

DECEMBER 2024 WORSHIP GUIDE

CHERRYVALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 709 CHERRY HILL DR, STAUNTON VA - 540 885 0098

This booklet contains the outline for each worship service during the month of December 2024.

As of the time of going to print, Sunday worship is in person, online and broadcast on the radio (you can listen in your car on FM 87.9, in the church parking lot). If you are not able to attend in person, you can watch online on our website and YouTube channel. Even if we are not worshipping in the same building, we are still one body, one family, we are brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. Look up the scriptures referenced in the following pages; pray the words, and claim the promises for you and your family.

December Worship

Worship Dec 1

Scriptures to read and meditate on

Jer 33:14-16; Ps 25:1-10; 1 Thess 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

Call To Worship - Lighting the Advent Candle

From deep in the past, Jeremiah calls to us, “The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise, I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah” (Jeremiah 33:14). Beloved, the days are surely coming when the yearning of the land; the longing of the sun, moon, and stars; the desperate need of the people of earth for flourishing and peace will receive their fulfillment. While fear, anxiety, misinformation, and suspicion surround us on every side, we choose to watch and wait in hope, preparing our hearts to notice and cooperate with God’s grace already at work in our midst. We light this candle of hope as a sign of our commitment to pay attention and prepare for the days that are surely coming and are already here—the days when God’s kingdom of love, justice, and mercy will reign.

Prayer of Confession

Righteous one, to you alone we lift our souls; in you alone, we place our trust; for you alone we wait all day long. For you are the God of our salvation, abounding in mercy and steadfast love. Forgive us for those times in our lives that we have not waited on you. Forgive us for the times that we have fallen asleep and given into the darkness of our lives. Help us remain alert and watchful for the coming of your promised one—the one who comes with power and glory, the one drawing near to bring our salvation and brings us eternally home. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Loving God, we thank you that when Heaven and Earth pass away, Your words will not pass away. We thank you for having planted your word within our hearts so that we can be bearers of the Good News. Bless our gifts that we offer now and use them to bring light into the darkness. Help us to give ourselves generously, for we do not know the day nor the hour of our redemption. We pray in the name of the one who will come again, Christ our Lord. Amen.

Worship Dec 8

Scriptures to read and meditate on

Mal 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Phil 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

Call To Worship - Lighting the Advent Candle

The prophet Malachi calls us to watch for the messenger God will send us, a messenger who burns with a passion for God’s coming salvation. “For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness” (Malachi 3:2b-3). In a world driven by a passion to maintain the status quo, we choose to live with a passion for God’s peace, to listen to those who call us to righteousness, and to submit ourselves to God’s grace, that we might be refined and purified until we reflect God’s love throughout the earth. We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to passionately pursue the work of making peace in our hearts, our families, our communities, and throughout the earth until God’s kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven.

Continued on back page

December 17 Darkness to Light Lessons and Carols, and December 24 Candlelight booklet enclosed.

Find the **35 bold** words or phrases from the Hymn,
I Heard the Bells

I heard the **bells** on **Christmas** day
Their old **familiar** carols play,
And **wild** and **sweet** the words **repeat**
Of **peace** of earth, **good will** to men.

I thought how, as the **day had come**,
The **belfries** of all **Christendom**
Had **rolled** along th'**unbroken** song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in **despair** I **bowed** my **head**:

"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For **hate** is **strong**, and **mocks** the **song**
Of peace on earth, good will to men."

Then **pealed** the bells more **loud and deep**:

"**God is not dead**, nor **doth He sleep**;
The **wrong shall fail**, the **right prevail**,
With peace on earth, good will to men."

Till, **ringing, singing** on its way,
The world **revolved** from **night** to **day**
A **voice**, a **chime**, a **chant sublime**,
Of peace on **earth**, good will to men.

Christmas Carol - Word Search

Just for fun, or use as a teaching aide with your younger family members.

R Q V E R R A J P S M K H J M M A H L L I W D O O G J N A L
Y E K O M X S J H O C B L S A V M R C L J H R I S W E E T I
M G P D E O C A D F R Q L A A B R Y E T P R O S K B M K M A
A W A E G W C N M R Z W Y I P M Q F P Q I T O L W Y I L A V
D Y Y A A S E D P T E H J A A I K G V K Q P E H M A L Q I E
U O L A K T F F A Y S V V N N F W W L N U B W G G Z B J D R
O Q N C S P M N S H Q I O I H H L G B F R L U N D B U X I P
E X O I G E B P K V Y D R L P E E L S E H H T O D X S E V T
K M R N Y A E C I O V A H H V M M G A B O I P R Z O T E R H
Z H X I W C D A E H R I D E C E D L D H S Q W T L Z N W Q G
C O D G H E V L S I N G I N G G D T L B S K Z S N B A T A I
E I W H S B F O Z D V Z J G Z G R M F X S G A M R O H R A R
Y O T T U M I U Q W D H S Q O S F G T A E Y N V S O C J K I
I F C T G W V D Q H F O E X J O R O L L E D O O P G I F H D
O Y O O K E R A W Q T M F Y W M M S J L C C B L R M L S I M
I U E I Z M T N Q P D C S F B I F G G P V B Y Y Z W M V V C
R K N Q G H F D P B N I Q P F O C O Z C P Y A U Z G S X G I
O H D B F P S D V S O N G W J S D D Z R Q E B X X E A I U E
P U Q G R X Z E R S O E I F U I R B X W P X A C W D L D L J
Z K H M C O O E H E R X T Z S I A M D N F L M L E N L R J T
M K L F X A K P P I X U J N T K I E Y E E G B B E I U P T I
Q O Z T M P I E E R Y U O E A V L U T D E O H N W D P C N F
Y E Z G W I B A N F V T R G N T I D N A W M J G J K L M F X
K S D Y K T R S T L D J N Z Y U M E H E H F I M H Y I J R W
S L L E B T U T K E H I U F P Z A S D K S M K H J G D O S D
P S I D H C U N A B G G F T U P F P U A M S U V C B A C A H
X U R V I W W D A N S I M Y R J V A F N Y W E U D I K M A H
G J O R L H Q A I D L M O C C F Z I V B O B S C P C P X H R
A T E B L P U R C S O C B M E F R R J U I M O D P C D U E F
L R V B H W D W M J D L L H N G G O D N A T R A G Q T V W V

December Worship

Worship Dec 8 continued

Prayer of Confession

God who is always with us, in this season suspended between hope and fulfillment, let us never forget what you have done. May we be overwhelmed by your mercy, which flows in wave after wave. May we be honest about the darkness within us, and perceptive of the light around us. Forgive us of our passive walk with you and the sins that we cling to. As we prepare for your coming again, wash and refine our hearts. May we make straight the path for the Lord, that together we may see God's glory revealed, as we bear the message of hope and peace to the world.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of mercy and grace, we pray that the gifts we offer this morning might be used to bring some compassion to the chaos that is our world. We give these gifts in love, hoping they will heal some of the hurting; and as they do, make the crooked road straight for the coming of the Christ. May the hills that separate us from sisters and brothers be made flat and may the valleys of our isolation be raised up, so we will be ready to welcome the Christ as one. In that holy name, we pray. Amen.

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## Worship Dec 15

### **Scriptures to read and meditate on**

Zeph 3:14-20; Isa 12:2-6; Phil 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

### **Call To Worship - Lighting the Advent Candle**

No matter what troubles overwhelm us today, Isaiah reminds us that in all of our preparation and passionate pursuit of God's coming kingdom, we must not forget that God's salvation has come and is coming. "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). With joy you will remember that God's salvation is already present among us. Faced with the troubles and the suffering of the world, we choose to live in joyful presence to God and one another. We will not turn away from the pain and the hurt in our world, and we will not stop rejoicing in God, whose salvation fills us to overflowing that God's love might flow through us and flood our troubled world with hope, peace, and joy. We light this candle of joy as a sign of our commitment to be present to ourselves, our friends, our families, and our neighbors that in sharing our vulnerable lives we might share in the glorious joy of God's salvation together.

### **Prayer of Confession**

Creator of the universe, we stand amazed at your power and glory. We are eager to worship you and offer our praise, but we are often reluctant to answer when we hear you calling our name. We sing our songs of tribute in the sanctuary, but shy away from the river, lest we be baptized with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Forgive us when we forget your promise to be with us always, O God. Renew us with the power of your ever-present love, and strengthen us to proclaim your justice throughout the world. Amen.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

God of Advent joy, we bring our offerings with hearts open to your transformative call. In this season of anticipation, may our gifts help mend what is broken and share the promise of redemption. Empower us to live fully present lives, giving generously and acting justly. Let these offerings be seeds of hope and joy that will draw us closer to your kingdom. Bless our giving, that it may reflect your love and bring light to our world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

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Worship Dec 29

Scriptures to read and meditate on

1 Sam 2:18-20, 26; Ps 148; Col 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

Our worship service on Dec 29 will be a service of Christmas carols. If you cannot join us in person or online, we encourage you to spend time reflecting on the birth of our Savior, reading the scriptures above and maybe sing a carol or two yourself. Merry Christmas and Blessings for 2025.