

TULLY UNITED COMMUNITY CHURCH

December 31, 2023, 9:30 AM
The Rev. Richard G. Reed, Pastor



FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

—TOGETHER WE WORSHIP THE LIVING GOD—

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Tully United Community Church would like to acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, Fire-keepers of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands our buildings now stand.

PRELUDE

“Christmas Trilogy”

Trilogy”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We welcome, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, all who have gathered to worship God together – those who are here in person, and those joining us on ZOOM. Are there any **BRIEF** announcements? Let us worship God.

GREETING

Celebrant: We rejoice in you, O God, all the earth rejoices and sings glory to your name. As Christ's beauty shines forth, we praise your great salvation and celebrate the merciful love that reconciles us to you. We bless you, O God, and we join all peoples in praising you, Emmanuel – God-With-Us!

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Liturgist: We who knelt in the stable—

People: Let us come and kneel in this sacred space.

L: Let our mouths give thanks, and our hearts rejoice!

P: Let our spirits sing, with songs unknown to mortals!

L: O children, let us praise the Lord together!

P: Let us come into God's presence and be reborn!

L: Together let us pray:

Emmanuel, God-With-Us, kindle your spark within us, that together we may shine forth your Light; a Light that banishes the shadows of this world, a Light that enlightens even the most brilliant mind to the humble love born in a cattle stall and laid in the feeding bin of the animals. Bring us again and again into the simple grace of your nativity story and make of us the continuation of your Christmas miracle: God-With-Us, now and evermore. Amen.

**CAROL

“Angels We Have Heard On High”

#238

1. Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains:
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria In excelsis Deo!

Gloria In excelsis Deo!

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song?
(Refrain)

3. Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing:
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
(Refrain)

4. See Him in a manger laid, Whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, While our hearts in love we raise.
(Refrain)

**PASSING THE PEACE

Celebrant: *The peace of Christ be with you.*

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Celebrant: *Let us share signs of welcome and peace with our neighbors.*

-WE REJOICE IN THE WORD OF GOD-

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Liturgist: A reading from the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah rejoices in the salvation of the Lord.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my whole being shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
You shall be a beautiful crown in the hand of the LORD
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Here ends the reading.

PSALTER

Psalm 148

#861

R

♪ Gloria, in excelsis Deo! ♪

Liturgist: Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise the Lord in the heights.

**People: Praise the Lord, all his angels;
praise the Lord, all his hosts!**

L: Praise the Lord, sun and moon;
praise the Lord, all shining stars.

**P: Praise the Lord, highest heavens,
and all waters above the heavens! R**

L: Let them praise the name of the LORD,
who commanded and they were created,

**P: Who established them for ever and ever,
and fixed their bounds which cannot be passed.**

L: Praise the LORD from the earth,
sea monsters and all deeps,

**P: fire and hail, snow and smoke,
stormy wind fulfilling God's command! R**

L: Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

**P: Beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!**

Celebrant: Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

**Liturgist: Young men and maidens together,
old men and children!**

L: Let them praise the name of the LORD,
whose name alone is exalted;
whose glory is above earth and heaven.

**P: God has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful ones,
for the people of Israel, who are near their God.**

Praise the LORD! R

SECOND LESSON

Galatians 4:4-7

Liturgist: A reading from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Galatians regarding the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Here ends the reading.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

****THE GOSPEL****+ Luke 2:22-40 +**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

SERMON

The Rev. Richard G. Reed

CHRISTMAS CAROL HYMN SING

The congregation can pick hymns from the Christmas section and we will sing a few verses of each.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“The Birthday Of A King”
Jaci Columbo, Soloist

Neidlinger

- WE BOW BEFORE THE LORD IN PRAYER -

SHARING JOYS, AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER (using “sins”)

#894

Bidding: O magnify the Lord with me;

Response: let us rejoice in God our Savior!

Celebrant: *In peace with God and with one another, let us offer to God our hearts desires and our concerns for our world and ourselves, saying: O magnify the Lord with me; **let us rejoice in God our Savior!***

Liturgist: To you, O giver of joy, we praise you that in the fullness of time you came to be with us and to give us hope, peace and the joy of eternal life. We thank you that in Mary you found one who would willingly give over control of her life, trusting in you, for the sake of your love of us.

O magnify the Lord with me; **let us rejoice in God our Savior!**

We rejoice that we have received grace upon grace in the giving of your Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior. Forgive us for our frequent unwillingness to let your joy spring to life in our midst, and the self-centeredness that has kept us from reveling in the fullness of your joy. Refashion us that we might recognize the greatness of your gift, and release the joy that you have planted deeply within us.

O magnify the Lord with me; **let us rejoice in God our Savior!**

Because you have made us for joy, Lord, we are burdened to see a world that is fearful and joyless. As trouble, oppression, grief and sorrow pervades our world, the joy of life seems to fade from our sight. Yet, we have been called by you to entrust our world’s needs and our own to your safekeeping. And so we trust that you will bring to fruition your promise of redemption. Inspire us to trust you more, and to joyfully bring to our world the news of your presence in our midst.

O magnify the Lord with me; **let us rejoice in God our Savior!**

We pray for all your children in their need. To those who are fearful and oppressed, give freedom; to those who are hungry and homeless, give help; to those who are lonely and grieving, give your peace; and to those who are sick, give healing and hope. We especially pray for those whom we have named aloud and those we bring to you now in the silence. We give thanks for the lives of those who have passed and for all your saints who rest in peace with you.

O magnify the Lord with me; **let us rejoice in God our Savior!**

Celebrant: Reveal to us the salvation that you have prepared for us. Make us to walk in your paths of righteousness and peace, and fill us with joy, as we pray in Christ's name, even as he taught us, saying:

**“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 sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.”**

- WE OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD -

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Celebrant: Christ our Lord has shown the greatest love of all, in offering himself to us in the flesh. He invites you to meet him here, to receive his gifts, and to give of yourself.

****DOXOLOGY, PRESENTATION, AND OFFERTORY PRAYER**

#95

Celebrant: We celebrate your love, God of life, in these gifts and in the daily lives we lead that allow us to bring them. We would give you all, and ask that you bless these tokens of our very selves, so that the world may receive your ultimate gift of love in Jesus Christ, our coming Lord. Amen.

- WE ARE SENT TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS -

****HYMN**

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

#251

*Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain, That Jesus Christ is born.*

**1. While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. Refrain**

**2. The shepherds feared and trembled, When lo! above the earth,
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed the Savior's birth. Refrain**

**3. Down in a lowly manger The humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. Refrain**

****BLESSING AND BENEDICTION**

Celebrant: Beloved, we have heard and trusted in the good news of Jesus Christ. Go now into the world to do and see still greater things, to open heaven upon earth and bear witness to eternal life today; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

P: Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

ORGAN POSTLUDE

“Paeon Of The Nativity”

Taylor

****Indicates to rise if you are able**

Thoughts to Ponder After Worship:

- **How do you think the Lord repays you for the offerings that you bring?**
- **How are you an offering – a gift – to others on God's behalf? How do you see your life fitting into the story of the gift of Jesus?**
- **How do you share kindness, forgiveness, gratitude and peace in your daily life?**
- **What are the stories of Jesus that you treasure in your heart?**