

HANGING OF



THE GREENS

December 1, 2024

WELCOME TO
LITHIA SPRINGS METHODIST CHURCH

Chiming of the Hour
Glenn McElroy

Welcome and Announcements
Rev. Thomas Long

Call to Celebration

Leader:
The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of
God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be
with you all!

People:
And also with you!

Leader:
Christ has come! Christ has died! Christ is
risen! Christ will come again!

People:
This is the faith of Jesus Christ!

Leader:
When we look at the world around us, we see
the darkness of war, captivity, greed and
broken relationships.

People:
**We long for Christ to come again and
bring light to the world.**

Leader:
The Word of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ
lives among us, bringing truth and light as a
present reality.

All:
**We worship as those who have a
glimpse of that reality, and we long for
its fullness. We are those who labor to
make Christ's light more visible on
earth. Let us praise God, that the light of
Christ shines on in the darkness, which
has never overcome it. To God be the
glory in Jesus Christ and in the church
forever and ever. Amen.**

Opening Prayer

Prelude
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Arr. Jason W. Krug
Glenn McElroy

The Meaning of the Service
Paul Wilkerson

***Carol**
Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus
Words by Charles Wesley
Music by Rowland Prichard
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Come, Thou long expected Jesus,
born to set Thy people free,
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth Thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to Thy glorious throne.

The Sanctuary Evergreens
Jim Lantz

The Christ of the Cross
Lenore Lantz

Carol
Go, Tell It on the Mountain
Words by John W. Work, Jr.
Music by William Farley Smith
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CHORUS

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 throughout the heavens
there shown a holy light.

CHORUS

The shepherds feared and trembled,
when lo! Above the earth,
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.

CHORUS

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

CHORUS

The Christmas Poinsettia
Susan Savage

Anthem: Beautiful Star of Bethlehem
Chancel Choir

Old Testament Reading
Isaiah 2: 1 - 5 (NRSV)
Lucretia Dallas

1 The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

3 Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. "For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall

beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Epistle Reading
Romans 13:11 - 14 (NRSV)
Russell Dallas

11 Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12 the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13 let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

*Carol

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Words by Georg Weissel; Catherine Winkworth

Music by Thomas Williams

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Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
behold, the King of glory waits,
the King of kings is drawing near,
the Savior of the world is here!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come, with us abide;
our hearts to Thee we open wide;
let us Thy inner presence feel;
Thy grace and love in us reveal.
Thy Holy Spirit lead us on
until our glorious goal is won;
eternal praise, eternal fame
Be offered, Savior, to Thy name!

***Gospel Reading**
Matthew 3:1-12 (NRSV)
Jim Smith

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

4 Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Reader:

This is the Word of God, for the people of God

All:
Thanks be to God.

**The Paraments and
The Advent Colors**
Pat Smith

Carol
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Words by John Mason Neale
Music by Thomas Helmore
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O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

CHORUS

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee O Israel.

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show
and cause us in her ways to go.

CHORUS

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

CHORUS

The Advent Candles
Bart, Jess and Sam Arther

The Nativity
Bart, Jess and Sam Arther

Carol
Away in a Manger
Words by Anonymous; John Thomas McFarland
Music by James R. Murray
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Away in a manger,
no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus
laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky
looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus,
asleep in the hay.

The cattle are lowing,
the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus,
no crying he makes;
I love Thee, Lord Jesus,
look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle
till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask Thee to stay
close by me forever
and love me I pray;
Bless all the dear children
in Thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven
to live with Thee there.

The Gifts of Christmas Margaret L. Jackson

The Offertory Prayer Rev. Thomas Long

The Offertory **Infant Holy, Infant Lowly** Arr. Lani Smith John Gentry & Glenn McElroy

***The Doxology**
Words: Thomas Ken
Music: Louis Bourgeois
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Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

The Christmas Tree Joetta Hayes

Carol Medley
Angels, From the Realms of Glory
Words by James Montgomery
Music by Henry T. Smart
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Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,

now proclaim Messiah's birth;
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant Light:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Words by James Chadwick
Music by Edward Shippen Barnes
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Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains.

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.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Words by Charles Wesley
Music by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
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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 host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem!
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 the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King!

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 man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King!

The Lighting of the Christmas Tree Karen Forehand

The lights on our tree shine as a symbol of the true Light so we may reflect that light to a darkened world.

Special Music **O Holy Night** Vickie Brubaker

Words by Placide Cappeau; John Sullivan Dwight
Music by Adolphe Charles Adam
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The Christ of Christmas Rev. Thomas Long

The greatest gift of Christmas is the gift of God in Christ Jesus. All that we do at this Holy Season points to that expression of Holy Love. Christ came as a babe in Bethlehem, God's gift at Christmas. In that gift is life, hope and a future, reconciliation between God and all of us too often wayward human beings.

Leader: The day of the Lord is coming soon.
The signs have been fulfilled.

All: But who can abide the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?



Leader: Lest that day surprise us unawares, let us confess our sins to God our Father, imploring his forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ, who will soon come as Judge and King, most merciful God.

All: We long for your coming, O God. But we are often unprepared for you to come, because we have not always lived as your people. Many times in our lives, we have disobeyed your will. We have not always done what we should have done. Sometimes, we failed and sinned. We implore your forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ, and seek the power of your Holy Spirit to restore our faith.

Leader: He who is coming has come, born among us to live our life and die our death, and guarantee our resurrection. For his sake I proclaim to you forgiveness of sin and transformation through Jesus Christ. The gifts of the Lord are yours in great abundance.

All: Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

Benediction

Rev. Thomas Long

Postlude

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

Arr. Lyndell Leatherman

Glenn McElroy



This Week's Schedule

Today, December 1:

9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School
9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Hanging of the Greens

Monday, December 2:

7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts Troop 62

Tuesday, December 3:

7:00 p.m. Admin

Wednesday, December 4:

4:30 p.m. Prayer Group
6:00 p.m. Cub Scout Pack 62
6:45 p.m. Handbells
7:15 p.m. Choir Practice

Thursday, December 5:

11:00 a.m. OCCDC Packing Party
6:00 p.m. HFTB Meeting

Friday, December 6:

3:00 p.m. HFTB Scene Sort

Saturday, December 7:

9:00 a.m. HFTB Setup
8:00 a.m. OCCDC Gift Distribution

Sunday, December 8:

9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School
9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Christmas Cantata

Christmas Cantata Dec. 8th

Celebrate the joy of the season with us during worship on Sunday, December 8th, as our Chancel and Handbell Choirs present the Christmas Cantata, "Once Upon a Holy Night." This special musical offering is a beautiful way to reflect on the miracle of Christ's birth. Invite your friends and family to share in this festive and meaningful experience.

Operation Christmas Child Douglas County

New, unwrapped Christmas gifts for children of all ages who are in need within Douglas County can be dropped off in the collection boxes located behind the Sanctuary and in the Children's Wing. Join us on Thursday, December 5th at 11am in the Fellowship Hall to pack bags with toys and candy in preparation for distribution to families on December 7th.

How Far to Bethlehem

Our annual live nativity drive-thru is being held on December 13, 14, 15 from 7pm-9pm. If you would

like to volunteer as an actor or in another capacity, please call the church office, as it takes many hands to make this happen. It is a truly moving experience that shares with the community the hope, peace, and fulfillment that Christ's birth brings and is a powerful reminder of God's love and the promise of salvation.

Donations are needed to help make HFTB a special event! Contributions of apple juice, homemade desserts, cookies, or snack cakes may be dropped off from Sunday, December 8, through Friday, December 13, in the conference room across from the church office or in the kitchen. Please clearly label your contributions with "HFTB." Monetary donations are also welcomed.

A meal is served every evening of HFTB at 5pm, before actors must dress at 6pm and take the stage at 7pm, when the community arrives. Thank you all, once again, for your generosity and support of our programs!

The Brotherhood of Methodist Men is seeking volunteers! Join them on Friday, December 6th at 3pm to sort out the HFTB parts, by scene, on the basketball court. Next, bring your cordless drills, pickup trucks, and trailers on Saturday, December 7th at 9am to help set up the scenes. **Meet up at Tiffany's on Lee Rd.** at 8am Saturday, December 7th for breakfast!

LSMC Christmas Party

Immediately following worship service on December 22nd we will head down to the Fellowship Hall for a fun, festive catered celebration! Stay tuned for details in the coming weeks.

Donate Used Eyeglasses

The Progressive Class is carrying on the legacy of Barbara Marquez, who dedicated 20 years to sending eyeglasses into the mission field. Your donation of gently used eyeglasses can help bring the gift of clear vision to those in need. A collection box is located in the Progressive classroom. Thank you for continuing this impactful ministry!

To contact the church office,
please send correspondence to
office@lithiaspringsmethodist.org

Or call 770.948.5429

For online giving visit:
<https://613e4b45.churchtrac.com/give>
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