

Order for the Worship of God

OPENING PRAYER

Highland Presbyterian Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2015

*God gets down on his knees among us,
gets on our level and shares himself with us.
God does not reside afar off and send diplomatic messages;
he kneels among us. That posture is characteristic of God.*

~ Philippians 2:7

The Message, Eugene Peterson

**Exuberant, Life-giving God,
as Elizabeth, filled with the Spirit,
was moved to bless Mary's child,
so fill us this day with your Spirit
that our hidden hopes may be blessed
and brought to birth,
to the glory of your name,
through the fruit of Mary's womb,
Jesus Christ. Amen.**

GATHERING

†HYMN

Emmanuel

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE

Mary

PRELUDE

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Deanna Lewis Sklar, violin
Dr. Kit Loong Yee, piano

The gospel of Luke tells how Mary meets her cousin Elizabeth:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Kelly

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
the child leaped in her womb.
And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

GATHERING SONG

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Hymn 2

and exclaimed with a loud cry,

CALL TO WORSHIP

Carol Behrmann

"Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb." (Luke 1:41-42)

Welcome! Worship God!
Speak of the promise that calls us.

God speaks in many ways:
Through dreams, visions, new ideas,
and the movement of a child not yet born.

**From a village called Bethlehem comes a leader, God-beloved,
to govern God's people –
to lead us as a shepherd guides the flock
to water and good pasture.**

We light our fourth candle,
asking that we may hear God's call
in our body, mind, and spirit.

With origins deep in the past
comes a child about to be born,

**Living Christ, give us
hope that trusts in you,
peace that surrounds us,
joy that fills our lives,
and love to live for you. Amen.**

**The source of true security –
whose greatness shall reach
to the ends of the earth,
bringing peace.**

†CALL TO CONFESSION

†At this sign, you are invited to rise in body or in spirit.

Bold: all people respond

† SILENT TIME OF PRAYER

+ PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**O God, we confess that we forget who we are.
We don't listen for a still small voice.
We walk with our heads down
and miss all the stars that could be ours,
But we know, O God, that you are a God of Hope
who does not forget your covenant with us,
a shepherd God who looks for lost sheep,
a faithful God who keeps calling us
in spite of our deafness,
a God who enters our history
and opens our eyes
and heals our blindness.
O God, accept us as your children
that we may walk in the hope of your love. Amen.**

+ ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE AND FORGIVENESS

+ PASSING THE PEACE

The hope, peace, joy and love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:39-45

HYMN

To a Maid Engaged to Joseph

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:57-66

SERMON

BORN IN THE GERIATRIC UNIT

RESPONSE

+ HYMN

*Blest Be the God of Israel
Song of Zechariah*

+ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Student Christian Me

**We affirm our hope that a new day is dawning upon us.
We affirm our vision of a new heaven and a new earth.**

**We affirm our belief that the love of God,
which is greater than all understanding,
has the power to unite us
so that we can participate in the creation of a new world**

**We affirm the hope that turns all opportunity into a creative act.
We affirm the hope that enables us to act.
God, in you we hope. Help us to hope together.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERING A GIFT OF GRATITUDE

OFFERTORY

Ave Maria

Deanna Lewis Sklar, violin; Dr. Kit Loong Yee, piano

+ DOXOLOGY

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

Hymn 19

+ PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Pastor Kelly

SENDING

+ CLOSING HYMN

Savior of the Nations, Come

+ BLESSING OF THE ANGELS

+ RESPONSE

Amen (sung twice)

see insert

+ POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

Deanna Lewis Sklar and I