

A detailed nativity scene set within a wooden stable. A large, bright yellow star hangs from the top. Mary, in a blue cloak, kneels before the baby Jesus, who lies in a white cloth. Joseph, in a green robe, stands nearby. The scene is surrounded by various figurines, including shepherds, animals like sheep, cows, and chickens, and a figure in a red cloak on the left. The background features a blue sky and green foliage.

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Our vision : Creating a welcoming community that worships well, disciples well, and serves well; transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

Gathering Music *"Do You Hear What I Hear" by Noel Regney & Gloria Shayne*
arr. Mark Hayes *Luann Alderks*

Pastor Penny Bonsell

Beloved, we gather to rejoice in God who does wondrous things, who promises that someday all manner of things shall be well.

We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.

We worship with joy now, confident that God will not stop until all creation is at peace.

We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.

We lift up our voices in song and story, in prayer and praise, as we remember and rejoice in all that God has done and will do among us.

We rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.

Come! Let us worship God with joy as we work with God toward the day when all of creation lives in everlasting joy.

Come! Let us rejoice in the truth of the day that all the earth awaits.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, May 2025.

Special Music

Irie French

Opening Prayer:

Holy God of Joy,

We rejoice in the reality of who you are.

We live within the joy of your love for us.

Our contentment comes and goes.

Our happiness ebbs and flows.

Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry.

But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children. And we give you thanks. Amen.

Written by Joanna Harader and posted on Spacious Faith, <http://spaciousfaith.com/>.

Hymn: *Once in Royal David's City (UMH # 250)*

All

The Advent Wreath

Betzold Family

Lighting of the third Advent candle of Joy

First Reader: In the midst of our waiting and longing for God to make the world right again, we cling to the truth that God has saved, God is saving, and God will save. So today, we join our voices with the prophet Isaiah, who calls us to live in the joy of the truth of God's salvation.

All: We choose to believe that the day is coming when "the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10).

Second Reader: We light this candle of joy as a sign of the Truth that sets us free to live in joy as we wait and work for the day when all creation will flourish together.

Sharing the Peace

THE WORD

Scriptures:

Isaiah 35:1-10

Luke 1:47-55

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Message

"Michael Mouse" Youth/Children Christmas Program

Directed by April Ostermann

Lullaby Carol

Nancy Raabe

Hymn

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (UMH # 218)

All

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

Offering

"Cradle Song" by Johannes Brahms arr. Mark Hayes

Luann

Alderks

Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (UMH # 95)

All

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious God of deep joy, even when storms rage and doubts rise, you call us to see with kingdom eyes—to look for healing, hope, and signs of your grace breaking in.

In this Advent season of expectation and weariness, we bring these gifts as expressions of joy, rooted not in ease but in trust.

May our giving bear witness to your good news: that the blind still see, the lame still walk, and the poor still receive care.

Use these offerings and us as signs of your coming reign, lights in the storm, and carriers of joy. In the name of Jesus, our hope and our Redeemer. Amen.

And the prayer which unites us...

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Hymn *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light (UMH # 206)*

All

SENDING

Advent people, go now in the blessing of God's joy, confident that the day we await is close at hand and ready to cooperate with God in building the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. May the love of Christ be fully present in you, so that a stranger will see in you a friend and neighbor. God sends you. The Spirit fills you. Christ goes with you and you with Christ, always and everywhere. God Bless!

Go in hope, peace, and joy. Shalom. Amen.

Postlude *The Twelve Days of Christmas*

All

INFORMATION

Pastor: Penny Bonsell, Administrator: Sara French, Music Director and pianist: Luann Alderks, Certified Lay Minister and Youth Director: Theresa Siemers, assistants Maddy Heinz-Kline and Kory Larson, Technology Administrator: Jesse Steed, Admin Council Chair: Kevin Larson, Admin Secretary: Sue Rollins, SPRC Chair: Deb Little, Treasurer: Lori Noreen, Finance Committee Co-Chairs: Kevin Larson and Mel Henrichs, Trustees Chair: Tom Stowe, Missions and Lay Servant: Karen Nelson, Soundboard Technician: Tom Hollenhorst

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sundays, Worship at 9:30 am

Tuesdays, 8:30 am: Breakfast Club, at L&M

Wednesdays, 9-10:30 am: Pastor Penny is at James Gang coffee shop

Saturdays 9-11 am Soul Sisters (see Theresa for details)

Thurs. Dec. 18, 5:30-7 pm Bible Book Group. "Beatitudes for Today" by James C. Howell (final study)

Sat. Dec. 20, 9-11am: Christmas Bake Sale

Wed. Dec. 24, 4:30 pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight service



Website



Online Giving

We are providing an on-going donation bin for CAC and Wallflower House in our entrance way.

See our website for more details at www.littleprairieumc.org.

“Michael Mouse”

Written by John L. Bell

Cast:

Narrator: Ivy Ostermann

Michael Mouse: Oli Kline

Owl: Liam Kline

Sheep: Irie French

Cow: Caroline Betzold

Hen: Emily Stowe

Chick: Sammy Stowe

Cat: Charlie Betzold

Joseph: Andrew Stowe

Mary: Adriana Keilen

Baby Jesus: Afton Keilen

Wiseman: Jace Keilen

Director: April Ostermann

Accompanist: Luann Alderks

Costumes: Cindy Nelson and Penny Bonsell

Sound: Tom Hollenhorst