

→ Joys and concerns & The Lord's prayer
Joys: "Thanks be to God" | **Response: "Halleluia"**
Concerns: "God in Your mercy" | **Response: "Hear our prayer"**

Holy communion: All are welcome at this open table.
*Invitation to the Table; The Great Thanksgiving; Epiclesis;
Breaking the Bread; Sharing the Bread and the Cup; Prayer
after Communion*

WE GO FORTH

*Closing hymn "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"
UMH #213

*Benediction

*Sending forth song "On Eagles Wings" (CCLI Song #3127)
It is the tradition of the Girdwood Chapel UMC to form a circle, hold hands, and sing 'On Eagles Wings.'

SERVICE NOTES

UMH: United Methodist Hymnal, TFWS: The Faith We Sing, Girdwood Chapel's CCLI Basic #: 11038417, CCLI Streaming License #: CSPL155734, CEB: Common English Bible.

This week's worship helpers—Greeter: Ann, Tech Helper: Kevin, Liturgist: Clark, Preacher: Pastor Hyunghee Kim

Next Week's Worship Helpers Sign-up

- Greeter: Wendy, Tech Helper: Lynné/Betsy, Liturgist: Patty

Announcements:

- **Food Pantry:** First Sundays 2-4p.m., 2nd&4th Wednesday 4-6p.m.
- **December Leadership Meeting:** Dec.9 at 7pm via Zoom
- **Men's Group:** Dec.10 (Wed.) at 6:30pm in the Green Room
- **Facility Use:** Wedding on Dec.12 (Fri.) in the Chapel
- **Longest Night Service:** Dec.22 (Mon.) at 6pm in the Chapel
- **Christmas Cookie Gifting:** Bring cookies on Dec. 14 or Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m. and join us as we assemble plates to bless community organizations. Contact Terry.

Subscribe our church newsletter, "Chapel Chatter,"
for the detailed announcements



Girdwood Chapel's Vision Statement:

Our vision is to be a heartbeat of Girdwood
connected in love and committed to Christ,
with faith that makes room for grace and honors differences.



Our Church Mission:
Love God,
Love Others, and
Change the World!

Second Sunday of Advent
December 7, 2025, 10:30 a.m.

* Indicates an invitation to rise in body or spirit.

WE GATHER

Welcome & Announcements (*back of bulletin*)

*Call to worship

One: Family of faith, God is at work!

Many: God is healing and creating,

One: redeeming and dreaming,

Many: calling and sending,

One: listening and loving.

Many: Yes, indeed, God is at work!

One: So may we worship our God who never gives up.

All: May we worship our God who holds onto hope. Amen.

*Opening hymn "Hark The Herald Angels Sing"

by Reawaken Hymns

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

All: On-the-move God,

we have every reason to hold onto hope.

**We have every reason to believe that spring will come,
that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise.**

And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers.

With anxious hearts we cry out to you,

"Will change ever come? Will things ever get better?"

Will I ever make a difference?"

(continued on next page)

Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining. Show us the places where you are on the move. With open hearts we pray. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

One: Family of faith, in our honesty,

Many: we are heard.

One: In our worries,

Many: we are held.

One: In our failings,

Many: we are forgiven.

One: In our fear,

Many: we are not alone.

One: Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!

Many: When we're running out of hope, God is still at work.

One: Thanks be to God!

All: Amen.

WE HEAR THE WORD

Prayer for illumination & Scripture reading

Isaiah 43:19-21 & Matthew 11:1-11 (CEB)

19 Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness. 20 The beasts of the field, the jackals and ostriches, will honor me, because I have put water in the desert and streams in the wilderness to give water to my people, my chosen ones, 21 this people whom I formed for myself, who will recount my praise.

1 When Jesus finished teaching his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

2 Now when John heard in prison about the things the Christ was doing, he sent word by his disciples to Jesus, asking, 3 "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

4 Jesus responded, "Go, report to John what you hear and see.

5 Those who were blind are able to see. Those who were crippled are walking. People with skin diseases are cleansed.

Those who were deaf now hear. Those who were dead are raised up. The poor have good news proclaimed to them.

6 Happy are those who don't stumble and fall because of me."

7 When John's disciples had gone, Jesus spoke to the crowds about John: "What did you go out to the wilderness to see?

A stalk blowing in the wind? 8 What did you go out to see?

A man dressed up in refined clothes? Look, those who wear refined clothes are in royal palaces. 9 What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

10 He is the one of whom it is written: Look, I'm sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you.

11 "I assure you that no one who has ever been born is greater than John the Baptist. Yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

One: This is the Word of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Message "When We're Running out of Hope, God Is at Work"

Response to the Word (remain seated for reflection)

*Hymn after the message "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
UMH #211

WE RESPOND

Invitation to generosity: Offering baskets are available on the side/back of the sanctuary. Or Mail your check: PO Box 1068, Girdwood, AK 99587, or give online; *scan QR code*→



Offering prayer: Please join me in offering prayer

**All: God of new beginnings,
we bring these gifts as seeds of hope —
small, imperfect, but offered with love.
Multiply them for your work of healing,
justice, and renewal in this world you so love.
When we are weary, remind us that
even the smallest act of generosity
becomes part of your unfolding kingdom.
In Christ, our living hope, we pray. Amen.**

(continued on next page)

Why Our Worship Follows This Pattern

Understanding the Blue Headings in Our Liturgy

WE GATHER

Worship begins with God calling us together.

We enter into a holy rhythm of welcome, song, prayer, and confession.

This is the moment when we shift from the noise of the week into God's presence.

WE HEAR THE WORD

We pray for illumination and listen to Scripture.

Through the reading, preaching, and the Spirit's movement,

God speaks hope, challenge, and grace into our lives.

WE RESPOND

Hearing the Word changes us.

We respond with our gifts, our prayers, our confessions, our joys and concerns,

and with the sacred meal of communion.

Worship is not passive—it is participatory.

WE GO FORTH

Worship sends us back into the world as people of faith.

We receive a blessing and go forth to live out Christ's love in our daily lives, our community, and our world.

This fourfold pattern is followed by Christians around the world and reminds us that worship is not entertainment, but a sacred journey:

God gathers us, speaks to us, transforms us, and sends us out.

Why These Prayers? – A Guide for Advent Worship

Why These Moments Matter in Worship

Call to Confession

An invitation to honesty.

We are reminded that we can bring our real selves before God — with all our failures, fears, and hopes — trusting in God's compassion.

Prayer of Confession

A prayer we speak together.

We acknowledge where we fall short in love, justice, and faithfulness. Confession does not bring shame; it opens the way for grace.

Words of Forgiveness (Assurance of Pardon)

A declaration of God's mercy.

We hear the good news that in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, restored, and made new. Forgiveness is a gift we receive, not something we earn.

Prayer for Illumination

A prayer for understanding.

Before Scripture is read and preached, we ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten our hearts and minds. We trust that God still speaks through the Word today.

These moments guide us into worship with **honesty, grace, and openness**, helping us listen for God's presence in our midst.

Why We Say “in body or in spirit”

(Inclusive Worship Language)

In worship we say, “**Please stand in body or in spirit,**” because Christian worship is embodied— yet not every body moves the same way, and **every body bears God’s image.**

This phrase honors:

- children, elders, and all stages of life
- those with chronic pain, mobility challenges, or fatigue
- those who are neurodivergent or sensitive to sensory input
- those recovering from injury or surgery
- those carrying grief, trauma, or emotional heaviness
- the full dignity of every person present

This reflects a core belief:

Participation in worship is never measured by posture, but by the posture of the heart.

Standing in body is faithful. Standing in spirit is faithful.
Remaining seated is faithful.

Why We *Don’t* Say “if you are able”

The phrase “*if you are able*” can unintentionally suggest that standing is the *preferred* or *more faithful* posture, and that those who remain seated do so because they “cannot.”

This language can separate people into categories—“able” and “not able”—rather than honoring the many ways bodies show up in worship.

By saying “**in body or in spirit,**” we offer an invitation rather than a condition.

We affirm that:

- all forms of participation are equal,
- ability is not a measure of devotion, and
- every body is welcomed exactly as it is.

**This language is a practice of hospitality—
a way of saying:**

“You belong here as you are.

Your presence is a gift.

Your body is honored in this space.”