**First Free Methodist Church of Saginaw**

**Second Sunday after Christmas**

**January 2, 2022**



*“All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being" (John 1:3)*

Minister: Bill Erickson

First Free Methodist Church

2625 N. Center Rd.

Saginaw, Michigan 48603

Phone: (989) 799-2930

Email: saginawfmc@gmail.com

[www.saginawfirstfmc.org](http://www.saginawfirstfmc.org)

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**Prelude**

**\*\*Greeting/Announcements**

**\*Call to Worship** (*spoken responsively*)

L: The Holy One called to the earth

**P: Heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds**

L: Eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem

**P: The virgin gave birth to a son**

L: God’s splendor shines as a bright star

**P: Where the Light of the world is humbly born**

L: The Light of life came in flesh, born into human pain and joy

**P: Giving us the power to be children of God**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “Come, Christians, Join to Sing” #115 (vv.1-3)

**Come, Christians, join to sing**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Loud praise to Christ our King**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Let all, with heart and voice**

**Before his throne rejoice**

**Praise is his gracious choice**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Come, lift your hearts on high**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Let praises fill the sky**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**He is our guide and friend**

**To us he'll condescend**

**His love shall never end**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Praise yet our Christ again**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**Life shall not end the strain**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**On heaven’s blissful shore**

**His goodness we’ll adore**

**Singing forevermore**

**Alleluia! Amen!**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: Almighty God, look upon our lives and cause all darkness and doubt to vanish beneath your gaze. Look upon our ministries and banish all barriers to effectiveness and faithfulness. Fill our life and mission with receptiveness to your Holy Spirits directive, that we may always be led into paths of fruitful ministry. May we continually be reminded of your incarnation, as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples…

**P: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**\*Gloria Patri**

**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.​**

**First Scripture Lesson:** Jeremiah 31:7-14

 For 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.”

 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. 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 in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

 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 a flock.”

 For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. 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.

 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. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

**Prayer of Confession**

L: Wisdom leads a holy people to the reward of their labors; guides them along a marvelous way. Let wisdom lead our souls, so our spirits may grow calm, our vision be clear, and our purpose be unified…

**P:** **My God, I desire to love thee perfectly, with all my heart which you made for thyself. With all my mind, which only you can satisfy. With all my soul, which feign would soar to thee. With all my strength, my feeble strength, which shrinks before. Claim thou my heart, fill thou my mind, uplift my soul and reinforce my strength, that when I fail thou may succeed in me and make me love thee perfectly.\*\***

**Affirmation of Faith:** Psalm 147

**P:** **Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your children within you. He grants peace within your borders; he fills you with the finest of wheat. He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool; he scatters frost like ashes. He hurls down hail like crumbs-- who can stand before his cold? He sends out his word, and melts them; he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.**

**Hymn of Affirmation:** “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” #51 (vv.1-3)

**Come, thou Fount of every blessing**

**Tune my heart to sing thy grace**

**Streams of mercy, never ceasing**

**Call for songs of loudest praise**

**Teach me some melodious sonnet**

**Sung by flaming tongues above**

**Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it**

**Mount of God’s unchanging love**

**Here I raise my Ebenezer**

**Hither by thy help I've come**

**And I hope, by thy good pleasure**

**Safely to arrive at home**

**Jesus sought me when a stranger**

**Wandering from the fold of God**

**He, to rescue me from danger**

**Interposed His precious blood**

**Oh, to grace how great a debtor**

**Daily I'm constrained to be**

**Let that grace, now like a fetter**

**Bind my yielded heart to Thee**

**Let me know Thee in Thy fullness**

**Guide me by Thy mighty hand**

**Till transformed in Thine own image**

**In Thy presence I shall stand**

**Second Scripture Lesson****:** Ephesians 1:3-14

 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.

 He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

 In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

**Children’s Sermon**

**Passing of the Peace**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Gospel Lesson****:** John 1:10-18

 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”)

 From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

**Sermon:** “”

**Prayer of Response**

**Hymn of Response:** “As with Gladness Men of Old” #200 (vv.1-4)

**As with gladness men of old**

**Did the guiding star behold**

**As with joy they hailed its light**

**Leading onward, beaming bright**

**So, most gracious Lord, may we**

**Evermore be led by thee**

**As with joyful steps they sped**

**Savior, to thy lowly bed**

**There to bend the knee before**

**Him whom heav’n and earth adore**

**So may we with willing feet**

**Ever seek thy mercy seat**

**As they offered gifts most rare**

**In that dwelling 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**

**Holy Jesus, ev’ry day**

**Keep us in the narrow way**

**And, when earthly things are past**

**Bring our ransomed souls at last**

**Where they need no star to guide**

**Where no clouds thy glory hide**

**Invitation of Offering**

L:The royal son will rule from age to age. All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him. His name will endure forever, as we collect this morning’s tithes and offerings.

**\*Doxology**

**\*Prayer**

**\*Closing Hymn**: “We Three Kings” #202 (vv.1-2,5)

**We three kings of Orient are**

**Bearing gifts we traverse afar**

**Field and fountain, moor and mountain**

**Following yonder star**

**O star of wonder, star of light**

**Star with royal beauty bright**

**Westward leading, still proceeding**

**Guide us to thy perfect light**

**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain**

**Gold I bring to crown him again**

**King forever, ceasing never**

**Over us all to reign**

**O star of wonder, star of light**

**Star with royal beauty bright**

**Westward leading, still proceeding**

**Guide us to thy perfect light**

**Glorious now behold him arise**

**King and God and sacrifice**

**Alleluia, Alleluia**

**Earth to heav’n replies**

**O star of wonder, star of light**

**Star with royal beauty bright**

**Westward leading, still proceeding**

**Guide us to thy perfect light**

**\*Benediction**

L: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. May Christ’s light shine in darkest corners our world. May Christ’s light illuminate our paths. May all see the star leading to salvation in us. Go in peace to love and serve. Amen.