

**United Methodist Church at Shrub Oak - ORDER OF WORSHIP**  
**December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – Third Sunday of Advent**

**ALTAR FLOWERS:** The flowers on the altar are given by Mary Vance, "In celebration of Xavier Payne's 12<sup>th</sup> Birthday, with love from his family."

**GREETING**

**CALL TO WORSHIP:**

L: Come and rejoice in God!

**P: Sing praise to God who continually blesses our lives!**

L: In the midst of troubles and stress, God is near, offering compassion.

**P: Our hope is in the Lord.**

L: Let all the people praise God.

**P: Hallelujah! AMEN.**

**PRAISE & WORSHIP:**

**PRAISE SHARING**

**LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE** - FWS #2090 (v.1,2,3)

**OPENING PRAYER:**

Lord, we have come to this place from a world of demands and schedules. We have sought hope and peace and have found them here. Now we seek the inner joy that only your presence can bring to our lives. Open our hearts and our spirits to your love. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

**OPENING HYMN:** "O Little Town of Bethlehem" – UMH #230

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION:**

It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn a deaf ear because we feel we just can't meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything but rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE:**

Hear the Good News: The messenger has been sent to you, proclaiming that there is One who is Coming who will heal and lead you. Know that this is a great gift from God, who has always and will always love you. AMEN.

**SCRIPTURE READING:** Zephaniah 3:14-20 (NIV)  
Isaiah 12:2-6 (NIV)  
Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)

## **CHILDREN'S MOMENTS**

**HYMN of PREPARATION:** "Once in David's Royal City" – UMH #250

**GOSPEL:** John 1:6-14 (NIV)

**SERMON:** Tapping in to Joy

1. God Rejoices Over us with Singing
2. Comfort and Joy
3. Rejoice in the Lord Always

**RESPONSE:** "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" – UMH #229

## **OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY:** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

## **DOXOLOGY**

## **PASTORAL PRAYER/LORD'S PRAYER**

**CLOSING HYMN:** "Joy to The World" – UMH #246

## **BENEDICTION:**

May the love of God fill us until we overflow with joy. May the coming of the Christ Child free us to live in an upside-down world. May the Holy Spirit empower us to work for the reign of God on earth. At Christmas and throughout the year, may we be inspired to share the good news of God's vision of peace and love. Amen.

<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/4441/worship-elements-december-11-2022>

<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3292/worship-connection-december-15-2024>

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **Zephaniah 3:14-20** (NIV)

<sup>14</sup> Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup> The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm.

<sup>16</sup> On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.

<sup>17</sup> The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

<sup>18</sup> "I will remove from you all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals, which is a burden and reproach for you.

<sup>19</sup> At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame.

<sup>20</sup> At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes

### **Isaiah 12:2-6** (NIV)

<sup>2</sup> Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.”

<sup>3</sup> With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

<sup>4</sup> In that day you will say: “Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup> Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world.

<sup>6</sup> Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

### **Philippians 4:4-7** (NIV)

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

<sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

<sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

## GOSPEL READING

### John 1:6-14 (NIV)

<sup>3</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—

<sup>2</sup> during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

<sup>3</sup> He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>4</sup> As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth.

<sup>6</sup> And all people will see God’s salvation.””

## **UMCSO SCHEDULE**

**Zoom links are included in Mailchimp. Please contact us with your email (umcso.ny@gmail.com) or call 914-245-4682 if you would like to receive Mailchimp emails.**

### **WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP:** Monday, 7:00 pm (Zoom)

**MORNING BIBLE STUDY:** Tuesday, 10:00 am, GP Room

**EVENING BIBLE STUDY:** Tuesday, 7:00 pm (Zoom)

**PRAYER GROUP:** Thursday, 11:00 am (Chapel)

**SMALL GROUP 1:** Thursday, 1:00 pm (ZOOM)

**EVENING BIBLE STUDY:** Thursdays, 7:30 pm with Pastor Sandy (ZOOM). (See link below).

**SMALL GROUP 2:** Friday, 10:00 am (phone 1-267-807-9495; 656355452#)

**MEN'S GROUP:** Saturday 8:00 am (ZOOM)

**SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY:** 9:30 am in the GP room (In person)

**SMALL GROUP LEADERS MTG:** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month, 9:30 am. Next: Dec. 21st

**TRUSTEES MEETING:** First Monday of every month, 7:30 pm (Zoom)

### **Pastor Sandy Mantz invites you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

Topic: Bible Study

Date/Time: Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2610447551?pwd=MXVIUGgvOFRrS3RZNVB2a0plRi8rUT09>

Meeting ID: 261 044 7551

Passcode: 246240

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,2610447551#,,,,\*246240# US

+16465588656,,2610447551#,,,,\*246240# US (New York)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **DECEMBER EVENTS AND CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS:**

**14<sup>th</sup>: Cookie Swap – 12-3 pm (A sign-up sheet is posted in the breezeway)**

**21<sup>st</sup>: -Tres Dias Christmas Secuela 2:00 pm in the sanctuary, followed by refreshments and fellowship in the GP Room.**

**- Pageant rehearsal at 4:30 in the Parish Hall with pizza dinner.**

**- Live Nativity at 6:30 pm**

**22<sup>nd</sup>: Christmas Pageant**

**24<sup>th</sup>: Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 pm**

**POINSETTIAS: Just a reminder...the cut off date for placing poinsettia orders is this Sunday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>!**

**REACH US ON FACEBOOK**

United Methodist Church at Shrub Oak

<https://www.facebook.com/Blessedassurancetoday>

There is a link to the Church's website

Pastor Sandy will post inspirational verses regularly.

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**This Week's B'days:**

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|------------------|-------|
| Dianne Benincasa | 12/15 |
| Doreen Matthews  | 12/17 |
| Aria Supino      | 12/18 |
| Nick Aryee       | 12/19 |
| Jordan Philips   | 12/19 |
| Gary Speedling   | 12/20 |

**No Anniversaries This Week**

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