

# HOPE CHURCH



*The Ten Young Women, JESUS MAFA 1973*

*Third Sunday in Advent*  
December 14, 2025

# Reflections

"Have yourself a merry little Christmas.  
It may be your last.  
Next year we may all be living in the past. ...  
From now on, we'll have to muddle through somehow.  
So have yourself a merry little Christmas now."

Hugh Martin, "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"

"Advent is the dialectic between the waiting and the hastening, the faithful confidence that strains forward toward the day and the long endurance that's required to wait for it."

Fleming Rutledge

"God wants us to learn from the inability of people, possessions, and experiences to satisfy our hearts. The message is clear and death is the giveaway: there has to be more than this life. God's plan is not for you to get as much as you can out of life and then die. Looking death in the face is meant to make you wise, and ultimately it is meant to give you peace. This is why God puts death in front of you so much. In grace God is working to rescue you from death and prepare you for forever."

Paul Tripp

"When all is said and done... we need to take a deep breath and let it out with a laugh. Because what we are watching for is a party. And that party is not just down the street making up its mind when to come to us. It is already hiding in our basement, banging on our steam pipes, and laughing its way up our cellar stairs. The unknown day and hour of its finally bursting into the kitchen and roistering its way through the whole house is not dreadful; it is all part of the divine lark of grace. God is not our mother-in-law, coming to see whether her wedding-present china has been chipped. He is a funny Old Uncle with a salami under one arm and a bottle of wine under the other. We do indeed need to watch for him; but only because it would be such a pity to miss all the fun."

Robert Farrar Capon

# Order of Worship

## GATHERING

### ***Comfort Comfort Ye My People***

Comfort, comfort ye my people,  
Speak ye peace, thus saith our God.  
Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.  
Speak ye to Jerusalem  
Of the peace that waits for them,  
Tell her that her sins I cover,  
And her warfare now is over.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon,  
Blotting out each dark misdeed;  
All that well deserved his anger  
He will no more see or heed.  
She hath suffered many a day,  
Now her griefs have passed away;  
God will change her pining sadness  
Into ever-springing gladness.

For the herald's voice is crying  
In the desert far and near,  
Bidding all to true repentance,  
Since the kingdom now is here.  
Oh, that warning cry obey,  
Now prepare for God a way;  
Let the valleys rise to meet him,  
And the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked,  
Make the rougher places plain;  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits His holy reign;  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o'er earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That his Word is never broken.

## WELCOME

### CALL TO WORSHIP

O Lord, open our lips

**and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Reveal among us the light of your presence

**that we may behold your power and glory.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation.

2 Peter 3:8-15a

We light these candles to remember the coming light of Christ

**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

### Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy 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 thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

### GATHERING SONG

***Arise Shine For Your Light Has Come***

Arise, shine, for your light has come

And the glory of God is on you.  
Arise, see when the earth grows dark  
That the Lord will arise upon you,  
That the Lord will arise upon you.

Nations will come to your light;  
Lift up your eyes and see.  
We'll gather together and come to you  
And your love will be all that we know.  
Yes, your love will be all that we know.

Arise, come to the open gates  
For the Father is welcoming you.  
Fear not for the Lord brings peace  
And redemption to all who believe,  
And redemption to all who believe.

The sun will not shine cause you'll  
Be all the light we need,  
And violence will end all the wars  
That we wage will cease.  
We will glorify your name,  
We will glorify your name.

## **PRAISE SONG**

### ***O Come, O Come Emmanuel***

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here,  
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee O Israel

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell Thy people save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave

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.

## **CONFESSION & ASSURANCE**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Lord God, we praise you for sending light into this world. We confess that we live as though the light had never defeated darkness. We confess that we ignore the Savior you sent to be among us and to live in us. We've kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his coming each moment in our waiting hearts. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus. Prepare us for His return. Help us to daily take up our cross. Help us rejoice in the light so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts. Amen.

### **SILENT CONFESSION**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly. Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

Psalm 85:8-9

### **RENEWAL SONG**

#### ***God With Us***

Oh You've come to bring peace to be love  
To be nearer to us  
You've come to bring life to be light  
To shine brighter in us  
Oh Emmanuel God with us

Our Deliverer You are Savior  
In Your presence we find our strength  
Over ev'rything our redemption  
God with us  
You are God with us

Oh You've come to be hope to this world  
For Your honor and name  
And You've come to take sin to bear shame  
And to conquer the grave  
Oh Emmanuel God with us

## **PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## **CHILDREN DISMISSED**

## **LIFE TOGETHER**

## **PREACHING OF THE WORD**

### **“Til He Comes Again: The Timing of His Coming Again”**

**Ethan Smith**

<sup>1</sup> Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup> But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” <sup>3</sup> As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. <sup>6</sup> And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup> All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.”

Matthew 24:1-8

<sup>36</sup> “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. <sup>37</sup> For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup> and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup> Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. <sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. <sup>42</sup> Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup> Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Matthew 24:36-44

<sup>1</sup> “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup> For when

the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup> but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup> As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup> But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup> Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup> And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' <sup>9</sup> But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup> And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup> Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup> But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup> Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Matthew 25:1-13

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

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Sermon Notes**

## **RESPONSE**

### **SONG OF RESPONSE**

#### ***Come Light Our Hearts***

For You, O Lord our souls in stillness wait

For You, O Lord our souls in stillness wait

Truly our hope is in You

Truly our hope is in You

Truly our hope is in You

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

### **OFFERTORY**

#### ***Lift Up Your Heads Be On The Lookout***

Lift up your head

Be on the lookout

Wake from your bed

Don't fall asleep

Lift up your head

He's comin' soon now

Get yourself ready

For the comin' of the King

Could a mother forget her children  
Could a husband forget his wife?  
How much more then, will he remember,  
Will He come and set things right!

Cast aside all the works of darkness  
Live as children of the day  
Light your lamps and keep them burnin'  
Till we see our bridegroom's face

See those fields, they're ripe for harvest  
See the work that's left undone  
Take to the world his love and justice  
Singin' "let his kingdom come!"  
Oh let his kingdom come!

### **DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

### **COMMUNION**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

### **COMMUNION SONG**

***Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence***

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
ponder nothing earthly minded,  
for, with blessing in His hand,  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,

our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth He stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
in the body and the blood.  
He will give to all the faithful  
His own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven  
spreads its vanguard on the way,  
as the Light of light descendeth  
from the realms of endless day,  
that the pow'rs of hell may vanish  
as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph,  
cherubim with sleepless eye,  
veil their faces to the Presence,  
as with ceaseless voice they cry,  
"Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, Lord Most High!"

## **SENDING**

### **SENDING SONG**

#### ***Everlasting God***

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord  
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord

Our God You reign forever  
Our Hope our strong Deliv'rer

You are the everlasting God  
The everlasting God  
You do not faint  
You won't grow weary

You're the defender of the weak  
You comfort those in need  
You lift us up on wings like eagles

Our God You reign forever  
Our Hope our strong Deliv'rer

**BENEDICTION**

"Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come.... Amen.  
Come, Lord Jesus!"

from Revelation 1:4 and 22:20

## LIFE TOGETHER

### SERVE

**WS Street School Christmas Gift Bags:** See Looking Up or Tori Petty.

### CHURCH LIFE

**MRFM \$500,000 Matching Gift** - Now- Dec 31: Gifts + increased/new commitments.

**Missions Prayer Lunch** - Today, 12:30pm upstairs; all are welcome!

**Church Directory** - Families who joined the directory can pick up between services.

**Winter Break** - Dec. 14-Jan 4: 9am and 10:45am Worship; 10:15am Hope Cafe.

**Christmas Lights Run** - Dec. 21 4:45pm: Run/walk + pizza - RSVP to Margo Brown-  
margobrown718@gmail.com

**Christmas Eve Services:** 4pm Family Service and 9pm Candlelight Lessons & Carols.

**Quito Missions Trip:** Info packets in back of sanctuary and registration open.

### PARENTS & CHILDREN

**Kids Connection** - *December Verse* - For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

### FINANCIAL UPDATE AS OF DECEMBER 9TH, 2025

	Actual to Date	Budget through 12/31	Difference	
Income	\$1,252,073	\$1,482,783	-\$230,710	-15.56%
Expense	\$1,296,218	\$1,482,783	-\$186,565	-12.58%
Surplus (Deficit)	-\$44,145	\$0	-\$44,145	

### ANNUAL MINISTRY BUDGET: \$1,482,783

Making Room for More	Campaign Goal	Campaign Commitments	Gifts Received
	\$8.6 million	\$5,243,302	\$3,322,185