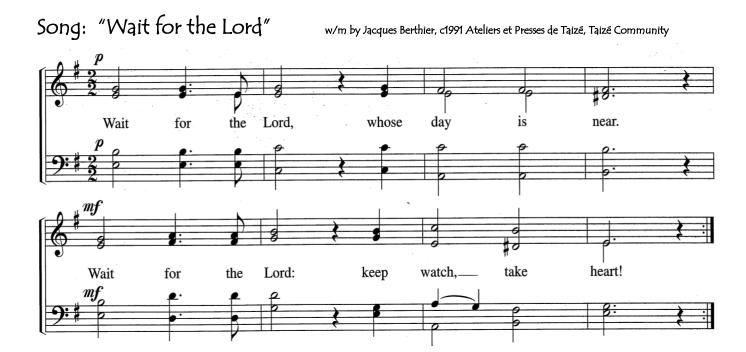
First United Methodist Church of Saginaw CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE IN THE STYLE OF TAIZÉ DECEMBER 3, 2025 7:00 p.m.

-----The beginning of the service will be denoted by the ringing of a bell.-----



Scripture: John 1: 1-9

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Reading: How the Light Comes - Jan Richardson

I cannot tell you how the light comes.

What I know is that it is more ancient than imagining.

That it travels across an astounding expanse to reach us.

That it loves searching out what is hidden, what is lost, what is forgotten or in peril or in pain.

That it has a fondness for the body, for finding its way toward flesh, for tracing the edges of form, for shining forth through the eye, the hand, the heart.

I cannot tell you how the light comes, but that it does. That it will. That it works its way into the deepest dark that enfolds you, though it may seem long ages in coming or arrive in a shape you did not foresee.

And so
may we this day
turn ourselves toward it.
May we lift our faces
to let it find us.
May we bend our bodies
to follow the arc it makes.
May we open
and open more
and open still
to the blessed light
that comes.

Silence (2 minutes)



Scripture: Isaiah 40: 3-5

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Reading: Prepare Your Way in Me - by Stephen Garnaas-Holmes

Holy One, prepare your way in me. Give me faith, like the stable, to know your presence within me. Give me courage, like Mary, to let your life overwhelm mine. Give me strength, like Joseph, to protect what is holy, tender and growing. Give me patience, like the shepherds, to be still and listen.

Give me humility, like the magi, to kneel before your presence.

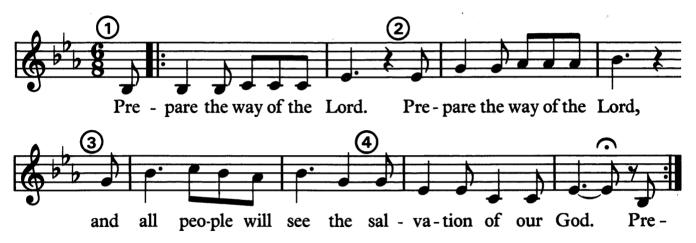
Give me trust, like the child, to let myself be borne into a new world. Give me joy, like the angels, to bring good news to the poor.

Give me love, like the manger, to hold Christ within.

Holy One, prepare your way in me.

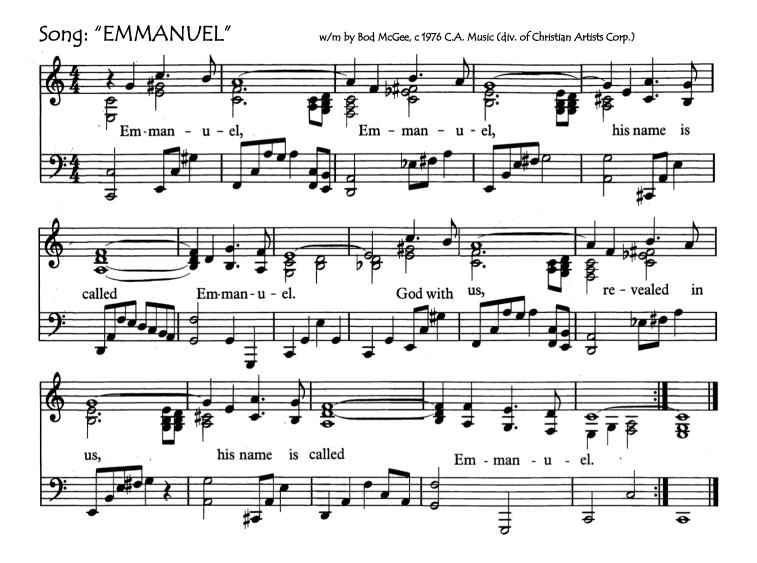
Song: "PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD"

wim by Jacques Berthier, c1984 Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, Taizé Community



Time of Prayer - Pastor Amy Terhune

Silence (10 minutes)



Benediction - by Mary Lou Kownacki

The incarnation is no mystery, Jesus. You make it easy to understand. Because you walked our earth we are to see the face of the Divine in every person we meet: the friend who betrayed the family gathered for a meal the welfare mother the man on death row

the clerk in the store the teenager on the corner the person near me now.

Every time I love, the mystery of the incarnation happens. Every time I love, I birth you on earth, Jesus. I fall on my knees and beg you, Jesus to deepen my living of the incarnation.