

**\*Response:** “Shalom”

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,  
Kami no mi megumi.** *(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace,  
peace, may we be blessed with grace from God.)*

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom  
yuta kani, yuta kani, yuta kani.** *(Peace, peace, until we meet  
again. Peace, peace, abundantly, abundantly, abundantly.)*

**Postlude**

Janet Hill

*We invite you to remain seated during the Postlude as we enjoy the music  
and God’s presence together. If you need to go, please feel free to do so. Go  
with God’s blessings.*

**In Appreciation:**

**Greeters:** Luyan Tang, Gary Younglove

**Ushers:** Betsy Eskridge, Irene Uno

**Parking:** Jonathan Sakakibara

**Sound System:** Lois Van Beers

**Zoom Moderator/Greeter:** Lori Hart

**Altar Flowers:** Lynn Yamamoto,

In loving memory of her parents, Masa and Fusako



## The Celebration of Worship

December 28, 2025 • First Sunday of Christmas

Guest Pastor:	Rev. Rola Al Ashkar
Worship Leader:	Sue Goodwin
Pianist:	Janet Hill
Choir Conductor:	Ben Pryor
Japanese Reader:	Michael Wright
YES:	Julie Chew, Cathy Nishizaki

### Centering Prayer for Advent Worship

*Now, may we all take a deep breath  
and center ourselves in this place.  
Christ is born. God has come. We are not alone.  
Let us celebrate that good news. Let us dwell with God!*

**Prelude** Janet Hill

**\*Introit**

**All: Make us one, Lord, make us one. Holy Spirit make us  
one. Let Your love flow so the world will know, we are one  
in You.**

**Welcome and Announcements** Rev. Rola Al Ashkar

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*\* Those who can, please stand*

## Call to Worship

Sue Goodwin

Leader: I have good news!

**People: I have good news!**

Leader: Christ is born!

**People: Christ is born!**

Leader: is alive!

**People: Joy is alive!**

Leader: God is here.

**People: God is here.**

*(Repeat 3x)*

Leader: Thanks be to God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## \*Opening Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High (#23)

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.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?

*Refrain.* Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis deo.

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

*Refrain.* Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis deo.

## Invitation to Confession

Sue Goodwin

Leader: God came to dwell with us so we can dwell with God.  
What good news! Let us confess together to God, knowing that  
the honest truth of our lives only makes this good news better.  
Let us pray:

## Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Congregation

**All: Our Parent Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on 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.**

## \*Sending Hymn: Go, Tell It on the Mountain (#29)

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

While shepherds kept their watching  
O'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold thru-out the heavens  
There shone a holy light.

*Refrain.*

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

*Refrain.*

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

*Refrain.*

## \*Benediction

Rev. Rola Al Ashkar

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

“A voice was heard in Ramah,  
weeping and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be comforted, because they care no more.”  
But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.” And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

#### Musical Interlude

Janet Hill

#### Opportunity To Present Offerings

**All: Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, God's Son. (Repeat) And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. (Repeat) Give thanks. Give thanks.**

#### \*Doxology

**All: Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

#### \*Prayer of Dedication

Sue Goodwin

#### Joys & Concerns

Rev. Rola Al Ashkar

#### Prayer of Confession

Sue Goodwin

Leader: Holy God, too often we feel as if change is hopeless and we cannot truly make a difference, so we let go of hope.

**People: Too often we let our spirits get anxious, and instead of praying and working for peace, We give it up.**

Leader: Too often we paint joy as naive or a luxury reserved for good times only, so in our hardships, we turn away from it.

**People: And too often we hold love so tightly, and we opt for easy love for those we favor.**

**All: Forgive us for extinguishing the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, and restore us into your light.**

#### *A Time for Silent Contemplation*

*This time of quiet is offered to encourage you to share your personal thoughts with God as well as listen to God through the presence of the Holy Spirit.*

#### Assurance of God's Grace

Sue Goodwin

Leader: Family of faith, God came into this world so that we could live in the light. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**People: No matter how many times we turn our back on hope, peace, joy, and love, God continues to light our way.**

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Response to God's Forgiveness:** Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me (#582 Glory to God hymnal)

*All Sing:* Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,  
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,  
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

#### \*Passing of the Peace

Sue Goodwin

Leader: As the forgiven and redeemed people of God, let us share our peace and joy with one another. The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

## Children's Message

Sue Goodwin

*Children and youth may now go to YES.*

### \*Hymn of Reflection: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (#31)

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Refrain.* Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold him come,  
Offspring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail th'incarnate Deity,  
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel.

*Refrain.*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
Risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
Born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise us from the earth,  
Born to give us second birth.

*Refrain.*

## Unison Prayer of Guidance

**All:** Now may the words of our mouths, the meditations of our hearts, the interpretation of our minds, and the response of our hands be acceptable to You, our Lord and our Redeemer. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Scripture Reading (Japanese)

Michael Wright

Psalm 65:11

You crown the year with your goodness, And your paths drip with abundance.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Scripture Reading

Sue Goodwin

Isaiah 63:7-9

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us and the great favor to God's people that God has shown them according to God's mercy, according to the abundance of God's steadfast love. For God said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not act deceitfully," and God became their savior in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but God's presence that saved them; in God's love and pity it was God who redeemed them; who lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Scripture Reading & Sermon

Rev. Rola Al Ashkar

"A Fresh Beginning - Aligned"

Matthew 2:13-23

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."