

Good Morning!

North Bend Church

a Global Methodist Congregation

Sunday, December 17, 2023

Because God is worthy we worship

GATHERING AND WELCOME

Prelude

Announcements

BIBLE STUDY: We are discussing the book of Jonah for the next three Tuesdays.

FRANK'S TREE: Each year we light Frank's Tree with donations to charities. This year, the board decided we split funds between Lane of Roses, supported by Hope Stephens' ministry, and Hope Restored India, supported by Laura Meyers' ministry. Each \$10 donation lights one colored bulb. Once all those are lit, representing \$200, a white bulb is turned on. After we reach \$2,000, the entire tree is lit up.

TRAM: All non-perishable food, personal care and household items are welcome. The location is at the Miami Town Hall, 112 S. Miami Avenue, Cleves. TRAM is always grateful for monetary donations. Mail checks to TRAM Ministry Inc., P.O. Box 389, North Bend, Ohio 45052.

(Are there any other Announcements?)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Each Sunday before Christmas, we light candles in the Advent wreath as we celebrate the coming of Christ. Today's rose-colored candle represents fierce JOY. The angels' message to the shepherds brought them great joy and enlightened hope as they learned Jesus came for all people, including people like themselves. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the coming of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

COME BEFORE THE LORD

***Call to Worship¹**

Leader: Love has come down to us this Advent Season.

People: Divine love which heals and transforms our lives.

Leader: With great joy, we receive that love and share it with others.

People: We open our hearts to all God's children, the last, the least, and the lost, as well as those who feel privileged.

Leader: The Lord has done and continues to do great things for us.

People: Praise be to God who loves us so much and who challenges us to be people of joy in this darkened world.

Amen!

***Singing**

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

UMH #57

(vs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7)

**1. O for a thousand
tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of
my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!**

**2. My gracious Master
and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all
the earth abroad
the honors of thy name.**

**3. Jesus! the name
that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in
the sinner's ears,**

**'tis life, and health,
and peace.**

**4. He breaks the power
of canceled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can
make the foulest clean;
his blood availed for me.**

**5. He speaks, and listening
to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken
hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe.**

**7. In Christ, your head,
you then shall know,
shall feel your sins forgiven;
anticipate your
heaven below,
and own that love is heaven.**

PRAY UNTO THE LORD

***Praying Together¹**

Lord God, as we gather this day, we open our hearts to you, seeking your healing and transforming love. Our world cries for justice for all people, yet the leaders seem intent on bantering with one another, unmindful of the peace-bringers and those who would heal and teach the ways of peace. Be with all of us. Prepare us for this bright light of love which you are sending to us, for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Joys & Concerns

Silent & Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

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.

HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD

Anthem

Reading the Scripture

Matthew 11:2-11 (NIV)

- 11:2 When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples
- 3 to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”
- 4 Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see:
- 5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.
- 6 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”
- 7 As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind?
- 8 If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces.
- 9 Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.
- 10 This is the one about whom it is written: “ ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’
- 11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not

risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Proclaiming the Gospel

Who is Jesus?

RESPOND IN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

***Singing**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

UMH #240
(vs. 1, 2, 3)

**1. Hark! the herald
angels sing,
“Glory to the
newborn King;
peace on earth,
and mercy mild,
God and sinners
reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye
nations rise,
join the triumph
of the skies;**

**with th'angelic
host proclaim,
"Christ is born
in Bethlehem!"**

Refrain:

**Hark! the herald
angels sing,
"Glory to
the newborn King!"**

**2. Christ, by highest
heaven adored;
Christ, the
everlasting Lord;
late in time
behold him come,
offspring of
a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh
the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us**

**in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our
Emmanuel.**

Refrain:

**Hark! the herald
angels sing,
“Glory to
the newborn King!”**

**3. Hail the heaven-born
Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun
of Righteousness!
Light and life
to all he brings,
risen with healing
in his wings.
Mild he lays
his glory by,
born that we
no more may die,
born to raise us**

**from the earth,
born to give
us second birth.**

Refrain:

**Hark! the herald
angels sing,
“Glory to
the newborn King!”**

GO IN THE GRACE OF THE LORD

***Receiving the Blessing**

Postlude

¹*From “Worship Connection: December 17, 2023,” by Nancy C. Townley, ministrymatters.com.*