



# Centenary

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**December 24, 2021**

**The Nativity of Our Lord**

(As the Prelude begins, you are invited to enter a time of prayer  
and meditation as we prepare to worship God together.)

**The Prelude**

*Pastorale* (from Christmas Concerto)

Arcangelo Corelli

## **The Call to Worship**

Leader: Augustus and Quirinius—  
ancient names that seem odd to today's ears...

**People: characters in an ancient story  
that we long to hear.**

Leader: Nazareth and Bethlehem—  
distant towns we know little about...

**People: places our hearts long for,  
because of the One who traveled there.**

Leader: We gather together to hear once more,  
a story so ancient and yet so current,  
so distant and yet so near.

**People: We come to hear the story  
of God coming to us.**

## **The Opening Prayer**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

All: **Holy God, in days of old you sent your angels  
to tell shepherds the good news:  
"To you is born this day a Savior,  
the Messiah, the Lord."**

**Help us hear with the shepherds this good news,  
that we too may glorify and praise you for all that  
we have seen and heard. Amen.**

**The Processional Hymn No. 234**, stanzas 1-3, 6     *O Come, All Ye Faithful*     ADESTE FIDELES

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*
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*
6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
     Jesus, to thee be all glory given.  
     Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

### **The Lighting of the Advent Candle**

Vic and Nancy Grand

Leader: We light this candle as a symbol of the Prince of Peace.  
         May the visitation of your Holy Spirit, O God, make us  
         ready for the coming of Jesus, our hope and joy.

**People: O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

### **The Scripture Lesson**

Luke 2:1-20

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **The Homily**

*It All Started with a Baby*

Dr. Matthew D. Bates

### **The Invitation**

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,  
     who earnestly repent of their sin  
     and seek to live in peace with one another.  
 Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

### **The Confession and Pardon (in unison)**

**Merciful God,**  
     **we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.**  
**We have failed to be an obedient church.**  
**We have not done your will, we have broken your law,**  
     **we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors,**  
     **and we have not heard the cry of the needy.**  
**Forgive us, we pray.**  
**Free us for joyful obedience,**  
     **through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

*All pray in silence.*

Leader: Hear the good news:  
         Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;  
         that proves God's love towards us.  
         In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!  
**People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.**  
**All: Glory to God. Amen.**

### **The Offertory Prayer**

## The Offertory Anthem

*A Cradle Song*  
Megan O'Brien, soloist

David Hurd

Sweet dreams form a shade  
o'er my lovely infant's head:  
sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
by happy, silent moony beams.  
Sleep, sleep, happy child,  
all creation slept and smiled;  
sleep, sleep, happy sleep,  
while o'er thee thy mother weep.  
Sweet babe, in thy face  
holy image can I trace.  
Sweet babe once like thee,  
thy Maker lay and wept for me,  
Wept for me, for thee, for all,  
when He was an infant small.  
Thou His image ever see,  
heav'nly face that smiles on thee.  
Smiles on thee, on me, on all,  
who became an infant small.  
Infant smiles are His own smiles;  
heav'n and earth to peace beguiles.

William Blake, 1757-1827

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## The Great Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts,

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*The pastor gives thanks appropriate to the occasion,  
remembering God's acts of salvation, and concludes:*

And so,  
with your people on earth  
and with all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

William Mathias

5 Ho - ly, ho - ly,

8 ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might.

12 Heaven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

16 Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

*The pastor continues the thanksgiving. The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled. The pastor concludes:*

And so,  
 in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
 we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving  
 as a holy and living sacrifice,  
 in union with Christ's offering for us,  
 as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

William Mathias

Christ has died, Christ is ris-en, Christ will come a-gain!

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

*The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and then praises the Trinity, concluding:*  
 All honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and for ever.

William Mathias

A - men, a - men, a - men.

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

## The Lord's Prayer No. 895

**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 that 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 Giving and Receiving of Communion

### The Hymn No. 239

*Silent Night*

STILLE NACHT

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Silent night, holy night,<br>all is calm, all is bright<br>round yon virgin, mother and child<br>Holy infant, so tender and mild,<br>sleep in heavenly peace,<br>sleep in heavenly peace.        | 2. Silent night, holy night,<br>shepherds quake at the sight;<br>glories stream from heaven afar,<br>heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!<br>Christ the Savior is born,<br>Christ the Savior is born, |
| 3. Silent night, holy night,<br>Son of God, love's pure light;<br>radiant beams from thy holy face<br>with the dawn of redeeming grace,<br>Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,<br>Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. | 4. Silent night, holy night,<br>wondrous star, lend thy light;<br>with the angels let us sing,<br>Alleluia to our King;<br>Christ the Savior is born,<br>Christ the Savior is born,            |

## The Benediction

### The Postlude

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

J. S. Bach

*The poinsettias are given by the Centenary family  
in honor of our fantastic Centenary staff.*

*The altar flowers are given by Jan and Troy Nelson  
in honor of their children and grandchildren.*

*Thank you to all the volunteers who helped us this morning  
and throughout the week to make this worship possible.*

# Scripture Reading

## Luke 2:1-20

### The Birth of Jesus

<sup>2</sup> In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### The Shepherds and the Angels

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” <sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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