



ROAD TRIP

THE JOURNEY TO CHRISTMAS

PACKED & READY?

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

Savior of the Nations Come

Wayne L. Wold

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Call to Worship

One: Advent is here, and the journey begins. We pack our bags, load up our vehicles, and prepare our hearts for the road ahead. As Christians, we are called to journey with anticipation, to stay alert, and to embrace every twist and turn on the path to Jesus.

All: Lord, guide us on this journey. Help us to stay alert and eager, for we do not know the surprises you have in store.

One: Our world tells us to chase perfection, to curate the perfect holiday memory, to rush from one festive event to the next. The road to Christmas can seem cluttered and chaotic, yet there's an underlying joy and hope.

One: **Lord, steady our hearts and minds. Help us to stay focused on the true meaning of our journey, even amid the noise and haste.**

One: As we embark on this Advent Road Trip, let's ensure our hearts are packed with faith, hope, and love. Let these virtues guide us through every leg of this trip.

All: Lord, fill our hearts for this journey. With every mile, draw us closer to the promise of your birth. Amen.

Prelude

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying

Arr. Johann Gittfried Walther

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Introit

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Arr. Donald Moore

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Welcome

† Opening Hymn

God Almighty, We Are Waiting

W&S 3047

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1. God Almighty, we are waiting for a Savior to appear.
Meet us in our desert journey; give a sign that you are near:
burning bushes, parted waters, food aplenty in the wild.
As we look for signs and wonders, help us see you in a child.
2. God Incarnate, we are waiting for the feast day of your birth.
Looking back and looking forward to the Christ's return to earth.
Help us to proclaim the gospel, 'til the world is reconciled.
Let us set your holy table for each woman, man, and child.

3. God the Spirit, we are waiting for your presence here and now.
Humbled by our sinful weakness, at your mercy we will bow.
Search our hearts and make us ready, speak in language strong and mild,
help each one of us, your people, to receive you like a child.

Blessing for Young Hearts

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Hope

One: In the days of exile and uncertainty, the prophet Isaiah cried out: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence. As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. (Isaiah 64:1-3)

One: “From ages past, no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.” In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, “Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come” (Mark 13:35).

All: We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kin-dom all around us.

One: We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

Prayers of the People

*A Pastor will begin a time of prayer and name those for whom our congregation is praying.
Online Worshipers may type prayer requests in the Live Chat, taking care for privacy.*

Pastoral Prayer

WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

Mark 13:24-37 (CEB)

“In those days, after the suffering of that time, the sun will become dark, and the moon won’t give its light. The stars will fall from the sky, and the planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken. Then they will see the Human One coming in the clouds with great power and splendor. Then he will send the angels and gather together his chosen people from the four corners of the earth, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

“Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that he’s near, at the door. I assure you that this generation won’t pass away until all these things happen. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

“But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the angels in heaven and not the Son. Only the Father knows. Watch out! Stay alert! You don’t know when the time is coming. It is as if someone took a trip, left the household behind, and put the servants in charge, giving each one a job to do, and told the doorkeeper to stay alert. Therefore, stay alert! You don’t know when the head of the household will come, whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the early morning or at daybreak. Don’t let him show up when you weren’t expecting and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: Stay alert!”

Scriptural Response

One: The Word of God for the People of God.
All: **Thanks be to God! Amen**

Anthem *Every Valley* Joseph M. Martin
©2000 Malcolm Music

Message *Road Trip: Hope Along the Journey* Rev. Tara Limbaugh

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Response to the Word

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory *From Heaven Above* David Schack
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† **Doxology** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* UMH 94

Prayer of Confession

All: God of all time, we confess that we are not ready. We call on you to rend the heavens and come down, and yet we aren’t ready for you to rend our hearts and enter in. When it comes to meeting you face-to-face, we hesitate. We fear what you will find in us and among us. We are uncertain that we really want our lives to be turned upside down by the Good News. We want the hope that comes with knowing you are coming to us, but we’re not sure we’re ready for the shock of that hope. Forgive us, we pray. Free us from our fear that we might joyfully live in the hope that shakes us up and turns us around to follow you.

One: Hear the good news: God is the Potter, and we are the clay. We are the work of God’s hand. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Thanksgiving and Holy Communion Musical Setting A

UMH 17

Online worshipers are invited to select elements including bread and juice (or similar) from their homes to participate in Holy Communion. Please wait until directed before receiving your elements.

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.

Communion Song

Ave Maria

Bach-Gounod

Aurora and Ellie Eichberger - Piano and Cello duet

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Prayer After Communion

WE FOLLOW CHRIST INTO THE WORLD

† **Closing Hymn**

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

UMH 203

1. Hail to the Lord's Anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
to take away transgression, and rule in equity.
2. He comes with succor speedy to those who suffer wrong;
to help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in his sight.
3. He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth.
Before him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,
and righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.
4. To him shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend;
his kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end.
The tide of time shall never his covenant remove;
his name shall stand forever; that name to us is love.

† **Benediction**

Postlude

Variations on "Puer Nobis Nasitur"

Arr. Hal H. Hopson
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Liturgical elements from *The Abingdon Worship Annual* and *The United Methodist Hymnal*

Flowers: Given by Marjorie Slankard in honor of her late father's birthday
Liturgist: Ann Davis
Advent Candles: Mary Jane Lincoln, Elizabeth Gangolea
Organist: Robert Wuertz
Pianist: Rebecca Cosford
Musicians: Ellie Eichberger and Aurora Eichberger
Ushers: Gail Chatfield, Ann Davies, Janet Lind, Ann Gonsalves, Cindy Rushing
Communion Servers: Virginia McCrae, Randy Seward, Jerri Williams
Tech Team: AJ Prat, Cam Rhodes

LJUMC Ministry Team

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