

Christmas Eve, 5:00PM
December 24, 2023

BEHOLD A GREAT LIGHT
ISAIAH 9:2-7

AS WE GATHER

Tonight we silently ponder the mystery of the Son of God, who took on our flesh by the Holy Spirit, and the Virgin Mary, being born into the world for us and for our salvation. Tonight we pray and sing:



O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel! (*LSB 361:4*)

+ PREPARATION +

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Stand

OPENING HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379

- 1 O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him
Born the king of angels: ***Refrain***

Refrain O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

2 Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: *Refrain*

4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

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INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

1 Timothy 3:16; Luke 2:19

Pastor: Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

People: **He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.**

Pastor: But Mary treasured up all these things,

People: **pondering them in her heart.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In peace let us pray to our heavenly Father, confident of His forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination

Pastor: Almighty Father,

People: **we confess that we are sinners by nature and by thought, word, and deed. We cannot and do not merit any forgiveness. But with repentant hearts, we turn to You for mercy, seeking Your grace. In Your loving kindness, forgive, restore, and lead us so that we may be renewed and may live to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor: With joy I announce God's good news to You. Our gracious God in His mercy has given His Son to be born, to live and then to die for you, and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Be at peace and rejoice in the Lord.

People: **Amen.**

INTROIT

Psalm 24:1, 3-5; antiphon: Psalm 2:7

Pastor: I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to Me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."

People: **The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.**

Pastor: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in His holy place?

People: **He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.**

Pastor: He will receive blessing from the LORD

People: **and righteousness from the God of his salvation.**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten You."

HYMN OF PRAISE *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

LSB 380

- 1 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 the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"
- 2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,

Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

- 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun 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!"

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SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Sit

+ WORD +

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

For to Us a Child is Born

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.
You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice
before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide

the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

CHRISTMAS CAROL *What Child Is This* **LSB 370**

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
 On Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
 While shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the king,
 Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
 The babe, the son of Mary!
- 2 Why lies He in such mean estate
 Where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
 The silent Word is pleading.
 Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
 The cross be borne for me, for you;
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
 The babe, the son of Mary!
- 3 So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
 Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
 The King of kings salvation brings;
 Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
 Raise, raise the song on high,
 The virgin sings her lullaby;
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
 The babe, the son of Mary!

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EPISTLE**1 John 4:7-16****God is love.**

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

VERSE*Matthew 1:21*

People: **Alleluia. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. Alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL**Luke 2:1-20***The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they

were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY *Angels We Have Heard on High* **LSB 368**

- 1 Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

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SERMON **“Behold a Great Light”**
Text: Isaiah 9:2-7

HYMN *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* *LSB 366, Sts. 1-2*

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,
 That glorious song of old,
 From angels bending near the earth
 To touch their harps of gold:
 “Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,
 From heav’n’s all-gracious king.”
 The world in solemn stillness lay
 To hear the angels sing.
- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come
 With peaceful wings unfurled,
 And still their heav’nly music floats
 O’er all the weary world.
 Above its sad and lowly plains
 They bend on hov’ring wing,
 And ever o’er its babel sounds
 The blessed angels sing.

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TITHES AND OFFERING

Please fill out a **Welcome-Worship Registration Card** (in the pew rack) and place it in the offering plate. Please read and fill out the Communion Registration side of this card if you will be partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

MUSICAL OFFERING

CHOIR SINGS *Christmas Lamb*

Stand

APOSTLES’ CREED

All: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church throughout the world and for all people of the world. Mighty and loving God our Father, hear our prayer for the whole Church gathered this night around the manger of our Savior, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Give us true unity of faith and singleness of love. Bless especially all pastors and ministers of Your Church that they may rightly proclaim Your Word and faithfully administer Your Sacraments. To all Your people, give ears of faith to hear that their lives reflect Your saving Word. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: May the good news of the Savior descend upon all people of the entire world, granting the miracle of repentance and faith in the hearts and minds of all. Bring true peace among nations and people. Guide leaders to promote justice and peace. Bless all who work even through this night to defend and protect us. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Gather each of our families into that love which tonight we view in the Holy Family. Give tender courage to all fathers, loving endurance to all mothers, and trusting obedience to all children. Grant to all who are single or all who are lonely an awareness of Your great love for each of them. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Visit with Your mercy all who are afflicted with illness, [*especially . . .*], all who suffer injury, and all who fear death. Give calmness in their silent suffering, and give faith to know and look to Your love that gives healing and life. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: In the silence of this night, we remember all who have gone before us with the sign of faith. Bring us with them into Your nearer presence in paradise. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

All: **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 and ever. Amen.**

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

(The pastor takes the light from the Christ candle and gives it to the ushers. They pass the light on to the congregation. Tip only the unlighted candle. Do not tip the lighted candle to avoid dripping the wax! Hold the candles straight up and the wax will not drip. Please return your candle to the ushers as you exit the Sanctuary. Thank you.)

Pastor: As the light of these candles illumines our faces, it symbolizes the light of Christ, a child in the manger at Bethlehem, a Savior suffering our death on the cross and soon to come from His throne on high as judge of all. He is our light here on earth and the eternal light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice, for the light of the world has come, who transforms us with the brightness of His glory.

This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

People: **If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.**

Pastor: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,

People: **and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.**

Pastor: You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

O God, as You make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, grant that we, who joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our judge; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Pastor: The almighty and merciful God, the Father, the Son + and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

People: Amen! Glory to God in the highest! Peace to His people on earth!

CLOSING HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schlaft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe in lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.*

- 1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
- 3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

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Please sit. Carefully extinguish candles.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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+ Serving You Tonight +


Preacher & Celebrant *Rev. Curtis Binz, Senior Pastor*
Organist *Amy Kao*
Lectors *Evelyn and Beatrice Priest*
Ushers *Hiroaki Murata & Megumi Amano,
Rhonda Short, Rev. Jonathan Priest*
Altar Guild *Darlene Hartman, Virginia Ferry,
Gerda Beisel*

Visitors, welcome! Thank you for being with us this Holy Christmas, the Nativity of our Lord. Please come and join us again in worship of the Blessed Triune God. Merry Christmas!

The Chancel Flowers are given to the glory of God by Carolyn and Jack Landgrebe and Margaret Finley in loving memory of Carolyn and Margaret's parents, Robert and Frieda Thomson, and in loving memory of Jim Finley, beloved husband, father, and grandfather. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Psalm 23:1

Your tithes and offerings support the mission and ministries of West Portal Lutheran Church. If you wish to make an online donation, please use the QR code below. PayPal deducts a small fee from these donations, or you may add a nominal amount to your donation by checking the box to help cover the fees.





Christmas Poinsettias that adorn our Church this Christmas Eve and Day are given to the glory of God for the great gift of His love, Jesus Christ, by the following:

Pastor & Stacey Binz

In loving memory of Michele Cottle - Stacey's sister and Sarann Cordonni - Stacey's Aunt

Vivian Char

In loving memory of Ben Char

Rudy & Gail Frey

To the glory of God

Ernestine Gutter

In honor of Ruth Stresow and Elaine Mills

Darlene Hartman

In honor of the honorary members of the Altar Guild - Vivian Char and Janice Mason

Rich & Terry Hesselroth

In memory of Gene & Martha Mize and Marcia Hesselroth

Ray & Kathy Holstead

In loving memory of our parents, Kristin Hyde-DeKolver, John Hyde, Emily Benson, Marie Louise Benson, Emily Keeley, and Ken Diercks

Jing Li

In honor of Pastor Binz

Bill & Nita Luebke

In memory of Marlene Hewison, Bill's sister

Patrick & Grace Man

In memory of Theresa Jeung - Patrick's sister and Bik May Yeung - Joshua's mother-in-law

Vicki, Karen, Tiffany, Bryan and Becky Proehl

In memory of Ed Proehl, Steven Kittilsby, Glenn & Marge Kittilsby, and Frank & Doris Gelini

Vicki, Bryan and Becky Proehl

In memory of Becky's sister Jenny Herbert

John Rixe

In memory of Art Frese

Rhonda Short

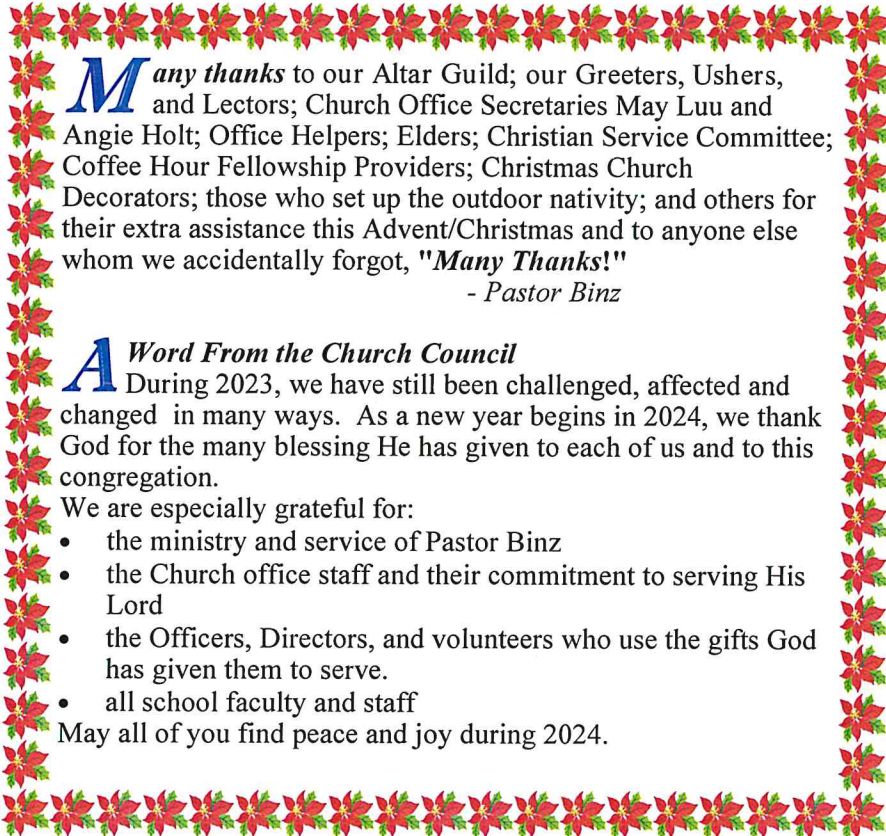
In honor of Darlene Hartman and the Altar Guild Ladies

The Stranahan Family

In memory of Ann Stranahan, Ed & Mary Sales, and Darlene Lau. Peace to the world

Tom and Georgeanne Wedergren

In memory of our parents



M*any thanks* to our Altar Guild; our Greeters, Ushers, and Lectors; Church Office Secretaries May Luu and Angie Holt; Office Helpers; Elders; Christian Service Committee; Coffee Hour Fellowship Providers; Christmas Church Decorators; those who set up the outdoor nativity; and others for their extra assistance this Advent/Christmas and to anyone else whom we accidentally forgot, "**Many Thanks!**"

- Pastor Binz

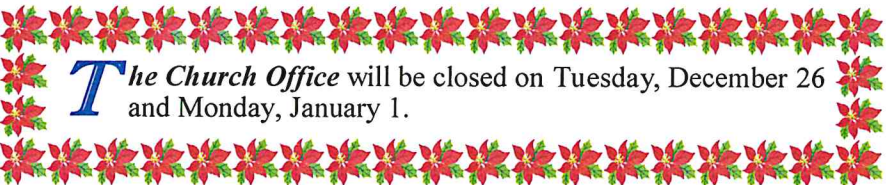
A *Word From the Church Council*

During 2023, we have still been challenged, affected and changed in many ways. As a new year begins in 2024, we thank God for the many blessing He has given to each of us and to this congregation.

We are especially grateful for:

- the ministry and service of Pastor Binz
- the Church office staff and their commitment to serving His Lord
- the Officers, Directors, and volunteers who use the gifts God has given them to serve.
- all school faculty and staff

May all of you find peace and joy during 2024.



T*he Church Office* will be closed on Tuesday, December 26 and Monday, January 1.



Worship Services

Saturday, 5:00PM

Sunday, 10:00AM

Bible Classes

Wednesday, 11:00AM

Sunday, 9:00AM

Sunday School

Sunday, 9:00AM

CHURCH

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westportallutheran.org

SCHOOL

Sloat Campus

200 Sloat Boulevard
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415-665-6330

Sunset Campus

3101 Moraga Street
San Francisco CA 94122

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Rev. Curtis Binz,
Senior Pastor

Ms. Sherise Lee,
Principal

Mrs. Sherilyn Jew,
*Assistant to the Principal-
Teaching, Learning, Curriculum*

Ms. Amy Kao,
Music Director

12/24/23
5:00PM