

**A Warm Welcome to
Solomon's United Church of Christ**

Sunday, December 15, 2024 10:15 am

Rev. Julia L. Brown, Pastor

Church Website: mysolomonsucc.org

WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORGAN PRELUDE & SILENT MEDITATION

GATHERING HYMN "This is the Day" (v. 1) **Black # 84**

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made!

We will rejoice, we will rejoice and be glad in it! And be glad in it!

This is the day that the Lord has made! We will rejoice and be glad in it!

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made!

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP** (inspired by Psalm 126:2, from LiturgyLink)

One: The Prophet Isaiah says, "Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel." In the beginning was the Word—spoken and breathed, a promise made and kept.

All: Persevere in hope, keep the faith—God's promise is true!

One: The Word was in the beginning, and through God all things come into being.

All: Eternal and near at hand, Already and not-yet, God's promise is the foundation of all life.

One: Keep going! Persevere in joy, giving voice to God's presence yet again.

The candle of joy is lit.

***OPENING HYMN** "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus" **Black # 122 (Red #79)**

A BLESSING FOR OUR PART IN THE BIGGER STORY Written by Dr. Kate Bowler

MOMENT of QUIET PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION and ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

All: Merciful God, we confess that we are not always truthful. We have defaced the purity of your love for us. We have embraced ugliness and oppression rather than loveliness and grace. We have distorted your cries for justice in order to benefit ourselves. We have given less than our best to others and to you. Forgive us, we pray. Transform our hearts, that our world may be changed. Amen.

One: God has taken away the judgements against us. God restores us to the family, welcomes us with open arms, and strengthens us for each day's challenges. Praise God, give thanks, and let the world know of God's marvelous deeds.

PRAISE HYMN

Black # 125

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

OLD TESTAMENT READING Zephaniah 3:14-20
EPISTLE READING Philippians 4:4-7

HYMN "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" **Black # 120 (Red #80)**

GOSPEL READING Luke 3:7-18

SERMON

PASTORAL PRAYER & OUR LORD'S PRAYER

All: 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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION

***PRESENTATION & OFFERING RESPONSE** **Red # 89**

O come, let us adore him! / O come, let us adore him!

O come, let us adore him! / Christ, the Lord!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: We rejoice, O God of peace, in the privilege of giving without fear. You come to us daily with blessings too numerous to count. You are the Holy One whose presence relieves our anxieties, feeds our hungers, and stirs our compassion. Through our offerings, we express our gratitude. As we give of ourselves, we respond to your call to bear fruit and to make your name known among the nations. Thank you for accepting all we offer. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** "Joy to the World!" **Black # 132 (Red # 313)**

***BENEDICTION**

One: May the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the encouragement of the Holy Spirit be with you and go with you always. Our Worship Service is ended,

All: May our service never end. Amen.

ORGAN POSTLUDE

**Please stand as you feel led and are comfortable*

Liturgies adapted from Lavon Bayler's Gathered By Love, adapted by Rev. Julia L. Brown