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As you enter the worship space, feel free to go to the altar and light a candle representing your life and the light you are to the world. May you shine brightly throughout the week.

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**Prelude:**

*Unto Us*

Aaron Shust (b.1975)

No matter who you are or where you are on your faith journey, **you are welcome here!**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**We are gathered and ready and aware of God's presence.**

**Chime~**

**Silence~**

**Prayer~**

**Opening Song:**

*Make Room*

Family hiding from the storm  
Found no place at the keeper's door.  
It was for this a child was born,  
To save a world so cold and hollow.

The sleeping town, it did not know,  
That lying in a manger low,  
A savior king who had no home  
has come to heal our sorrows.

*Is there room in your heart?  
Is there room in your heart?  
Is there room in your heart  
For God to write his story?*

Shepherds counting sheep at night,  
Do not fear the glory light.  
You are precious in his sight,  
God has come to raise the lowly.

*Is there room in your heart?  
Is there room in your heart?  
Is there room in your heart  
For God to write his story?*

You can come as you are,  
But it may set you apart.  
Then you make room in your heart,  
And trade your dreams for his glory.  
Make room in your heart,  
Make room in your heart.

Mother holds the promise tight,  
Every wrong will be made right.  
The road is straight,  
The burden's light,  
For in his hands he holds tomorrow.

*Is there room in your heart?  
Is there room in your heart?  
Is there room in your heart  
For God to write his story?*

You can come as you are,  
But it may set you apart.  
Then you make room in your heart,  
And trade your dreams for his glory.  
Make room in your heart,  
Make room in your heart...

**1st Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14****Cheryl Glasker**

*God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.*

<sup>7</sup> Thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,  
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;  
proclaim, give praise, and say,  
"Save, O Lord, your people,  
the remnant of Israel."

<sup>8</sup> See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north  
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,  
among them the blind and the lame,  
those with child and those in labor together;  
a great company, they shall return here.

<sup>9</sup> With weeping they shall come,  
and with consolations I will lead them back;  
I will let them walk by brooks of water,  
in a straight path where they shall not stumble,  
for I have become a father to Israel,  
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

<sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,  
and declare it in the coastlands far away;  
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him  
and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock."

<sup>11</sup> For the Lord has ransomed Jacob  
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

<sup>12</sup> They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,  
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,  
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,  
and over the young of the flock and the herd;  
their life shall become like a watered garden,  
and they shall never languish again.

<sup>13</sup> Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,  
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy;  
I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow.

<sup>14</sup> I will give the priests their fill of fatness,  
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,  
says the Lord.

**Gospel Acclamation:***Open Our Eyes, Lord*

Open our eyes, Lord. We want to see Jesus, to reach out and touch him and say that we love him.  
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen. Open our eyes, Lord. We want to see Jesus.

## Gospel Reading: John 1:1-5

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

Help us God, as we seek to interpret what this means for our lives.

## Message

## Reception of Tithes & Offerings

**Offertory:** *Welcome to Our World* Chris Rice (b.1962)  
Caitlin McNeish, Kelly Brightbill, Katie LaRosa

**Offering Response:** DIX

As they offered gifts most rare at the cradle, rude and bare.  
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.

## Affirmation of Faith *(Please kneel if able.)*

**We believe in a God who walks headfirst into the world's suffering,  
who lights a candle in the darkest night,  
who pulls back the curtain so we can see the stars.  
We believe in a God who does not shy away from the truth,  
who is bold in seeking justice, and humble in taking power.  
We believe in a God who sees our hurt and wraps love around it,  
cocooning us in hope, tethering us to one another.  
We believe in a God who is always carrying us from the pain of the world  
into the hope of a new day.  
That is where God is headed. That is where we follow. May it be so.  
Amen.**

## Prayers of the Church

**Tiffany Wilten**

*After each petition:* Show us where you are headed, **so that we may follow.**

Mark Rambo, Kris Richard, Natalie & Dane Kmetz, Leona, Richard, Sharon Middleton,  
Beryl LaFond, Danielle Kirchner, The Foote Family, Ashley Viegas, Mary Ann Kolumber,  
Karen, Michel Daage, Mariah Butterfield, George Suarez, Meghan, Tammy Harding,  
Steven Portnoy, Bill Tone, Keith Schaedel, Kyle

*Finally and together:* **Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh,  
we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God,  
in the name of Jesus, whom we love and follow.  
Amen.**

## **Words of Institution** *(Please kneel if able.)*

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for all."

We gather at this table and remember how on the night when Jesus was handed over, he gathered with his disciples in the upper room and together they shared in an ordinary meal that had extraordinary implications.

For at this table,

**Jesus broke bread and shared wine with one who betrayed him.**

At this table,

**Jesus broke bread and shared wine with one who denied him.**

At this table,

**Jesus broke bread and shared wine with those who fled in his time of need.**

At this table,

**Jesus broke bread and shared wine with people from all walks of life.**

And so whenever we gather at this table to share the bread and the cup in this community of faith, we proclaim Jesus' life, which affirms there is a place at the table for all people, for the love of God transcends every power that tries to contain it.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Preparation Song:** *Sanctuary*

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.  
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you...

### **ALL ARE WELCOME**

Come to the banquet where no one is turned away, and there is always enough for everyone.

**Distribution Hymns:** *Of the Father's Love Begotten* **ELW #295**

*The Bells of Christmas* **ELW #298**

## **Communion Prayer**

Gracious God, as we received this bread and wine,  
we receive the presence and life of Christ within us  
so that the spirit of Christ might work through us.  
**Amen.**

**Closing Song:** *Go Tell It on the Mountain* **EWL #290**

## **Benediction**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

## **Postlude**