

SCRIPTURE

John 1: 1-14 (RSV)

Rev. Lynnette Sills

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God; ³ all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. ⁴ In him was life,^[a] and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. ¹¹ He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

MESSAGE

True Light

Rev. Lynnette Sills

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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BENEDICTION

May the hope of this season, the hope we can find in our faith,
find its way to us.

May the peace of Christ be with us

as we journey into the days ahead.

May the simple joys of this season be made known to us

and be a source of light and warmth.

May the love that comes from God be known to all of us.

**May we find it within and share it with others so that they may know
the hope, peace, and joy of a good and loving God.**

Let us go in peace. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

Pam McNeil, organ

You are welcome to stay in the sanctuary for as long as you wish.

We ask that this be a time of quiet and that when you leave, that you please leave quietly.

Service of Darkness and Light



Artwork by James Sills

Tryon United Methodist Church

December 19, 2024

5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.
PRELUDE

Tryon United Methodist Church
Service of Darkness and Light

December 19, 2024
Pam McNeil, organ

CALL TO WORSHIP

We cry to the Lord who counts and collects our tears.

Be with us now, O God.

In our grief and our pain, our bodies and spirits cry out.

Hear us, O God.

GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we prepare to enter this season of winter when the days are short and the nights are long.

The reality of our hearts knows that your gracious spirit is with us as we mourn.

You mourn with us in our grief. You cry with us in our sorrow.

You sit with us in our difficult days. And, you will be with us always.

You are not a distant God. You are faithful to us, our companion when we weep.

We seek your healing touch, with the hope that was promised and delivered in Jesus Christ your son.

Be with us, we pray, O God. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

We light these candles in thanksgiving for loved ones lost,

For past health and joy that now may be distant.

We light these candles in prayer, that we will feel God's love.

May we feel your love in our moments of sorrow.

We light these candles in hope.

For the promises of God yet to be revealed.

Glory to God. Amen.

PSALTER

PSALM 27 (UMH 758)

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom, shall I be afraid?

When evildoers assail me, to devour my flesh, my adversaries and foes shall stumble and fall.

Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;

though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:

**That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in the Lord's temple.**

The Lord will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble,

will conceal me under the cover of his tent, and will set me high upon a rock.

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies round about me;

and I will offer sacrifices in the Lord's tent with shouts of joy;

I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious and answer me!

"Come," my heart said, "seek the Lord's face." Your face, O Lord, I seek.

Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, for you have been my help.

Cast me not off, forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

Rev. Lynnette Sills

If my father and mother should forsake me, the Lord would take me up.

Teach me your way, O Lord; and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

Give me not up to the will of my adversaries;

for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!

Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord.

HYMN

In the Bleak Midwinter

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Merciful God,

In this season of rejoicing, **some of us are weary.**

In this season of feasting, **some of us are hungry.**

In this season of light, **some of us have hearts veiled in sorrow and shadow.**

In this season of hope, **some of us need healing and relief.**

And we long to know...**will this pass from us?**

For all who seek you for restoration, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who are sick, weak, or worn down, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the sufferings of our ecosystems and our fellow creatures, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who are abused and afflicted, all who are imprisoned, especially for the sake of the Gospel,

O Lord, hear our prayer.

For the gifts of faith, hope, courage, and endurance, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the forgiveness of our sins, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

May we find the peace, rest, and comfort that only you can give.

May we see the light of your love in the darkness of the valleys through which we pass.

The darkness will not overcome the light.

We pray these things to you, O God, and pray now the prayer you taught your disciples to pray;

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

I Wonder as I Wander

Pam McNeil, organ

CANTICLE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Rev. Lynnette Sills

We look for light, but find darkness. **We search for brightness, but walk in gloom.**

Often it is like we have no eyes to see. **We stumble at noon as if it were twilight.**

But, Lord, even the darkness is not dark to you.

The night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.

Blessed be your name, O God, forever,

You reveal deep and mysterious things; you are light and in you is no darkness.

Our darkness is passing away.

And already the true light is shining. Amen.