



# HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

DECEMBER 24, 2017  
10:30 A.M. SERVICE



The bulletin cover is a mural of the Nativity, painted by the children of Highlands as a part of a Vacation Bible School project in the early 1990s. The painting was conceived and organized by Marie Jeff and her daughter Leslie Davis. The mural hangs in the Church School Building hallway opposite the Choir Room and is part of a collection of murals throughout the church that include: the Creation story, the Prodigal Son and the Journeys of Paul.

Today's Christmas Pageant has evolved over many years and was written by longtime Highlands' staff member, Allie Norton Forte, and published by Abington Press as *The Story of Christmas*. Pageant costumes were designed by Suzy Baker, Gayle Douglas and Marie Jeff.



*Highlands United Methodist Church affirms that nothing can separate anyone from the love of God. We invite all to worship, wonder, and discover God's grace as we aspire to create a safe space for all to participate fully in the life of this community of faith.*

*We are called to shine as a beacon of hope, grace, belonging, and respect for all people. Regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family, financial status, nationality, physical or mental ability, past or future, there is room for you at Highlands.*

- † All children are welcome to stay in worship, or a nursery is provided for ages 4 and younger. An usher will be happy to direct you there. Children ages 4 to 2nd grade are encouraged to come to the chancel when called to the Children's Moment and may then attend Children's Church or return to be with their family. If you are visiting today or this is your child's first time in Children's Church, we ask that a parent accompany the child downstairs in order to provide emergency contact information and meet our staff.
- † Children's bulletins, books, and crayons are available from the ushers for use in worship.
- † Please pick up a guest welcome bag after worship to learn more about Highlands. Feel free to call or email the church with any questions or pastoral care needs. We would love to have the opportunity to visit with you.
- † Parking is free on Sundays at all metered street spaces near the church, at the Hotel Highland Parking Deck on Magnolia Avenue, and in the Highlands Bar and Grill lot on 11th Avenue South.



## Vision Statement

*Highlands United Methodist Church is a community of disciples of Christ; a beacon of hope, inviting all to become new persons in Christ to be sent into the world to share the Gospel and to serve our neighbors; and a sanctuary for those in need of God's love and grace.*

1045 Twentieth Street South • Birmingham, Alabama 35205  
(205) 933-8751 • [highlandsumc.net](http://highlandsumc.net)

# ORDER FOR MORNING WORSHIP WITH HOLY BAPTISM

LITURGISTS – THE REVEREND MIKAH HUDSON, THE REVEREND DEB WELSH, AND REGGIE HOLDER  
CHOIRMASTER AND ORGANIST – RICHARD PHILLIPS

\*Congregation please stand. Words in bold are spoken or sung by the congregation.

*Serving as Altar Guild:* Beth Douthit, Lynn Hairston, Valerie Nash

*Serving as Ushers:* Porter Fell, Maurice Green

*Acolytes:* Hannah Wheeler, Lydia Wheeler

*Serving as Verger:* Brian Bellenger

PEALING OF THE TOWER BELLS

*Suzanne Phillips, Chimer*

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRELUDE

**Air**

*Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*

*From Orchestral Suite No. 3 - Movement No. 2  
BWV 1068*

\*HYMN IN PROCESSION 238

**Angels We Have Heard on High**

GLORIA

*Organ Improvisation: Gerre Hancock*

\*THE INVITATORY & GLORIA PATRI 70

MEINEKE

*O Lord, open our lips. And we shall declare your praise.*

*We praise you, Lord. Your holy name be praised.*

\*THE PEACE

\*VENITE

**Psalm 95**

*Musical Setting: DARWALL'S 148TH*

**Come, Sing With Joy to God**

Come, sing with joy to God, our Rock and Sav-ior praise; come en - ter in with  
The heights and depths of earth are cra-dled in God's hand; the same al-might - y  
shouts of joy, your voic - es raise. O might - y God, You  
power made moun - tains, sea, and land. Come wor - ship God, come  
are the Lord, the God of gods by all a - dored.  
kneel and bow be - fore the Lord our Mak - er now.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

**Pifa**

*George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)*

*from MESSIAH  
Sacred Dancers*

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM  
*Musical Setting: Charles H. Webb (b. 1933)*

INTRODUCTION

Brothers and sisters in Christ: Through the Sacrament of Baptism we are initiated into Christ's holy Church. We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

PRESENTATION

Elin Wren Lewis Mason, Story Olivia Mason, Wynter James Mason

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?

**I do.**

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

**I do.**

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?

**I do.**

Will you nurture Elin, Story, and Wyn in Christ's holy church that by your teaching and example they may be guided to accept God's grace for themselves, to profess their faith openly, and to lead a Christian life?

**I will.**

Do you, as Christ's body, the church, reaffirm both your rejection of sin and your commitment to Christ?

**We do.**

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life, include Elin, Story, and Wyn now before you in your care, and surround them with a community of love and forgiveness?

**We will.**

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

*(All stand.)*

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

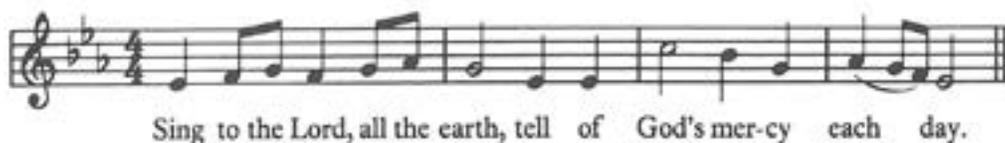
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

(All sit.)

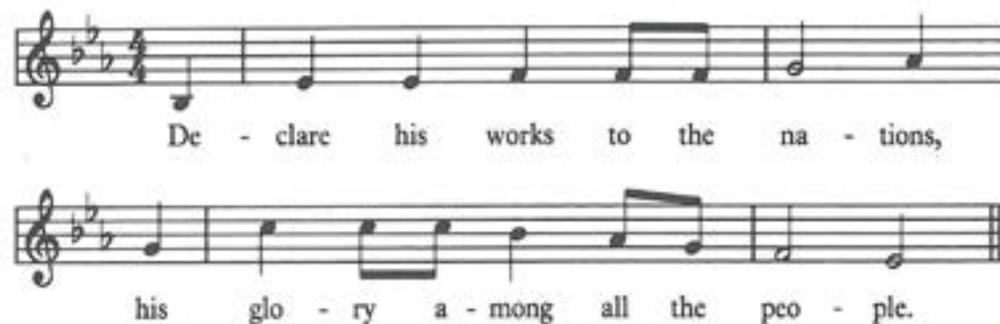
### THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

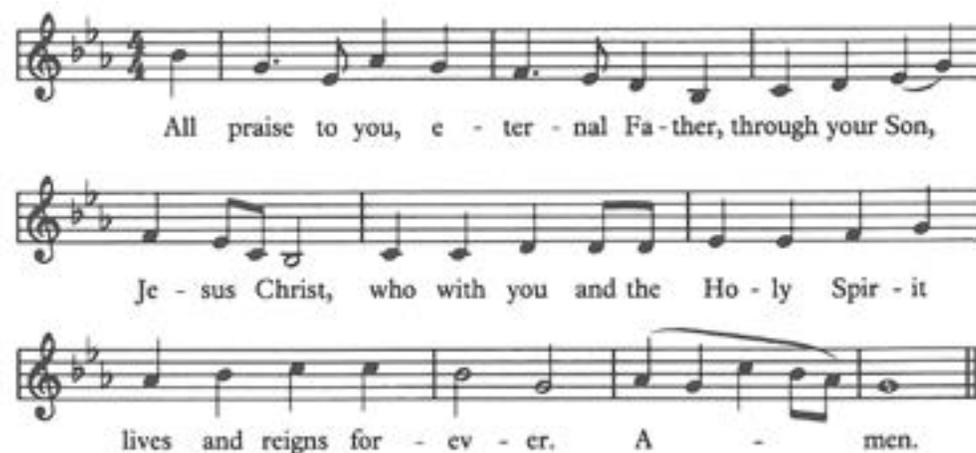
Let us pray: Eternal Father: When nothing existed but chaos, you swept across the dark waters and brought forth light. In the days of Noah you saved those on the ark through water. After the flood you set in the clouds a rainbow. When you saw your people as slaves in Egypt, you led them to freedom through the sea. Their children you brought through the Jordan to the land which you promised.



In the fullness of time you sent Jesus, nurtured in the water of a womb. He was baptized by John and anointed by your Spirit. He called his disciples to share in the baptism of his death and resurrection and to make disciples of all nations.



Pour out your Holy Spirit to bless this gift of water and these children who receive it, to wash away their sin and clothe them in righteousness throughout their lives that, dying and being raised with Christ, they may share in his final victory.



## BAPTISM WITH LAYING ON OF HANDS

Elin Wren, Story Olivia, and Wynter James, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Holy Spirit work within you, that being born through water and the Spirit, you may be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Elin Wren, Story Olivia, and Wynter James, as children of God, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in baptism and marked as Christ's own forever.

## COMMENDATION

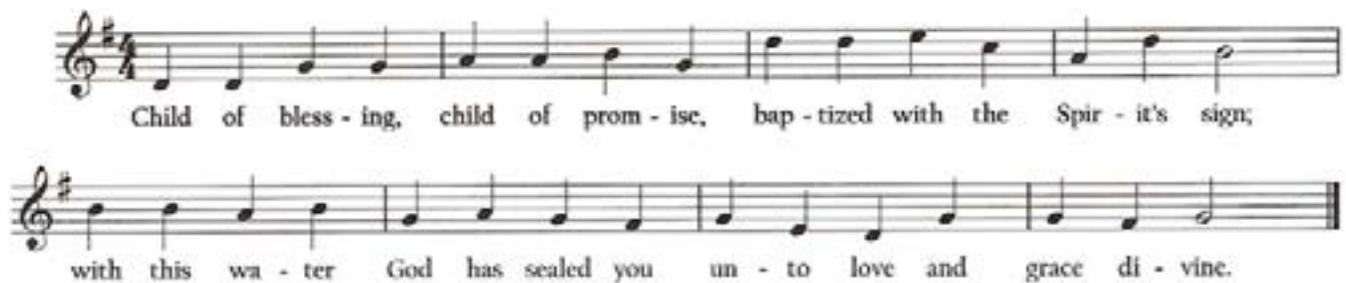
Members of the household of faith, I commend to your love and care Elin Wren, Story Olivia, and Wynter James, whom we this day recognize as members of the family of God. Will you endeavor so to live that they may grow in the knowledge and love of God, through our Savior Jesus Christ?

With God's help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ, that Elin Wren, Story Olivia, and Wynter James, surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.

## HYMN OF BLESSING

### Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

STUGGART



Child of bless - ing, child of prom - ise, bap - tized with the Spir - it's sign;  
with this wa - ter God has sealed you un - to love and grace di - vine.

## THE PRAYERS

The Reverend Deb Welsh

*The Lord be with you. And also with you.*

*God our Redeemer, you chose Mary to be the mother of our Lord and Savior. Fill us with your grace that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

Silent Prayer

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

## GREETINGS AND PARISH NOTICES

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

### And the Glory of the Lord from MESSIAH The Choir

*And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;  
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)

Text, Isaiah XL:5

## THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

*Congregation*

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem. Come and behold him, born the King of angels; O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

### *The Prophecy*

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

*Congregation*

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

### *The Annunciation*

HYMN

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

ES IST EIN ROS

*Congregation*

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung. It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night. Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind; with Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.

### *The Visitation*

HYMN

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

W ZLOBIE LEZY

*Congregation*

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all. Swift are winging, angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing: Christ the babe is Lord of all.

### *The Birth of Jesus*

HYMN

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

*Congregation*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie; above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

### *The Prophecy Fulfilled*

HYMN

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

*Congregation*

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies; with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

## The Shepherds and the Angels

HYMN

He Is Born

IL EST NE

Congregation

Refrain: He is born, the holy Child, play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!  
He is born, the holy Child, sing we all of the Savior mild.

Thru long ages of the past, prophets have foretold his coming;  
thru long ages of the past, now the time has come at last! Refrain.

## The Visit of the Magi

HYMN

We Three Kings

KINGS OF ORIENT

Congregation

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain following yonder star.

Refrain: O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies. Refrain.

## Finale

HYMN

Away in a Manger

The Children's Choir

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.*

HYMN

Let There Be Peace on Earth

WORLD PEACE

*Children's Choir: Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me. Let there be peace on earth the peace that was meant to be.  
With God our creator, children all are we. Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.*

**All: Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now. With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow: to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally. Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.**

\*BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

\*VOLUNTARY

Improvisation on FRENCH CAROL

Richard Phillips (b. 1959)

Musicians: The Choir, Levon Margaryan (violin), Yuriko Yasuda (violin),  
Lucina Horner (viola), Warren Samples (cello), and Scott Welch (assisting organist)

## Christmas Pageant Cast

Narrators – Nathan Jones, Gracie Lowery

Angel Gabriel – Aoife Martin

Gabriel's Angels – Bess Forrester, Reed Forrester, Julia Stowe

Mary – Emmalynne Hudson

Elizabeth – Sophia Green

Joseph – Cade Smith

Inn Keeper – Robert White

Magi – Harper Boyd, John Marshall Rathmell, Virginia White

Star Bearer – Story Mason

Donkey – Ann Harper Nash

Sheep – Eleanor Hudson, Mack Forrester

Cow – Polly Dawson

Camel – Liam Stowe, James Halliday

Angels – Sophia Barney, Annie Carroll, Lily Kate Jones,  
Georgia Long, Beatrice Lowery, Brennan Neal, Amelia Rathmell

Shepherds – Nathan Green, Miriam Hudson, Riley Neal,  
Wyn Mason, Will Soong

Director – Mary Elizabeth Neal