

Order of Worship

THE INVITATION AND GATHERING

Centering Word (Psalm 85, 2 Peter 3, Mark 1)

Christmas is near at hand. But do we truly believe Christ is coming soon? Do we yearn for the day when faithful love and truth shall meet, when righteousness and peace shall kiss? Will we prepare our hearts to receive the coming miracle? It is time to get ready.

Father, prepare our hearts to celebrate your birth joyfully! We thank you for faithfully doing what you promised long ago when you sent your Son to earth so that we might have the chance to become part of your family. Let the promise of your second coming inspire us to live with hope and purpose.

As we wait for your plan to unfold, give us the patience we need. Remind us of the peace we can access when we take time to still ourselves before you and remember that you are God. We thank you that you are both sovereign and gracious.

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather here today to listen to what God has to say.

Give us ears to hear your word, O God.

We gather here today expecting God to move and work among us.

Give us expectant hearts that anticipate the movement of your spirit, O God.

We gather here today, seeking to see with the eyes of faith and hope for what your love has done, is doing, and will do in the world.

Give us ears to hear, hearts that sense, and eyes to see your glory as it is revealed to us this day and always. Amen.

OPENING Hymn: “Let Earth and Heaven Combine” (#77 VIP)

1. Let earth and Heaven combine,
Angels and men agree,
To praise in songs divine
The incarnate Deity,
Our God contracted to a span,
Incomprehensibly made man.

2. He laid His glory by,
He wrapped Him in our clay;
Unmarked by human eye,
The latent Godhead lay;
Infant of days He here became,
And bore the mild Immanuel's name.

3. Unsearchable the love
That has the Saviour brought;
The grace is far above
Or men or angels' thought:
Suffice for us that God, we know,
Our God, is manifest below.

4. He deigns in flesh to appear,
Widest extremes to join;
To bring our vileness near,
And make us all divine:
And we the life of God shall know,
For God is manifest below.

5. Made perfect first in love,
And sanctified by grace,
We shall from earth remove,
And see His glorious face:
His love shall then be fully showed,
And man shall all be lost in God.

INVOCATION

Lord, we come before your throne of grace not trusting in ourselves but in your marvellous and gracious love as it seeks expression among us. May we listen for your still, small voice as it speaks to us today and as it boldly proclaims the undeniable reality of your love that will not let us go. Instil in our humble hearts, through your grace, the hope of Christmas that transforms the ordinariness of life into the extraordinary sacredness of that which has been made holy by the presence of your most Holy Spirit. Stir our hearts and our imaginations that we may see beyond the appearances of what is to the bold reality of all that can possibly become. In the name and spirit of the Holy child, Jesus our Lord, we pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Isaiah 40, Psalm 85)

(Silent Confession)

God of shepherding love, we need your guidance this day.
You proclaim that faithful love and truth have met, but we cannot see it.
You rejoice that righteousness and peace have kissed, but we can scarcely believe it.
Forgive our jaded hearts, and correct our wandering ways.
Breathe your grace into our lives, and give us the confidence to shout for all the world to hear: “Here is our God!”

Forgive us for insensitivity to who you are and how you are working in our lives and in our world. Pardon us for being so selfish that enough is never enough to quench our thirst and hunger for more. Direct our attention to the places that we are afraid to look in our own lives and in the life of the communities where we live. Make us realize the importance of this moment and all the moments that follow. Give to us today, in this season of giving and sharing, hearts that are humble and willing to give. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE:

In Christ we are made new. We are healed and forgiven, we are challenged and guided to become those who work for the better rather than those who would destroy and damage. You call us your people, O God, and we are eternally grateful.

Comfort, O comfort, my people,” says our God. **(Isaiah 40)**
We have served our term.
Our penalty is paid in full.
Rejoice in the good news.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Collect

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 40:1–11

Responsive Reading Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13 (VIP 616)

LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

² **You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you pardoned all their sin. Selah**

⁸ Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.^a

⁹ **Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰ Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

¹¹ **Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

¹² The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³ **Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.**

Gloria Patri...

**ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen.**

Epistle 2 Peter 3:8–15a

Special Item Saxthorpe Choristers

Gospel Mark 1:1–8(a)

SERMON Rev'd Dr. Oral Thomas

CALL TO COMMITMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hymn: "There's A Light Upon The Mountain" (#144 VIP)

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| 1 There's a light upon the mountains,
and the day is at the spring,
When our eyes shall see the beauty
and the glory of the King;
Weary was our heart with waiting,
and the night-watch seemed so
long, But His triumph-day is
breaking, and we hail it with a song. | 3 There's a hush of expectation,
and a quiet in the air;
And the breath of God is moving
in the fervent breath of prayer;
For the suffering, dying Jesus
Is the Christ upon the throne,
And the travail of our spirit is the
travail of His own. |
| 2 In the fading of the starlight we
can see the coming morn;
And all human lights are paling in
the splendours of the dawn;
For the eastern skies are glowing
as with light of hidden fire,
And the hearts of all are stirring
with the throbs of deep desire. | 4 He is breaking down the barriers,
he is casting up the way;
He is calling for His angels to
build up the gates of day;
But His angels here are human,
not the shining hosts above,
For the drum-beats of His army
are the heart-beats of our love. |
- 5 Hark! we hear a distant music, and it comes with fuller swell;
'Tis the triumph-song of Jesus, of our King, Emmanuel:
Zion, go you forth to meet Him; and, my soul, be swift to bring
All your sweetest and your dearest for the triumph of our King!

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

Almighty God, we thank you for the Scriptures, in which you have revealed to us your Son, Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of the law and prophets, the promised Messiah of Israel and the Redeemer of humankind.
Grant that we, who gratefully celebrate his advent and acknowledge him as your living Word, may walk in the light of his truth and make known the good news of his kingdom, in all the world.

God of hope, who brought love into this world,
be the love that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought peace into this world,
be the peace that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought joy into this world,
be the joy that dwells between us.

God of hope, the rock we stand upon,
**be the centre, the focus of our lives always,
and particularly this Advent time.**

The Lord's Prayer

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Hymn: "We Come Now To Your Table Lord" (#441 VIP)

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|---|--|
| 1. We come now to your table Lord,
You are the Living Bread.
We come now to your table Lord,
Let every soul be fed.
You are the Living Bread,
Let every soul be fed,
And now may every soul be fed,
With Living Bread. | 2. We drink the cup, it was for us
Your sacred blood was shed,
We drink the cup, it was for us
You suffered pain and bled;
Your sacred blood was shed,
You suffered pain and bled;
We drink the cup, it was for us
Your blood was shed. |
| 3. A holy feast transforming us, The sacred Bread and Wine,
A holy feast transforming us, That makes our lives divine;
The sacred Bread and Wine, That makes our lives divine;
A holy feast transforming us, This Bread and Wine. | |

THE BLESSING & SHARING

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Hymn: "Jesus Shall Reign" (#134)

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| 1 Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to
shore, Till moons shall wax and
wane no more. | 3 People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest
song, And infant voices shall
proclaim
Their early blessings on his name. |
| 2 For him shall endless prayer be
made, And praises throng to crown
his head;
His name like sweet perfume shall
rise With every morning sacrifice. | 4 Blessings abound where'er he
reigns; The prisoners leap to lose
their chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all who suffer want are blest. |
| 5 Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honours to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud amen. Amen | |

BENEDICTION

Be alert! God is all around us! Be ready to joyfully serve God in ministries of peace and justice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Go in peace and may the peace of God always go with you. Amen.

(Sung)

We will go in peace to love and serve the Lord

We will go in peace to love and serve the Lord
We will live the gospel and sing with one accord
As we go in peace to love and serve the Lord
Thanks be to God, Alleluia!

**The Methodist Church in the Caribbean
and the Americas (MCCA)**

JAMAICA DISTRICT

DISTRICT THEME:

*"Spreading scriptural holiness to reform the nation...
beginning with ME"*

**METHODIST VOICES IN WORD AND SONG
TELEVISION MINISTRY**



DIVINE WORSHIP

Third Lord's Day Before the Nativity
(Second Sunday of Advent)
Sunday, December 6, 2020

OFFICIATING CLERGY:

Preacher: Rev'd Dr. Oral Thomas
President, United Theological College of
the West Indies

Liturgist: Rev'd Dr. Wayneford McFarlane

Organist: Bro. Audley Davidson

Choristers: Sis. Yvonne Brown
Sis. Yvonne Patterson
Sis. Marie Miller
Sis. Lucette Cargill
Bro. David Darlington
Bro. Nigel Hays

District Bishop: Rev'd Christine Gooden Benguche
District Secretary: Rev'd Dr. Wayneford McFarlane

A warm welcome to all worshippers!