

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

Sunday, December 17, 2023 10:15 am

Rev. Julia L. Brown, Pastor

Church Website: [mysolomonsucc.org](http://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)

One: The Holy One has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.

**All:** *Our mouths were filled with laughter, our voices with songs of joy.*

One: Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.

**All:** *Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying a bounty with them.*

One: On this third Sunday of Advent, we light again the candles of hope and peace, and we light the candle of joy.

**All:** *Let us worship God together! Amen.*

**\*OPENING HYMN**

“Come, O Long-Expected Jesus”

Black # 122, Red # 79

**\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

**All:** *Loving God, we rejoice in this season of anticipation as we remember your promises and look forward to ways that you reveal yourself to us. May your presence be real to us in this hour.*

*Strengthen us for victories over temptation, for renewal of our love for you and one another, for leadership and service in your world. We give thanks that you have called us into community and commissioned us to make a difference in the world. Equip us here for the tasks you set before us. Amen.*

**MOMENT of QUIET PRAYER, CONFESSION, and ASSURANCE**

**ONE:** All-knowing God, we confess our worry and anxiety over small matters. We admit the fears that make us defensive instead of loving. We acknowledge our resentment over losses and oppression we have suffered. We recognize that we have been far more concerned for our own welfare than for the building up of Christ’s body, your children. In our congregation, we have at times focused on survival more than service. We often look for what we can gain more than for what we can give. Re-establish your rule among us, we pray, and save us from ourselves. As work with you to be changed by your grace, we rejoice in the promises of your comfort and faithfulness to us. Amen.

**PRAISE HYMN**

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

Black # 125

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

**EPISTLE READING**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

**HYMN**

“There’s a Voice in the Wilderness”

Black # 120, Red # 80

**GOSPEL READING**

John 1:6-8, 19-28

**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:** *O God, may our gifts bring honor to the Messiah. May the brokenhearted be led to enriching new celebrations. May the lowly among us come to know their true worth as persons chosen by you to do great things. By your mercy, may the hungry be fed not only with bread but also with opportunities to feed others. We give ourselves as your servants, for no gift is complete without personal commitment. Thank you, God, for expecting great things of us. Our spirits rejoice in the coming of our Savior. 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’re comfortable*

*Liturgies from Led by Love by Lavon Baylor, adapted by Rev. Julia L. Brown*