

SJUMC Online Worship Guide

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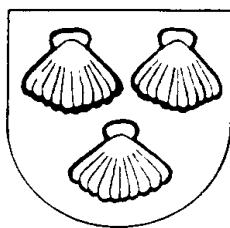
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December 7, 2025
9:30 am
“Signs and Stories”
ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE

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 "Comfort, comfort ye my people" Paul Manz, A. W. Leupold *Offered by Clarice Snyder*

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Welcome

Rev. Patricia Abell

Threshold Song

"Toda la Tierra" (All Earth Is Waiting)

UMH 210

2. Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel,"
For his name is "God with us," our brother shall be,
with him hope will blossom once more within our hearts.

Catalonian Text, Alberto Taule, 1972, trans. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House
Harm. © 1988 Skinner Chavez-Melo

Lighting of the Advent Candle

ONE: ...the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6).

All: Today, we choose to live the story of peace, believing that true peace comes when we seek the flourishing of all God's creation.

Call to Worship

Mary Anne Espenshade

ONE: Beloved, we gather to remember who we are, not who the world tells us to be.

ALL: We tell the story together of the day that all the earth awaits.

We recall the story of God's people, how God has called us to live in peace and righteousness in a world full of conflict and twisted morality.

We tell the story together of the day that all the earth awaits.

We recount the story of our journey with God, the moments of God's provision, God's prodding, and God's prophetic guidance.

We tell the story together of the day that all the earth awaits.

We gather to repent and return anew to God's story that guides our lives to work for peace and flourishing for all God's creation.

We gather to tell the story of the day that all the earth awaits. Thanks be to God! Amen.

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

Prayer for the Day

Mary Anne Espenshade

Loving God, be to us as a bulldozer of the spirit. Clear your road in us; clear a path through the detritus of possessions and obsessions. Thrust aside our divided aims and devious games. Topple the ramparts of pride and the doubts that deride. Make a highway on which Christ may come and take possession of the whole territory of our being. To the glory of your name, we pray. Amen!

Written by Bruce Prewer and posted on Bruce Prewer's Home Page, <http://www.bruceprewer.com/>.
Reposted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/11/opening-prayer-prepareway.html>.

Prayer of Confession

Mary Anne Espenshade

When our faith is rooted deeply in you, O God, our lives reflect your kingdom values of justice and righteousness, but sometimes our lives become so entangled with the values of the world, that your values take second place. Forgive us, O God, and reconnect us to the Holy Spirit, source of power and life. Merciful God, strip our hearts and minds of all that prevents our lives being firmly rooted in you.

May our lives bear fruit worthy of our faith in you, as we watch and wait for your breaking into our world once more, in the person of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

***Opening Hymn**

“Savior of the Nations”

UMH 214

1. Savior of the nations, come;
Virgin's son, here make thy home!
Marvel now, O heaven and earth,
that the Lord chose such a birth.

2. Not by human flesh and blood;
By the Spirit of our God
Was the Word of God made flesh,
Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

3. Wondrous birth! O wondrous child
Of the virgin undefiled!
Human and divine in one
Eager now his race to run

4. God the Father is his source,
Back to God he runs his course;
Down to death and hell descends,
God's high throne he reascends.

5. Now thy manger's halo bright
Hallows night with newborn light;
Let no night this light subdue,
Let our faith shine ever new.

Author: St. Ambrose; Translator (German): Martin Luther (1523); Translator: William M. Reynolds (1860)
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Passing of the Peace

Mary Anne Espenshade

Proclaiming

Children's Message

Donna Benson

Scripture

**Isaiah 11:1–10 (NRSVue)
Matthew 3:1-12 (NRSVue)**

Mary Anne Espenshade

Anthem

“Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming”

Chancel Choir

by Michael Praetorius arr. by SJP
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Message

“Signs and Stories”

Rev. Patricia Abell

Responding

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Patricia Abell

***Doxology**

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

UMH 95

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. Amen.

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Offering Prayer

*Please stand as able

Holy Communion

Going Forth

*Closing Hymn

"Come, Thou Almighty King"

UMH 61

1. Come Thou Almighty King
Help us Thy name to sing
Help us to praise
Father all glorious
O'er all victorious
Come and reign over us
Ancient of Days

2. Come thou incarnate Word
Gird on thy mighty sword
Our prayer attend
Come and thy people bless
And give thy word success
Spirit of holiness
On us descend

3. Come Holy Comforter
Thy sacred witness bear
In this glad hour
Thou who almighty art
Now rule in every heart
And ne'er from us depart
Spirit of power

4. To thee great One in Three
Eternal praises be
Hence evermore
Thy sovereign majesty
May we in glory see
And to eternity
Love and adore

CCLI Song # 29073

Felice de Giardini

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Benediction

Rev. Patricia Abell

Postlude

Toccata on "Come, thou Redeemer of the Earth" Paul Manz ***Offered by Clarice Snyder***

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Questions for Reflection

Look for places where the wolf and the lamb lie down together in peace.
Where do you see that peace in your relationships, in your family or circle of friends, in the neighborhood,
the city, the nation, and the world?
Even within yourself, where has peace been forged between previously warring factions?

Household Prayer: Morning

As I rise, O God, I give you thanks for safety in the night,
for rest from my labors, for another day in this creation.
Turn my eyes toward what is noble. Teach me to see hope where it is veiled.
Give me the wisdom to desire the good.
Help me to love not only those I encounter but myself as well,
for with you, I know my many frailties and failings. Let peace reign. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

As I end this day, Holy One, I give you thanks for the richness of my hours:
for family and friends, for people with whom I work and play,
for my neighbors, for those who fill this world with music and art,
for those whose needs remind me of my blessings and whose skills make me grateful for differences.
Guard us all, O God, and keep us in your embrace until the daylight comes. 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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