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Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

2nd Sunday of Christmas

January 4, 2026

FEAR DOESN'T STOP US

GOD IN THE KITCHEN

There was a funeral in Charleston,
a funeral for nine people killed by one gun.
There was a funeral in Charleston because the world is a scary place.
A violent place, a place full of Herods with pistols and broken agendas.
People could have stayed home. They could have locked their doors,
closed the curtains, buried themselves the way fear invites us to do.
We would have understood.

But instead, people came to the funeral.
They unearthed their hearts.
They carried the tenderest parts of themselves out into the world
where the sun could reach them, along with their fear.
They crowded the pews with black hats and mourning cries.
They sang "Amazing Grace" when the worst had happened.

In a world full of fear, we have choices to make—
bury ourselves and close the curtains,
or fill the church and choose to sing.

I'm not saying it'll be easy,
but if you want to carry the tenderest part of yourself out into the world,
I'll begin to sing.

Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed
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BRINGING THE LIGHT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In the dark of morning,
the stars still shine.
In the depth of winter,
the birds still climb.
At the start of the year,
tender and new,
God is here.
God is near.
Do not rest in your fear.
God is here.
So like the stars and the birds,
Let us worship holy God.

*SONG OF PRAISE

We Three Kings of Orient Are

Hymnal, No. 151

*CONFESSION AND PARDON

Ever-loving God,
we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However,
we know that is not how the
world works. Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to
face with fear once again.
So today we pray—
forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks.
Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call.
Forgive us when fear is louder than love.
Show us how to turn our fear into action.
Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world.
With hope we pray, amen.
(Time for silent reflection)

Family of Faith,
whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid,
God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:

Whether fear inspires us to action,
or stops us dead in our tracks,
God's love for us is boundless.
We are seen.
We are surrounded with grace.
We are sent to serve.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

*THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

*SONG OF RESPONSE

Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain) Hymnal, No. 113
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Julie Forthman

SCRIPTURE READING

Page No. 950

Ephesians 3:1-12

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18

Page No. 783

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Fear Doesn't Stop Us

Tracy L. Evans

*SONG OF FAITH

We've Seen God's Face

Bulletin, page 7

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We have seen the valley.

We have seen a sky without stars.

**We have seen the longest night,
and still we believe.**

We believe in a with-us God.

We believe in the hope of tomorrow.

We believe that good news is louder than fear.

We believe this good news is for all people.

**So even when our knees shake,
even when our voice trembles,
even when fear is all around us,
we will hold onto that good news.**

We will reach for each other.

We will look for God in our midst.

We will sing songs of joy.

We will proclaim:

Unto us, love is born.

**We have seen the longest night,
and we have seen unimaginable love.**

So still, we believe.

Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY

Glory to God

Hymnal, No. 583

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!
Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SEALING THE WORD—CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LORD'S PRAYER

Hymnal, p. 35

*Please pray the Lord's Prayer
in the language and wording most familiar to you.*

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING SONG

As with Gladness Men of Old

Hymnal, No. 150

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*POSTLUDE

Fanfare on Joy to the World

D. Bish

*Please rise in body or spirit.

We invite anyone who wishes to consider membership in this church to contact the pastor or a member of the session. Membership in this church is a step made by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of church letter.

Lectionary Readings for January 11: Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17.

The Food & Shelter items of the month for December are gloves and socks. Please place your donations in the box by the church information table.

We've Seen God's Face

W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY 8.7.8.7.8.8.7.7

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Traditional Polish melody



Like the ma - gi from the east we tra - vel in - to
If we find our path has led us to King Her - od's
We will trust that star to guide us to the place where
When new threats de - rail our jour - ney from the path we



the un - known Step by step we make the jour - ney, called by
den of fear Still we'll keep our fo - cus fixed on chas - ing
we were called Find - ing God em - bod - ied in the humb - lest
planned to take We won't let fear par - a - lyze us, no we



God to seek the throne O - ver moun - tains, through the des - erts
down that star so clear Though the ty - rants rage and threat - en
dwell - ing place of all As King Her - od sends his sol - diers
won't stay locked in place Stay - ing nim - ble, we'll move for - ward



Seek - ing Christ we fol - low e - ver 'Til at last
Noth - ing weak - ens our pro - fess - ion It is God's
Time stands still while we be - hold him Here's where we
Keep - ing safe by cross - ing bor - ders Move a - round



we reach the place Where we hope to see God's face
voice we have heard Fear will not have the last word
were called to be God's in - car - nate love to see
the fear with grace For we know we've seen God's face