



# MERCY

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



# KINGDOM SONGS

*"Far as the Curse is Found"*

JOY TO THE WORLD  
PSALM 98

DECEMBER 24, 2023



## **Welcome to Mercy Presbyterian Church**

Thank you for joining us in worship today. If you are visiting with us, we are delighted that you have chosen to be with us and our desire is to be a blessing to you. Our prayer is that God will transform our lives and enable us to live for His glory and the good of the world. We would love to get to know you better and answer any questions you may have. Please share your information with us by emailing us at [church@mercydallas.com](mailto:church@mercydallas.com).

### ***Our Worship***

You will notice that we follow a thoughtful and connected rhythm in our worship, called liturgy. The order of our worship reflects the work of the gospel in our hearts. In worship, we come together to tell the story of the gospel by the structure of our worship, the content of our worship, and the way that we worship.

### ***Parents of Young Children***

We believe the church is for all people, young and old, and want Mercy to be a church where children are seen, heard, and loved. We invite you to involve your children in our service, help them understand what is going on, sing the songs with you, and participate in worship. Children learn how to worship by imitating you. We say and sing parts of our worship service every week in order to help our young children to participate. Children's bulletins with coloring activities are available by the door to the sanctuary. Nursery is also available for babies and toddlers. A Mother's Room (the Blumen Room) is available during the service if you need a space to feed or calm a little one. The Blumen Room is a private space set with comfortable chairs and a changing station to the north of the sanctuary, and down the hall to the right.

### ***Connection Points***

If you are a visitor, regular attender or member, we would love the chance to connect with you outside of Sunday mornings! Use the QR code below to receive more information about community groups and other ministries, as well as to communicate changes to your personal information.

**Community Groups** are a vital part of Mercy's ministry and worship. **The Weekly Update** is our email newsletter and the primary way we communicate announcements, information about church life, and details about upcoming events. Your **Prayer Requests** matter to us! If there is any way that we can pray for you, we would love the opportunity to join you in lifting your needs before the Lord. Use the QR code below or email [church@mercydallas.com](mailto:church@mercydallas.com) to connect with us!





## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Lord's Day Worship | December 24, 2023

### WELCOME

**INVOCATION** | *We pray for God's presence, power and blessing in worship*

**CALL TO WORSHIP** | *God invites us into His presence to worship Him*

*based on Psalm 85:7-13*

Show us your unfailing love, O God, our Savior, and grant us your salvation.  
Listen to what the Lord our God says:

**He promises peace to his people, who are his beloved saints.**

The Lord will indeed give what is good. Righteousness goes before him  
and prepares the way for his steps.

**May the Lord make his holy face to shine upon us in this time of Advent  
worship. May we see God's face and so know peace. Amen.**

**HYMN OF ADORATION** | *We sing praises to God*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

*Latin Text | Translated by J.M. Neal | 15th c. French Franciscan Processional | Public Domain*

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.

O come thou rod of Jesse free,  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!  
Shall come to thee O Israel.

O come thou dayspring come and cheer,  
Our spirits by Thine advent here  
And drive away the shades of night,  
And pierce the clouds and bring us light  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!  
Shall come to thee O Israel.

O come desire of nations bind,  
All people in one heart and mind  
Bid envy strife and quarrels cease,  
Fill all the world with heaven's peace  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!  
Shall come to thee O Israel.

**ADVENT DOXOLOGY** | *(Glory Words) We praise the Triune God*

O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him.  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.  
We'll praise Your name forever, we'll praise your name forever.  
We'll praise Your name forever, Christ the Lord.

**CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION** | *We acknowledge our sin and ask for God's grace*

**Lord Christ, we confess our willingness to be loved but also our reluctance to love. We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love but also our refusal to forgive. We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love but also our resistance to follow you without question. In this Advent time, forgive us our failure to respond as we should. Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you with joy, as the shepherds; with gratitude, as Simeon; with obedience, as Mary; with love, as you have loved us. Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen**

**SILENT CONFESSION**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDONING GRACE** | *God forgives our sins and gives us grace*

*Isaiah 9:6-7*

*For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the Lord Almighty  
will accomplish this.*

**HYMN OF ADVENT** | *We celebrate God's gift of grace*

*O Come, All You Unfaithful*

*Music and words by Lisa Clow & Bob Kauflin | Sovereign Grace ©2020*

O come all you unfaithful  
Come weak and unstable  
Come know you are not alone  
O come barren and waiting ones  
Weary of praying, come  
See what your God has done  
Christ is born, Christ is born  
Christ is born for you

O come bitter and broken  
Come with fears unspoken  
Come taste of His perfect love  
O come guilty and hiding ones  
There is no need to run  
See what your God has done  
Christ is born, Christ is born  
Christ is born for you

He's the Lamb who was given  
Slain for our pardon  
His promise is peace  
For those who believe  
He's the Lamb who was given  
Slain for our pardon  
His promise is peace  
For those who believe

So come, though you have nothing  
Come He is the offering  
Come see what your God has done  
Christ is born, Christ is born  
Christ is born for you  
Christ is born, Christ is born  
Christ is born for you

## DEACON'S OFFERING

*Since the earliest days of the New Testament church, the deacons have taken a special offering to provide for those in need both inside and outside the church. The Lord uses the generosity of His people to provide care that ministers to the whole person, meeting physical and mental needs while being attentive to the spiritual. Through this, we see God's mercy work through us to bless our church and community. Every 4th Sunday, our deacons will give Mercy an opportunity to give to this special offering.*

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE | *A sign of the coming light of Christ* | The Thomason Family

*based on Luke 2:10, 17-18; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:8*

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

The shepherds were the first to hear the joyful announcement of Christ's birth— the good news of great joy for all the people. Upon seeing the baby Jesus, the shepherds spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed. We have also heard this wonderful news. We welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. Though we have not seen Jesus, we love him; and even though we do not see him now, we believe in him. And we are filled with an expressible and glorious joy.

**CONFESSION OF FAITH** | *We confess what we believe*

*Heidelberg Catechism* | Q&A 35 & 36

What is the meaning of these words "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary"?

**That God's eternal Son, who is, and continues true and eternal God, took upon him the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; that he might also be the true seed of David, like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted.**

What profit dost thou receive by Christ's holy conception and nativity?

**That he is our Mediator; and with His innocence and perfect holiness, covers in the sight of God, my sins, wherein I was conceived and brought forth.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** | *Rev. Doug Tharp*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** | *We lift up our requests to God*

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**



**HYMN OF PREPARATION** | *We prepare our hearts to hear God's Word*

*Joy to the World!*

*Words by Isaac Watts | Music by George Frederick Handel | Public Domain*

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make his blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness  
And wonders of his love,  
And wonders of his love,  
And wonders, wonders of his love.

**CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**CHILDREN DISMISSED TO CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

Oh sing to the Lord a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things!

His right hand and his holy arm  
have worked salvation for him.

<sup>2</sup> The Lord has made known his salvation;  
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

<sup>3</sup> He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.

<sup>4</sup> Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

<sup>5</sup> Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody!

<sup>6</sup> With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

<sup>7</sup> Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who dwell in it!

<sup>8</sup> Let the rivers clap their hands;  
let the hills sing for joy together

<sup>9</sup> before the Lord, for he comes  
to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** | Rev. Doug Tharp | *Far as the Curse is Found*

**SERMON NOTES**



## INTERLUDE

### CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER | *The family meal of Christians*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right for us to give thanks and praise.**

## PRAYER OF PREPARATION AND THANKSGIVING

With joy we praise you, gracious God, for you have created heaven and earth, made us in your image, and kept covenant with us— even when we fell into sin. We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord, who came among us as the Word made flesh to show us your glory, full of grace and truth. Therefore we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim the glory of your name.

## ACCLAMATION OF PRAISE

Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest!**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Hallelujah! Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us.

**Therefore, let us keep the feast. Hallelujah!**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

## PARTAKING OF THE ELEMENTS

*The Lord's Supper, also called Communion or the Eucharist, is the family meal of Christians. We invite followers of Jesus Christ to partake of this sacrament: those who have believed the good news, have repented of their sins, and are baptized members in good standing in the Lord's Church. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with His people, the Church.*

*Please consider offering your tithes as a physical act of worship by placing your offering in the tithe box located at the entrance to the sanctuary.*

### **Prayer for Those Searching for Truth**

*Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.*

### **Prayer for Awakening**

*Lord Jesus, I have heard from the Bible for years, and have been in church for years, but very little of this seems real to me. Please show me the reality of what you are saying. Unnerve me with the badness of the bad news. Enthrall me with the goodness of the good news. Make what is familiar seem new. Amen.*

### **Prayer of Belief**

*Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared to hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.*

### **Prayer for Covenant Children**

*Lord Jesus, thank you for giving me the opportunity to grow up in a Christian family where I am surrounded by the good news of the gospel. Help me to grow in my understanding of who you are and what you have done for me on the cross. Help me learn what it means for me to turn from my sins and trust in you alone for my salvation. Teach me what it means to follow you as one of your disciples. Amen.*

### **Prayer for Those Struggling Against Sin**

*Lord Jesus, give me the ability to see in you the fulfillment of all my needs and desires, and help me to turn from every false source of satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely to me, and run with perseverance the race that you have set before me, looking only to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.*

**COMMUNION HYMN** | *We celebrate the family meal of Christians*

*Joy Has Dawned*

*Words and Music by Keith Getty & Stuart Townsend | Thankyou Music ©2004*

Joy has dawned upon the world  
Promised from creation  
God's salvation now unfurled  
Hope for ev'ry nation  
Not with fanfares from above  
Not with scenes of glory  
But a humble gift of love  
Jesus born of Mary

Sounds of wonder fill the sky  
With the songs of angels  
As the mighty Prince of Life  
Shelters in a stable  
Hands that set each star in place  
Shaped the earth in darkness  
Cling now to a mother's breast  
Vulnerable and helpless

Shepherds bow before the Lamb  
Gazing at the glory  
Gifts of men from distant lands  
Prophecy the story  
Gold a King is born today  
Incense God is with us  
Myrrh His death will make a way  
By His blood He'll win us

Son of Adam Son of heaven  
Given as a ransom  
Reconciling God and man  
Christ our mighty Champion  
What a Savior what a Friend  
What a glorious mystery  
Once a babe in Bethlehem  
Now the Lord of history

*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

*Words by Charles Wesley | Music by Felix Mendelssohn | Public Domain*

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 angelic host proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem!  
Hark the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King!

Christ by highest heav'n adored;  
Christ the ever lasting Lord;  
Late in time behold Him come  
Offspring of the virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see;  
Hail the incarnate Deity.  
Pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel.  
Hark the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King!

Hail! The heav'n born Prince of Peace,  
Hail the Son of righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die;  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth!  
Hark the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King!



**GLORIA PATRI** | *(Glory to the Father) We praise the Triune God*

Gloria, in excelsis Deo.  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

**BENEDICTION** | *God sends us out into the world with His blessing*

*from The Worship Sourcebook*

*God the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son, give you grace to prepare for eternal life. God the Son, who comes to us as Redeemer and Judge, reveal to you the path from darkness to light. God the Holy Spirit, by whose working the virgin Mary conceived the Christ, help you bear the fruits of holiness. Amen.*

**DISMISSAL** | *God sends us out into the world*

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy and make you heralds of the gospel. **Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### ***Mercy's Tenth Anniversary!***

This will be a year to celebrate as we look back on the last ten years and remember the Lord's faithfulness to our church. We'll have several touch points throughout the year, but will start with the Tenth Anniversary Jubilee Dinner - an evening of dinner and fellowship - on Sunday, January 21, 2024 from 6-9pm at Communion Cooperative (514 Lockwood Dr., Richardson). This celebration will be adults only, but we look forward to including our entire church family in other ways throughout the year.

### ***Children's Ministry***

Toddler Sunday School and Children's Church meet every Sunday. Elementary Sunday School (3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade) meets from 9-10am on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday mornings in Room 207. We still need volunteers weekly in both the nursery and toddler rooms. If you are interested in getting your family plugged in to the children's ministry at Mercy or if you have a teen or pre-teen interested in helping, contact Emily Freeman ([emily@mercydallas.com](mailto:emily@mercydallas.com))!

### ***Youth Ministry***

Youth Group activities will pause during the Christmas holidays. We'll see you back on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> for our usual meeting from 6-8pm!

### ***Women's Ministry***

Bible Study will resume with a new series on January 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Look for registration information in the Weekly Email.

### ***Men's Ministry***

Men's Bible Study will resume with a new session on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. Look for registration information in the Weekly Email.

## CALENDAR

### **Sunday, December 24**

*Christmas Eve*

*No Elementary Sunday School*

*No Youth Group*

10 - 11:30am

Sunday Morning Worship | Chapel

6 - 7pm

Christmas Eve Service | Chapel

### **Sunday, December 31**

*New Year's Eve*

### **Sunday, January 14**

9 - 10am

Elementary Sunday School | Room 207

6 - 8pm

Youth Group | The Church's Home

### **Tuesday, January 16**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

### **Wednesday, January 17**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

### **Sunday, January 21**

6 - 9pm

*Tenth Anniversary Jubilee | Communion*

### **Tuesday, January 23**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

### **Wednesday, January 24**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

### **Sunday, January 28**

9 - 10am

Elementary Sunday School | Room 207

6 - 8pm

Youth Group | The Morgan's Home

### **Tuesday, January 30**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

### **Wednesday, January 31**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

### **Friday, February 2**

5pm

Women's Retreat | Waco, TX

### **Saturday, February 3**

*All Day*

Women's Retreat | Waco, TX

**Sunday, February 4**

8am

Women's Retreat | Waco, TX

**Tuesday, February 6**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Wednesday, February 7**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Sunday, February 11**

9 - 10am

Elementary Sunday School | Room 207

6 - 8pm

Youth Group | The Church's Home

**Tuesday, February 13**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Wednesday, February 14**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Tuesday, February 20**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Wednesday, February 21**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Sunday, February 25**

9 - 10am

Elementary Sunday School | Room 207

6 - 8pm

Youth Group | The Church's Home

**Tuesday, February 27**

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Study | Cindi's Deli

9:30am - 11am

Women's Bible Study | TBD

**Wednesday, February 28**

7 - 8:30pm

Women's Bible Study | TBD

## FINANCIAL UPDATE AND GIVING

### ***Giving***

If you have questions about giving, expenses or budget at Mercy, or would like more information, contact Bryan Hatfield (bryan@mercydallas.com).

If you would like to give to the work and worship of Mercy Presbyterian Church, you can:

- Mail a check to: Mercy Presbyterian Church, 6930 Alpha Rd., Dallas, TX 75240
- Place checks or cash in the offering box located by the door as you exit the sanctuary.
- Give by scanning the QR code:



<b>2023/2024 Budget</b>	<b>\$655,000</b>
July 1, 2023 - October 31, 2023 Expenses	\$194,392
July 1, 2023 - October 31, 2023 Giving	\$143,711
<i>Variance</i>	<i>(\$50,687)</i>

### **MINISTRY STAFF**

#### ***Senior Pastor***

Rev. Doug Tharp | doug@mercydallas.com

#### ***Ministry Coordinator***

Jessica Nokes | jessica@mercydallas.com

#### ***Children's Ministry Coordinator***

Emily Freeman | emily@mercydallas.com

#### ***Women's Ministry Coordinator***

Joanna Dawson | women@mercydallas.com

#### ***Director of Music***

Sal Bautista | music@mercydallas.com

#### ***Youth Group Leaders*** | youth@mercydallas.com

Josh and Hannah Patch

Nate and Cecile Foster

Sevee Alaniz

### **INTERIM SESSION**

#### **Rev. Doug Tharp**

*Senior Pastor | Mercy Presbyterian Church*

#### **Rev. David Rogers**

*Senior Pastor | Town North Presbyterian Church*

#### **Rev. Robbie Mills**

*Associate Director | Mission to the World Western Hub*

#### **Eric Horan**

*Ruling Elder | Park Cities Presbyterian Church*

### **DEACONS** | deacons@mercydallas.com

Thomas Buerger

Eric Clay

Micah Cunningham

Bryan Hatfield

Adam Huebner

Phil Vanderhill

Thomas Walter