

Good Evening!

## *North Bend Church*

*a Global Methodist Congregation*

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

*Because God is worthy we worship*

### **GATHERING AND WELCOME**

#### **Prelude**

#### **Opening Prayer/Faith on 50 Prayer**

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us in this moment, so that we may feel your presence. Fill our heart with your love. Illuminate our minds with your light. Mold us and make us useful servants for you. Reveal to us at this moment, opportunities for showing your love and your light in our communities along Route 50 in Western Ohio. Guide us and energize us into action, so that we may turn possibilities into ministries of hopeful service. Through the power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

## **COME BEFORE THE LORD**

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

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light!

**People: Christ the Savior is born!**

Leader: Sing to the Lord a new song; declare His glory among the nations.

**People: We rejoice in the gift of God's Son!**

Leader: Come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

**All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth!**

### **\*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.**

**PRAY UNTO THE LORD**

**\*Praying Together<sup>2</sup>**

**This bright night is for mystery, O God. We scarcely understand the ways you break into this world and into our lives. Yet we know you do. The whole earth still needs your peace, with peoples in conflict and a world that is lost. May the ancient story of your arrival this night make us courageous bearers of good news and doers of good deeds. For the sake of your beautiful, created world we pray. Amen.**

## **LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE**

Leader: The prophet Isaiah calls to us from the past to imagine the future when God's reign will be fully realized and recognized throughout creation. When that time comes, God "shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4).

**All: Today, we choose to live in hope, believing that the time of God's reign has come and is coming among us.**

Leader: We light this candle of hope as a sign of our promise to follow the Light as we answer God's call to transform our hope into reality today and in the days to come.

—Light the first Advent Candle—

**Special Music**

*Noel by Lauren Daigle*

Ashley-May Burkhardt

## **LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE**

Leader: Advent reminds us that we are people who share a story, the story of Jesus, who enacts peace by judging in favor of the poor and deciding with equity for the meek of the earth. We long for the day when “the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6).

**All: Today, we choose to live the story of peace, believing that true peace comes when we seek the flourishing of all God’s creation.**

Leader: We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to bring Light to the places the world seeks to hide until that day when all creation lives together in harmony and abundance.

—Light the second Advent Candle—

## Old Testament Reading

Psalm 96 (NIV)

- 1 Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.
- 6 Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.

- 10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it.
- 12 Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.
- 13 Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.



## LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

Leader: In the midst of our waiting and longing for God to make the world right again, we cling to the truth that God has saved, God is saving, and God will save. So today, we join our voices with the prophet Isaiah, who calls us to live in the joy of the truth of God's salvation.

**All: We choose to believe that the day is coming when “the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isaiah 35:10).**

Leader: We light this candle of joy as a sign of the Truth that sets us free to live in joy as we wait and work for the day when all creation will flourish together.

—Light the third (pink) Advent Candle—

**\*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!”**

## **LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE**

Leader: Today, we come face to face with the scandal of Advent: Mary, the unmarried mother; God Incarnate growing in Mary's womb as a vulnerable baby; Joseph contemplating leaving Mary because of her pregnancy; God's love at work in ways that society and propriety could not understand; God calling Mary and Joseph to faithfulness despite the fear of disgrace.

**All: With Mary and Joseph, we choose to wait, watch, and listen for the way of Love instead of responding in fear to the world's judgment.**

Leader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our faithfulness as we seek, find, and follow Emmanuel, God with us.

—Light the fourth Advent Candle—

## Reading

Luke 2:1-14 (NIV)

- 2:1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.
- 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."

## **LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Leader: Tonight, we gather to remember with the prophet Isaiah: For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this (Isaiah 9:6-7).

**All: We gather to once again bask in the glory that visited a stable and a manger, shepherds watching their flocks, and a young couple cradling the newborn Messiah.**

Leader: We light the Christ candle as a sign of the glory that came among us in unexpected places and to unexpected people, that we may be people who seek and follow the glory of the Christ child here and now.

—Light the (white) Christ Candle—



## **New Testament Reading**

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.

## **Proclaiming the Gospel**

*Isaiah Points to the Light*

## **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 aisle 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, Holy Night*

UMH #239

(vs. 1, 2, 3, 4)

**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.**

**4. 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!**

**GO IN THE GRACE OF THE LORD**

**\*Receiving the Blessing**

**Postlude**

<sup>1</sup>*The Seedbed Worship Planner, December 24, 2025*

<sup>2</sup>*The Abingdon Worship Annual, December 24, 2025*