

# Welcome to Seward United Methodist Church

*January 2, 2022 - 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.*



Jesus, Mary, and Martha by Anton Laurids Johannes Dorph

Making disciples who make a difference in Seward and beyond.

## Welcome and Announcements

**Prelude**

**8:00 a.m. Dylan Teut**

## Passing of the Peace

**Call to Worship:** Weaver of Time and Space (Brian Wren)

Leader: Listen. Here is good news. The Living God, Weaver of time and space, far beyond us, nearer than body and bone,

**People: is joining us in person, growing in a mother's womb, delivered in the labor of birth, washed and clothed, cradled, nursed, and fed.**

Leader: This is the wonder and a mystery. This is good news of great joy.

**People: Thank God! Thank God! Amen.**

Refrain:

He is born, the holy Child,  
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!  
He is born, the holy Child,  
sing we all of the Savior mild.

1 Thru long ages of the past,  
prophets have foretold his coming;  
thru long ages of the past,  
now the time has come at last!(Refrain)

2 O how lovely, O how pure  
is this perfect child of heaven;  
O how lovely, O how pure  
gracious gift to humankind!(Refrain)

3 Jesus, Lord of all the world,  
coming as a child among us,  
Jesus, Lord of all the world,  
grant to us thy heavenly peace.(Refrain)

**Common Prayer:** (Brian Wren)

Loving God, beginning and end, we thank you and praise you for ancestors, known and unknown, held in memory, or hidden in time, and for the forms of life from which we have descended and which have left their mark in our body and brain. We praise you for people with whom we are connected – in this congregation, at home or work, through kinship and friendship and through TV, books, and other media. Thank you for all who shape us for good and make us what we are. Mysterious God, beginning and end, first and last, hidden and revealed, all glory and honor are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**Children's Time**

**Pastor JoEllen Axthelm**

**Scripture Lessons**

**Luke 10:38-42**

New Revised Standard Version  
Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

**38** Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. **39** She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. **40** But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." **41** But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; **42** there is need of only one thing.[a] Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

**Hymn**

**Sing We Now of Christmas**

**UMH 237, v. 1 - 3**

1 Sing we now of Christmas, Noel, sing we here!  
Hear our grateful praises to the babe so dear.

Refrain:

Sing we Noel, the King is born, Noel!  
Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!

2 Angels called to shepherds, "Leave your flocks at rest,  
journey forth to Bethlehem, find the child so blest." (Refrain)

3 In Bethlehem they found him; Joseph and Mary mild,  
seated by the manger, watching the holy child. (Refrain)

**Sermon**

**A Gift of Time**

**Pastor JoEllen Axthelm**

The Prayers of the People

*Please share your joys or concerns at the microphone or in the comments on Facebook or by texting us at 402-810-8900.*

**Prayer Hymn**

**Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

**UMH 229**

1. Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing,  
Christ the babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging angels singing,  
noels ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the babe is Lord of all.

2. Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story,  
tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the babe was born for you.

Sharing of Joys & Concerns  
Pastoral Prayer  
The Lord's Prayer

**Offertory Prayer** (Discipleship Ministries)

God of eternity, we bring our gifts to your altar this day, even as we are worn out and glazed over from the endless pursuit of an endless to-do list. We have crammed our lives full of activity and busyness, missing the opportunity we have today to be in your presence, bathe in your love, and open our souls to being filled, renewed, and restored by your presence. Help us to bring our whole being to your altar this morning, that we don't miss the precious gift that you have offered to us: a relationship through Jesus Christ. In that name that is above all others we pray. Amen.

**Offertory**

**8:00 a.m. Dylan Text**

**10:30 a.m. Megan Forbes**

**Doxology**

**Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow**

**UMH 94**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God, all creatures here below;  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power up lifts!  
Praise the Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### **Prayer of Dedication**

Gracious God, we seek to put all we are into this time of preparation that we might fully receive our Messiah into our lives. No half-hearted celebrations, no lukewarm commitments; but a generous, joyous, enthusiastic offering of our whole being we bring to you this day. We dedicate ourselves and these monetary offerings to your work and service. In Christ's name. Amen.

### **Celebration of Holy Communion -- Body and Soul**

God be with you.

### **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

### **We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God.

### **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to God, creating force in the universe. We give thanks this day for the breath of God which swept across the primordial chaos calling forth harmony, creating life. We give thanks for the wondrous way we are created, body and soul, holistically knit together in the image of God. We give thanks for the wonders of our senses – taste, hearing, smell, touch, and sight. We give thanks for our souls imbuing life with meaning beyond the physical sensory input. We celebrate that we are God's good creation, Body and Soul. You are Holy, O God, and patient beyond measure. When we people lose sight of your Beloved Community, when we fail to live love, when we give in to the power of violence and control, still you love us. Still you call us back to the way of compassion. You send prophets to call us to accountability. You remind us each day that there is opportunity to extend grace and compassion in tangible ways to a world in need. Our world is in need of redemption and so we wait. We wait in hope, expectation, and active engagement for the time when your kingdom will come. We wait as your people long ago waited in anticipation of your Messiah. Even in our waiting, we praise your name:

**Holy, holy, holy One, God of Body and Soul,**

**All of creation reflects your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, God of Body and Soul, in the fullness of time, you became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth, revealing to all who will see, how life might be lived in love and gentle power. In Jesus, you extended forgiveness, embraced the outcast, healed the hurting, welcomed the children, released those in bondage, and announced again and again a way to be the Beloved Community which will transform the world.

We remember and we give thanks for the gift of incarnation revealed in Jesus. We remember and give thanks for the moments when another has aligned with your will for a moment and in so doing incarnated your presence through Body and Soul.

We remember and give thanks for the final night of Jesus' life when he gathered those closest to him for a shared meal. We remember that Jesus took simple, ordinary items – bread, cup and filled them with sacred meaning when shared in holy ritual. So this day, we have the Bread of Life, which is

symbol of God incarnate in Jesus, broken and shared with all. We have the Cup of Grace, which is symbol of God's grace poured out time and again for forgiveness for each and everyone.

We remember and we offer ourselves in thanks and praise to live as followers of Jesus, seeking God's will, ready to be vessels of God's love and grace to all the world, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

God of Body and Soul, pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and juice, and on all of us gathered here. Grant that these gifts would be a means of grace to draw us closer to you and closer to one another. Fill us with all hope. Empower our waiting to be productive in increasing love and joy in the world as we anticipate the fullness of your Beloved Community.

**Amen and amen.**

**Hymn**

**Go Tell It On the Mountain**

**UMH 251**

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.

1 While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout the heavens  
there shown a holy light. (Refrain)

2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo! above the earth,  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed the Savior's birth. (Refrain)

3 Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)

**Benediction**

**Pastor JoEllen Axthelm**

**Postlude**

**8:00 a.m. Dylan Teut  
10:30 a.m. Megan Forbes**

***The People of God Go Forth to Serve***

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