015/12/advent-intercessions.html>.

Passing of the Peace

Jan Petrosch

Anthem

"Christmas Carol Fest III"

Handbell Choir

Setting by Douglas E. Wagner (ASCAP)

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Proclaiming

Children's Message

Edie Candee

**Introduction to Cantata
Prayer for Illumination**

Scriptures Matthew 1:18-21; Luke 2:1-20

Rev. Patricia Abell

Cantata

"Silent Night"

Chancel Choir

Sally DeFord Copyright 2003

Message

"Signs and Faithfulness"

Rev. Patricia Abell

Responding

Prayer for God's People, Church, & World

Jan Petrosch

Response: Come down, come in, come among us and make us whole.

Lord's Prayer

Offertory

"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"

Handbell Choir

J. Baptiste Calkin, arranged by Cynthia Dobrinski (ASCAP)

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***Doxology**

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost.
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

CCLI Song # 2730466

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Offering Prayer

Going Forth

*Closing Hymn

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 5-7)

UMH 211

5. O come thou Key of David come
and open wide our heavenly home
Thy captives from their prison free
and conquer death's deep misery

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

6. O come thou Dayspring come and cheer
Our spirits by thy justice here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

7. O come Desire of nations bind
All peoples in one heart and mind
From dust thou brought us forth to life
Deliver us from earthly strife

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel

CCLI Song # 3063194

Henry Sloane Coffin | Laurence Hull Stookey | Thomas Helmore

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Benediction

Rev. Patricia Abell

Postlude

"The King of Glory" (Israeli folk song) arr. by Anne Krentz Organ

Offered by Clarice Snyder and Susan Day, flute

(Advent Reflections for Piano and Solo Instrument)

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Questions for Reflection

In Romans 1:1–6, Paul defines himself according to (1) who Jesus is (promised through the prophets),
(2) what Jesus gives (grace and apostleship),
and (3) why Jesus is for all people (to foster faith).

How do those qualities and gifts inform your own definition of self? How might you amend, or more greatly appreciate, your own self-image and the image you have of others because of Jesus?

Household Prayer: Morning

Giver of light, in the light of your Christ I see myself clearly as your child.
I rise in thankfulness for you are present when I sleep and when I am awake.
I rise to come to you in the hours of joy and in sorrow.
I rise to live this day in your wisdom, without fear, without acrimony,
but with charity toward those I meet and toward myself when I find I am wanting.
Lead me into your desire for me this day, O Lord.
Let me know your love is deep and abiding; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Giver of rest and silence, in you I take refuge when the shadows deepen and the time of sleep has come.
I thank you for the ventures of this day,
for friends who helped me and for those who sought my help,
for the skills you planted in me to hone and use,
for the strangers whose lives enlarged mine today and whose insights enrich my life.
Keep me safe from harm as I sleep,
and bring me to a new dawn with strength to work and rejoice; in Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

RESOURCES:

- + Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2 © 2013
Westminster John Knox Press
- + Abingdon Worship Annual 2025...ministrymatters.com
- + All Earth Is Waiting. Discipleship Ministries, 2025. (NOV 30-DEC 28)
Retrieved from umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/

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Saint James UMC is a Lighthouse Congregation of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church.