

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023 - Order of Worship

TIME OF REFLECTION

“On a starlit hillside, shepherds watched their sheep.
Slowly, David's city drifted off to sleep.
But to this little town of no great renown
The Lord had a promise to keep.

Prophets had foretold it, a mighty King would come,
Long awaited Ruler, God's Anointed One.
But the Sovereign of all looked helpless and small
As God gave the world His own Son.

Wondrous gift of heaven: the Father sends the Son.
Planned from time eternal, moved by holy love.
He will carry our curse and death He'll reverse,
So we can be daughters and sons.

And who would have dreamed or ever foreseen
That we could hold God in our hands?
The Giver of Life is born in the night
Revealing God's glorious plan
To save the world.”

~“Who Would Have Dreamed,” Sovereign Grace Music

“The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.”

~“O Little Town of Bethlehem,” Phillips Brooks

“God promises to keep His people and He will keep His promises.”

~ Charles Spurgeon, 19th century Baptist preacher

“King of Kings yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
In the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.”

~“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence,”
The Divine Liturgy of St. James

SERMON – “The Promise Keeping God” – *Noah Crane*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Micah 5:1-5, 7:7-20 (ESV)*

Micah 5

- ¹ Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops;
siege is laid against us;
with a rod they strike the judge of Israel
on the cheek.
- ² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.
- ³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.
- ⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure,
for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.
- ⁵ And he shall be their peace.
When the Assyrian comes into our land
and treads in our palaces,
then we will raise against him seven shepherds
and eight princes of men;

Micah 7

- ⁷ But as for me, I will look to the LORD;
I will wait for the God of my salvation;
my God will hear me.
- ⁸ Rejoice not over me, O my enemy;
when I fall, I shall rise;
when I sit in darkness,
the LORD will be a light to me.
- ⁹ I will bear the indignation of the LORD
because I have sinned against him,
until he pleads my cause
and executes judgment for me.
He will bring me out to the light;
I shall look upon his vindication.
- ¹⁰ Then my enemy will see,

and shame will cover her who said to me,
“Where is the LORD your God?”
My eyes will look upon her;
now she will be trampled down
like the mire of the streets.

- ¹¹ A day for the building of your walls!
In that day the boundary shall be far extended.
- ¹² In that day they will come to you,
from Assyria and the cities of Egypt,
and from Egypt to the River,
from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain.
- ¹³ But the earth will be desolate
because of its inhabitants,
for the fruit of their deeds.
- ¹⁴ Shepherd your people with your staff,
the flock of your inheritance,
who dwell alone in a forest
in the midst of a garden land;
let them graze in Bashan and Gilead
as in the days of old.
- ¹⁵ As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt,
I will show them marvelous things.
- ¹⁶ The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might;
they shall lay their hands on their mouths;
their ears shall be deaf;
- ¹⁷ they shall lick the dust like a serpent,
like the crawling things of the earth;
they shall come trembling out of their strongholds;
they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God,
and they shall be in fear of you.
- 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.