

Good Morning!

***North Bend Church***  
*a Global Methodist Congregation*

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

**GATHERING AND WELCOME**

**Prelude**

**Announcements**

**BIBLE STUDY:** We are discussing the book of Jonah for the next two 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 purple candle represents God's LOVE, which is always with us to comfort, to heal, to strengthen, and to guide us. God's love draws us home and warms our hearts and spirits. Help us to remember Mary's willingness to serve God and bear the Christ Child. May we be just as eager to serve God and recognize how our love and faith leads us to salvation.

## COME BEFORE THE LORD

### **\*Call to Worship<sup>1</sup>**

Leader: Light the lamps, prepare the room, God is coming to us!

**People: Make our hearts and spirits ready to receive God's most gracious gift, God's Son, Jesus Christ.**

Leader: Push the darkness away. The light is truly coming!

**People: May God's light shine on us, in us and through us that God's glory may be seen. Amen!**

### **\*Singing**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

UMH #230

(vs. 1, 2, 3, 4)

**1. 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.

2. For Christ is born of Mary,  
and gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep,  
the angels keep  
their watch of  
wondering love.

O morning stars together,  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing  
to God the King,  
and peace to  
all on earth!

**3. 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.**

**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!**

## **PRAY UNTO THE LORD**

### **\*Praying Together<sup>1</sup>**

**In the rush of preparation for holiday celebration, we come to this place to be fed by God. We need the peace, hope, love and joy that this season represents. We need to listen again with wonder at the magnificent words of Mary as she proclaims her faithful participation in God's most miraculous gift. Open our hearts this day, Lord, to receive the words and the blessings, to be fed and then to be those who will share with others as you have shared with us. In Jesus' Name, we pray. 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 1:18-25 (NIV)

- 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.
- 19 Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.
- 20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.
- 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”
- 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:
- 23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

**Proclaiming the Gospel**

*Are We Prepared?*

**RESPOND IN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD**

**\*Singing**

*Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

UMH #251  
(vs. 1, 2, 3)

***Refrain:***

**Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills  
and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.**

**1. While shepherds kept  
their watching**



**o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout  
the heavens  
there shown a holy light.**

***Refrain:***

**Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills  
and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.**

**2. The shepherds  
feared and trembled,  
when lo! above the earth,  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed  
the Savior's birth.**

***Refrain:***

**Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills  
and everywhere;**

**go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.**

**3. Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed  
Christmas morn.**

***Refrain:***

**Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills  
and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.**

**GO IN THE GRACE OF THE LORD**

**\*Receiving the Blessing**

**Postlude**

<sup>1</sup>*From "Worship Connection: December 24, 2023," by Nancy C. Townley, [ministrymatters.com](http://ministrymatters.com).*