

First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2023 – Order of Worship

TIME OF REFLECTION

“I wrote this story for you, but when I began it I had not realized that girls grow quicker than books. As a result you are already too old for fairy tales, and by the time it is printed and bound you will be older still. But some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again.”

~C.S. Lewis (1898-1963), Author & Theologian

“It is the mark of a good fairy-story, of the higher or more complete kind, that however wild its events, however fantastic or terrible the adventures, it can give to child or man that hears it, when the ‘turn’ comes, a catch of the breath, a beat and lifting of the heart, near to (or indeed accompanied by) tears, as keen as that given by any form of literary art, and having a peculiar quality.”

~J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973), Author

“But wait, I haven’t even told you the best part yet.
You see - as if there wasn’t enough here already to impress you -
The best part about this story is this story is true.
The only fairytale that’s not a fairytale.”

~“The Damsel and the Villain” by Jimmy Needham

“What does Christmas feel like for me? It feels like I’m in a courtroom where my life hangs in the balance. The prosecuting attorney is the unassailable law of God, and the defense attorney does not exist. There is no defense. It is manifest to everyone in the courtroom that all evidence is against me, and the judge, the son of the king of the realm, brings down the gavel: ‘Guilty.’ I’m sentenced to execution and everlasting ruin. And as they leave the courtroom with me in bonds, the son-judge follows me out, pulls me aside, and says, ‘I’m going to take your condemnation... I love you.’”

~John Piper (1946-Present), Pastor & Author

“Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
‘Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.”

~“O Holy Night” by Adolphe Adam

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “The Eucatastrophe of Christmas” – *Mike O’Leary*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Micah 1:1-7; 7:18-20 (ESV)*

Micah 1

¹ The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

² Hear, you peoples, all of you;
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,
and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you,
the Lord from his holy temple.

³ For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place,
and will come down and tread upon the high
places of the earth.

⁴ And the mountains will melt under him,
and the valleys will split open,
like wax before the fire,
like waters poured down a steep place.

⁵ All this is for the transgression of Jacob
and for the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the transgression of Jacob?

Is it not Samaria?

And what is the high place of Judah?

Is it not Jerusalem?

⁶ Therefore I will make Samaria
a heap in the open country,

a place for planting vineyards,
and I will pour down her stones into the valley
and uncover her foundations.

⁷ All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces,
all her wages shall be burned with fire,
and all her idols I will lay waste,
for from the fee of a prostitute
she gathered them,
and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return.

Micah 7

¹⁸ Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in steadfast love.

¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us;
he will tread our iniquities underfoot.

You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.

²⁰ You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and steadfast love to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our fathers
from the days of old.