

Wesley United Methodist Church

6:30 PM Worship

December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve

At Wesley we foster a sanctuary culture by creating a safe environment where all feel welcomed, loved, accepted, valued, and affirmed for who they are, through intentional practices such as empathy, compassion, generosity, hospitality, and inclusion.

For the safety of every worshipper, please observe the following guidelines regardless of your vaccine status.

- **Wear a mask covering your mouth and nose all the time during worship.**
- **Keep social distancing in your sanctuary seating.**
- **Please let an usher know if you have questions, need assistance, or have a concern about health or safety.**

Prelude	Two Preludes	Brenda Portman b. 1980
	<i>It Came Upon the Midnight Clear</i> <i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	
	Away in a Manger	Alice Jordan 1916-2012
	Noel on <i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i> Theme with four variations	Larry Visser b. 1962
	Christmas Eve	Norberto Guinaldo b. 1937
	Three Variations on <i>Sussex Carol</i>	Raymond Haan b. 1938
	On Christmas night all Christians sing To hear the news the angels bring. News of great joy, news of great mirth, News of our merciful King's birth.	
	Still, Still, Still	Franklin Ashdown b. 1942

Greeting & Announcement

*Call to Worship The Fletcher Family, liturgist

One: We are a people who have walked in deep darkness.

Many: We come this night, seeking to be a people who have seen a great light.

One: Light comes to us on this holy night.

Many: The light of a small babe, the light of a bright star;

One: The light of God's love;

Many: Shining for all the earth.

One: Come and see... the child has been born! Lights are shining!

* Please stand in body or in spirit

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;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

*Candle Lighting

One: Unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given!

The four Advent candles are relit.

Many: God has brought light into every darkness.

One: The promises of God are fulfilled! Wonderful Counselor! Mighty One! Prince of Peace!

Many: We hear, even today, a chorus of angels bringing good news of great joy to all the people.

One: We light the Candle of Christ – witness to the Savior who is Christ the Lord.

The Christ candle is lit.

All: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors.

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.

Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent word is pleading.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

* Please stand in body or in spirit

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

God who comes to us, forgive us; when our shadowed lives dim your light; when the tinsel of Christmas means more to us than your truth; when our hearts of stone resist the pain and brokenness around us; when we care more about what is under the Christmas tree, than the damage we do to your creation and to your children.

Silent Prayer

Have mercy on us, Loving God, so we might tear down the walls we have built to keep your love away; so we could seek justice for our sisters and brothers; so our hearts would become cradles for your Child, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Solo

The Little Road to Bethlehem

David Potts, tenor
Michael Head 1900-1976

As I walked down the road at set of sun,
The lambs were coming homeward one by one.
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them,
Along the little road to Bethlehem
Beside an open door as I drew nigh,
I heard sweet Mary sing a lullaby.
She sang about the lambs at close of day,
And rocked her tiny King among the hay.
Across the air the silver sheepbells rang.
"The lambs are coming home, " sweet Mary sang.
"Your star of gold, your star of gold is shining in the sky.
So sleep, my little King, go lullaby."
As I walked down the road at set of sun,
The lambs were coming homeward one by one.
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them,
Along the little road to Bethlehem

The Christmas Pageant

Wesley Children and Youth

This longest night your candles light
Keep watch over all the earth
Welcome hope and cheer as dawn draws near
And rejoice! Rejoice! in the Savior's birth!

This longest night your candles light,
when those who listen await his cry!
Keep watch over all the earth!
This night it the eve of the great nativity,
when those who are longing await his appearing

Listen carefully, through the stillness;
Listen, hear the telling of the waves upon the shore
Listen, hear the song of the angels glorious

Soon it will be heard that his foot has reached the earth!
News! That the glory is come
Welcome hope and cheer as dawn draws near!
Truly His Salvation is near
For those who know Him
And His glory shall swell in our land
Watch and pray, the Lord shall come
Those who are longing await His appearing
Those who listen await His cry
Watch! Wait! Listen!

Christmas Message

Rev. Byungmoo Lee

Solo

The Holy Boy

John Ireland 1879-1962

Lowly, laid in a manger, with oxen brooding nigh,
The heavenly babe is lying his maiden mother by.

Lo! the way-faring sages, who journeyed far through the wild,
Now worship, silent adoring, the boy, the heavenly child.

Leave your work and your playtime, and kneel in homage and prayer,
The prince of love is smiling asleep in his cradle there!

Bend hearts to the wonder, the birth, the mystery mild,
And worship, silent adoring, the boy, the heavenly child.

Dim the light of the lantern, and bare the mean abode,
Yet gold and myrrh and incense proclaim the son of God.

Lowly laid in a manger by virgin undefiled,
Come worship, silent, adoring, the boy, the heavenly child.

Holy Communion for Christmas Eve

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. In the fullness of time, you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and at his birth the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago, so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Candle Lighting & Hymn

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round you virgin, mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glorious streams from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

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.

Departing Prayer:

The Canticle of Simeon

One: The holy child of Bethlehem has come to us this night.

Many: We have welcomed the Prince of Peace.

One: Now, like Simeon, that righteous and devout man who looked forward to the consolation of Israel and who beheld the coming of our Emmanuel, we pray.

Many: God, let your servants now depart in peace, according to your word; for our eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all people, a light for revelation and for glory to all your children.

Benediction

(Please extinguish your candle and put it in the basket as you leave the sanctuary.)

Postlude

Away in a Manger

William Ness, organist
Austin Lovelace 1919-2010

On your way out you may leave your tithe/offering and attendance slip in the offering plate at the back of the sanctuary. You can also mail your offering to the church or give online via church website (wesleyworc.org).

Tonight's prelude is a collection of well-known carols intended for Christmas Eve. The arrangement of these compositions uses the organ's resources from soft stops to louder, fuller sounds returning to the sweeter soft stops. I hope as you experience these pieces you will find awe, wonder, and peace in our Savior's birth to save a sinful world.

Candle Lighting – by F. Richard Garland, The UMC Discipleship Ministries, Resources,
Advent Wreath Meditations

Portions of the Pageant are adapted from the Celtic Daily Prayerbook of the Northumbrian Community
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