

Wesley United Methodist Church

10:00 AM Sunday Worship

December 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent

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.

Please let an usher know if you have questions, need assistance, or have a concern about health or safety.

Prelude In the Bleak Midwinter Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

Greeting

*Advent Candle Lighting

One: When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared: But you, O Bethlehem ... from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule with justice and mercy. But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming: But you, O Wesley United Methodist Church, from you shall come forth for me What? What might God be calling forth from us?

Many: God invites us to receive the promise of God's salvation and the sustenance of God's mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God's invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

One: We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God's promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God's love for all creation.

Light the fourth candle of the Advent wreath.

*Hymn "Tell Out, My Soul" UMH 200

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of God's word;
in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of God's name!
Make known God's might, who wondrous deeds has done;
God's mercy sure, from age to age the same;
God's holy name, the Lord, the mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of God's might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

***Please stand in body or in spirit.**

Tell out, my soul, the glories of God's word!
Firm is the promise and God's mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and forevermore!

*Praise Songs

We Will Celebrate

We will celebrate our God!...
Let his banner be raised, let his glory be seen.
We will celebrate our God!...

Praise O Praise

Praise, O praise, my God and King.
Hymns of adoration, sing;
For his mercies, shall endure; Ever faithful, ever sure ...

Alleluia, Alleluia!
King of Kings and Lord of Lords!
For his mercies, shall endure; Ever faithful ever sure...

Common Prayer (*unison*)

**Holy God,
the mystery of your eternal Word took flesh among us in Jesus Christ.
At the message of an angel,
the virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your will.
Filled with the light of your Spirit,
she became the temple of your Word.
Strengthen us by the example of her humility,
that we may always be ready to do your will,
and welcome into our lives Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Christmas Nativity Play

Sunday School

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

UMH 230, v. 4

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!

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. Amen.

The Offering

Offertory Music

Tie! Tie! Abofo Reto Dwom

Sam Asare Bediako

Hark! Hark! The Angels are Singing

Hark! Hark! The Angels are singing,
Hark! Hark! The Angels are singing,
Hark! The Savior is born for us,
The sheep of the Lord has been born unto us
Hark! Jesus, The Savior has brought peace
Hark! Jesus, the Savior has brought happiness.

Hark! Hark! The Messiah is born
Hark! Hark! He is Bethlehem.
Hark! Hark! Glory in the highest,
Peace is here on earth.
He is our Savior,
He has brought happiness,
Hark! Jesus, the Savior has brought peace,
Hark! Jesus, the Savior has brought happiness.

*Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Prayer of Dedication

*Passing of Peace

“Shalom”

Mensah Essilfie

God’s peace be unto you,
We wish you Shalom!
The peace of God which transcends all
understanding be with you forevermore.

Hebrew Scripture Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

Anthem

Mary

Amy Tate Williams (cf. 20th c.)

Mary, oh Mary, the Lord is with you.
Fear not, for He has found favor with you.
Behold, you shall bear a son, He shall be the Holy One.
You shall name Him Jesus, the Son of God.
He will be great and will sit on the throne of His father David,
Ever to reign for His kingdom shall know no end!

God's Holy Spirit shall come upon you and dwell within you,
There is nothing impossible with God!
Behold, you shall bear a son, He shall be the Messiah, the Holy One.
You shall name him Jesus, the Son of God.

*Gospel Reading

Luke 1:39-55

Message

Announcement

*Hymn

“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”

UMH 198

My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is this name.
All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.

From age to age, to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.

Love casts the mighty from their thrones, promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied, the rich seem suddenly poor.

Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,
remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

*Benediction

Postlude

Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella

Alfred V. Fedak (b. 1953)

Worship Leaders: Gifty Bentum-Asante, Rhianna Burke, Desmond Cheetham, David Dagle,
Ronna Davis, Chris Kerns, Byungmoo Lee, Debbie O’Driscoll, Harllen Orofino, David Potts,
Jennifer Quansah, Chancel Choir, Ghanaian Choir, Worship Tech Team

Advent Candle Lighting – *Come, Let Us Adore Him: Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy*, by Lisa Hancock,
The United Methodist Church Discipleship Ministries
Common Prayer – *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, 256.

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Music Notes for today's worship service

Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella

If you're in Provence on a Christmas eve, you might witness a local tradition: a parade of children on their way to midnight mass, dressed as milkmaids and shepherds, carrying candles and singing the lively, infectious melody, its 3/8 meter, rooted in traditional Provençal dance rhythms; it may have been that era's swing music. The lyrics, Flambeau, Jeanette, Isabella, are by an anonymous lyricist and first appeared in written form in a 1553 book of French Christmas carols. Jeannette and Isabella, are two farmhands who find the Baby Jesus and his mother, Mary, in a stable. Excited by this discovery, they run to a nearby village and many rush to see Mary and the Baby. Visitors to the stable are urged to keep their voices quiet, so the newborn can enjoy his dreams.

Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabella,
Bring a torch, to the cradle run!
It is Jesus, good folk of the village;
Christ is born and Mary's calling:
Ah! Ah! Beautiful is the Mother!
Ah! Ah! Beautiful is Her Son!

Who is that, knocking on the door?
Who is it, knocking like that?
Open up, we've arranged on a platter
Lovely cakes that we have brought here
Knock! Knock! Open the door for us!
Knock! Knock! Let's celebrate!

It is wrong when the Child is sleeping,
It is wrong to talk so loud.
Silence, all, as you gather around,
Lest your noise should waken Jesus:
Hush! Hush! See how fast He slumbers;
Hush! Hush! See how fast He sleeps!