

Wesley United Methodist Church

Silent Night

December 20, 2022

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.**
 - **Please let an usher know if you have questions, need assistance, or have a concern about health or safety.**
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*Into this silent night as we make our weary way we know not where,
just when the night becomes its darkest and we cannot see our path,
just then is when the angels rush in, their hands full of stars. ~ Ann Weems*



WE GATHER

Prelude

O Little Town of Bethlehem (Forest Green)

What Child is This?

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

William Ness, organ

Philip Young b. 1937

Peter Pindar Stearns 1931-2016

Brenda Portman b. 1980

Greeting and Welcome

Rev. Byungmoo Lee

***Call to Worship** (*Based on Genesis 1:1-4 and John 1:1-5*)

One: In the beginning of creation, when God made heaven and earth, the earth was without form and void. Darkness was over the face of the deep, and a mighty wind swept over the waters. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Many: **God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from darkness.**

One: When all things began, the Word already was. The Word dwelt with God, and what God was, the Word was. Through him all things came to be; no single thing was created without him. All that came to be was alive with his life, and that life was the light of the world.

Many: **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out** **Call to Worship**

***Hymn**

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

UMH 196

Tune: HYFRYDOL

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
 from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
 Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
 dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
 born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
 By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
 by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne

Opening Prayer (in unison)

God of Mercy, hear our prayer this Advent season for ourselves and our families who live with the painful memories of loss. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the past. We look for light but find darkness, for brightness, but walk in gloom. Come, gracious God, come in quiet hope. Come in gentle assurance and tender mercy. Come with healing to make us whole. We ask these things in the name of your Christ who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

Music for Reflection

Still, Still, Still

Marjorie Ness
Wesley Ringers**WE LISTEN FOR GOD****Scripture**

James 5:7-11

Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Tune: ST. LOUIS

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
 above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
 so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
 No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
 where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

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 Emmanuel!

Reading

When the World Was Dark

Iona Community

Music for Reflection

Away in a Manger

Marjorie Ness
Wesley Ringers

Prayers of Intercession

Response: Nothing Can Trouble

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.
Those who seek God shall never go wanting.
God alone fills us.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and contains the melody for 'Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.' The second staff starts with a first ending bracket and contains the melody for 'Those who seek God shall never go wanting.' The third staff starts with a second ending bracket and contains the melody for 'God alone fills us.' The key signature is one sharp (F#).

The Lord's Prayer

Scripture

Revelation 21:1-7

Hymn

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Tune: CAROL

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, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

RESPONDING AND GOING FORTH

A Liturgy of Light and Remembering

Congregational Prayer (in unison)

Gracious God, we know and have known times of sadness and darkness, darkness within us and outside us. Though we do not cause light to shine, we can place ourselves in the path of your sunbeams, your starlight, the light of Advent candles, and begin to experience the warmth of your presence, your love, and your healing. In your presence we can become light-bearers and hope-bringers. Grant us your touch and your light on this night and on all the long nights of our lives. Amen

Candle lighting

During the singing of the hymn, all who wish may come forward to light a candle as a sign of Advent hope shining in the darkness. Those who wish are invited to kneel for a time of prayer

Hymn

Silent Night

Tune: STILLE NACHT

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.

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.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Dismissal with Blessing

Closing Time of Meditation

Silent Night

Marjorie and William Ness, piano
Joel Raney

*As gentle music is played you are invited to sit in the quiet for further reflection.
You may remain in silent prayer for as long as you wish and leave when you are ready.*



WORSHIP NOTES

Portions of this evening's liturgy were taken from the following sources:

Call to Worship and When the World Was Dark Iona Community Wild Goose Worship Group, comp. *Cloth for the Cradle: Worship Resources and Readings for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2000.

Opening Prayer, Prayers of Intercession, A Liturgy of Light and Remembering, and Dismissal with Blessing: adapted from Ana Gobledale, *Worship Words* <https://worshipwords.co.uk/>

Congregational Prayer: adapted from: Larry J. Peacock. *The Living Nativity: Preparing for Christmas with Saint Francis*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2018.

Tonight's Worship Leaders: Rev. Byungmoo Lee, Judith Barton, Donna Hirtle, Marjorie Ness, William Ness, Deborah O'Driscoll, Wesley Ringers

Worship Tech: Mark Muncey and Brent Drajesk

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.

You are invited to join us for our upcoming Christmas worship services:

Saturday, December 24th - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7 pm

Sunday, December 25th - Christmas Service with Holy Communion, 10 am

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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