

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

Sunday, December 31, 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 148)

One: Praise God from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

**All: Praise God, all the angels; praise the Holy One!**

One: Praise God, sun, moon, and all shining stars! God commanded and they were created.

**All: Praise God from the earth, mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!**

One: All peoples, all stewards of the earth! Old and young together! Let us praise the name of God, for the Holy One's name alone is exalted;

**All: God's glory is above earth and heaven. Let us praise God together! Amen.**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" **Black # 154, Red # 105**

**\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

**All: Faithful God, by whose Spirit all people and places become holy, lead us by that Spirit today. We have come to celebrate a birth that offers us rebirth. We have gathered that you might claim us as heirs, with Christ, of eternal life. Unite our hearts and minds in a chorus of praise, that the life of this church might be quickened, renewed, and refocused. May your faithful people become a crown of beauty in your hands. Amen.**

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

**ONE:** We bring our prayers to you, gracious God, sensing that there is more to life than the ways we have known. We are drawn to the Messiah, yet we shrink from following where faith leads. We are afraid of what we might lose if we are guided by the Spirit. Thoughts of sacrifice and servanthood are not always appealing to us. We are at times reluctant to enter into a close relationship with you. We think we know, better than you, what is best for us. Forgive our arrogance. Help us see Christ.

Remind us that the robes of righteousness are not heavy burdens. As we receive your abundant grace, O God, form us into a crown of beauty. Mold us into a new creation. Shape us more into your image for the sake of others. We rejoice in the knowledge of your forgiveness, and we praise be to you, O Holy One! Amen.

**PRAISE HYMN**

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

**Black # 125**

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Isaiah 61:10-62:3

**EPISTLE READING** Galatians 4:4-7

**HYMN** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" **Black # 144, Red # 94**

**GOSPEL READING** Luke 2:22-40

**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.**

**COMMUNION**

**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: With joyous praise, we return to you, O God, a portion of all you have given to us. You have invited us to sacrifices befitting of our blessings. You have asked us to care for those less privileged. What we offer in these moments is a beginning. We will ponder again your amazing grace in granting us life and in offering us Jesus to bring us back to you. Praise be to you, O God! 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*