

Good Evening!

North Bend Church
a Global Methodist Congregation

Sunday, December 24, 2023
Because God is worthy we worship

GATHERING AND WELCOME

Prelude

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, the love that transforms us, and Jesus Christ, our wondrous Light. May the Light burning in our hearts guide us, comfort us, protect us, and tend us in all seasons and circumstances, reminding us that day and night, in the light and in the darkness, God is with us. Our salvation has come! Amen.

***Call to Worship¹**

Leader: It's Christmas Eve! How quickly this time has come upon us!

People: We are breathless. Still so much to be done.

Leader: Calm your spirits. Take time to hear the wondrous news.

People: Open our ears to hear Mary's Story

Leader: Believe in the good news!

People: We believe and rejoice! God's love is here with us!

***Singing**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

UMH #234

(vs. 1, 2, 3)

**1. 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;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

Christ the Lord.

2. True God of true God,

Light from Light Eternal,

**lo, he shuns not
the Virgin's womb;
Son of the
Father,
begotten,
not created;**

Refrain:

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

**3. Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens
of heaven above!
Glory to God,
all glory in
the highest;**

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,

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

***Opening Unison Prayer¹**

Lord, remind us that, like Mary, each one of us is a bearer of your Good News. We are called to proclaim hope, peace, joy, and love in your name. Open our hearts and our spirits today to receive with great joy the love that you have for us. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Special Music

Ashley-May Burkhart

Scripture Reading: Old Testament

Isaiah 9:2-7 (NIV)

- 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.
- 3 You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.
- 4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

- 5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.
- 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

***Singing**

Away in a Manger

UMH #217

(vs. 1, 2, 3)

**1. Away in a manger,
no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus
laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky
look down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus,
asleep on the hay.**

**2. The cattle are lowing,
the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus,
no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus,
look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle
till morning is nigh.**

**3. Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask thee to stay
close by me forever,
and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children
in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven
to live with thee there.**

Scripture Reading: New Testament

Luke 2:2-21 (NIV)

- 2: 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
- 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in
Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because
he belonged to the house and line of David.

5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to
be married to him and was expecting a child.

6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be
born,

7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped
him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there
was no guest room available for them.

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby,
keeping watch over their flocks at night.

9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of
the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you
good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;
he is the Messiah, the Lord.

12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in
cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared
with the angel, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to

those on whom his favor rests.”

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,
18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Message

Celebrate!

Pastor Ed Gebhart

Christmas Prayer

***Candlelight Ceremony**

Pastor Ed will take the Light of Christ from the Christ Candle of the Advent Wreath and walk down the center isle lighting those candles at the end of the pew. Please pass your light to the person next to you ... remembering the lit candle remains upright while the unlit candle is tipped to receive its light.

***Singing**

Silent Night

UMH #239

(vs. 1, 2, 3)

**1. 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.**

**2. Silent night,
holy night,
shepherds quake**

**at the sight;
glories stream
from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing
Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!**

**3. 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.**

***Closing Blessing**

Postlude

¹*From "Worship Connection: December 24, 2023," by Nancy C. Townley, ministrymatters.com.*