

# FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 28, 2025 | REFUGEE SUNDAY

## WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

**Preparing for Worship:** Praise the Lord for this First Sunday after Christmas! We hear again the words of Isaiah 63:7 — that **“the LORD has done great things for us, and the holy One of Israel has shown steadfast love.”** May our hearts be ready to rejoice in the miracle of God’s presence among us, and may our worship reflect the deep gratitude of those redeemed by grace.

**Prelude** **Joanna Cunningham, Pianist**

**Welcome and Greetings in Jesus’ Name** **Rev. Dr. Ivan E. Greuter**

**\*Opening Song (Stand) # 216 “O Sing a Song of Bethlehem”** *KINGSFOLD*

**\*Opening Prayer (Stand)** **Rev. Traci U. Brown**

**Song of Faith** **“Peace Has Come”** **Worship Team**

**The Lighting of the Christmas Candles: The Holy Family’s Flight to Egypt**

**Leader:** We remember the Holy Family, who fled in the night seeking safety in a foreign country as refugees.

**People:** We remember all who are forced to leave home because of fear, famine, and violence.

**Leader:** Jesus shared our humanity and knew hardship and displacement.

**People:** Christ walks with all who suffer and seeks refuge today.

**Leader:** God’s steadfast love endures from generation to generation.

**People:** May we respond with compassion, welcome, and hope.

**All:** God of mercy and light, lead us to love as you love, to protect the vulnerable, and to follow Christ’s example of long-suffering love, who was once a child seeking refuge and is now our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Song of Faith # 198** **“What Child is This”** *GREENSLEEVES*

## WE HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD

Scripture Reader: Lonna Hersh

**The First Reading** **Isaiah 63:7-9**

## The Second Reading

**Hebrews 2:10-18**

Gospel Reader: Deacon Sonia Roling

**\*The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (Stand)** **Matthew 2:13-23**

**\*Responsorial (Stand) #187** **“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”**

**\*Greeting and Sharing Peace with Family and Neighbors (Stand)**

**The Children's Sermon** (Children’s Church for Students Preschool–3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)

**Announcements & Prayers of the People - 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.

**Presentation of Tithes, Gifts, and Donations –** As the prophet declares, we will **“tell of the LORD’s faithful love and the LORD’s praiseworthy acts, because of all the LORD has done for us”** — let us now give our offerings in joyful thanksgiving to the Lord.

**Offertory** **Rexanne Greuter, Director of the Chancel Choir**

**A Prayer of Illumination & Message**  
**The Reverend Traci U. Brown, Chaplain**

## WE RESPOND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT IN FAITH AND SERVICE

**Invitation to Faith and Fellowship –** If the Spirit of God is moving you to receive God’s forgiving love in Jesus, calling you to be a follower of Jesus in the waters of baptism or encouraging you to join this Christian Church, please come forward during this song.

**\*Hymn (Stand) # 182** **“Go Tell It On The Mountain”** *GO TELL IT*

**\*Spoken Benediction** **Rev. Dr. Ivan E. Greuter**

**Postlude** **Joanna Cunningham, Pianist**

## HOW TO BECOME A FULLY DEVOTED FOLLOWER OF JESUS

**GOOD NEWS!** God loves you and wants to rescue all people from the consequences of evil. The Bible teaches the way to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ:

1. **ADMIT** – Admit to God you have done wrong things (sinned) that have hurt God and others. Apologize to God, turn away from harmful behavior, and start doing good things (See Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; 1 John 1:9; Acts 3:19).
2. **BELIEVE JESUS CHRIST DIED FOR YOU AND GOD HAS RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD** – Accept and trust that Jesus is God's one and only Son who died on the cross in your place and give God the credit for raising Jesus from the dead (See Romans 5:8; Acts 4:12; Acts 16:31a; John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18; John 14:6).
3. **CONFESS JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR LORD** – Make a religious commitment to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus by trusting Him to be your Rescuer, Redeemer (Savior), and Ultimate Leader (Lord). (See Romans 10:9 and 10; Romans 10:13; Matthew 16:24; Luke 9:23)
4. **DEDICATE YOUR LIFE TO THE JESUS WAY** - Tell your family and friends about your new trust in Jesus Christ by coming to the front of the Sanctuary at the end of a worship service to publicly share your decision to be a follower of Jesus (Christian).

**HOW TO JOIN THIS CHRISTIAN CHURCH - COME FORWARD** – Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and accepting the Baptist principles, practices, and the covenant of this church, may join this Christian church. Persons interested in affiliating should speak with the Pastor or come forward at a congregation meeting. A person may join by Believer's Baptism, Letter of Transfer from a previous Christian church with prior baptism, or a Satisfactory Statement of Christian Faith.

**OUR MISSION** – We love God and We love People by sharing the Good News of God's forgiving, renewing love in Jesus Christ by word and deed to improve the lives of neighbors. West Side Baptist Church is an independent, autonomous Christian church partnering for mission support with like-minded people of faith in our City, County, State, Nation, and World.



Then *Joseph* Got Up,  
took the child and his mother by night,  
and went to **EGYPT.**

Matthew 2:14, NRSV

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