



Centenary

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 24, 2023 ~ 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve

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

Prelude

Away in a Manger

Charles Ore

Call to Worship

Leader: We gather to celebrate the birth of Christ.

**Men: As shepherds watched their flocks by night,
we watch with expectation and with joy.**

**Women: As angels sang "Glory to God in the highest,"
we raise our hearts and voices in joyous praise.**

Leader: Come let us worship God this holy night.

Carol

O Come, All Ye Faithful (vs. 1, 2, 3, & 6)

UMH No. 234

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***

Welcome and Greeting

Lighting of the Christ Candle

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.

All: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

Carols

Angels from the Realms of Glory

UMH No. 220

1. Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:

- Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.
2. Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light: ***Refrain***
3. Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star: ***Refrain***

4. Saints, before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear;
suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear: **Refrain**

Away in a Manger

UMH No. 217

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked 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.

Christmas Story with a Children's Nativity Processional

Luke 2:1-20; Matthew 2:1-12

Carol

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH No. 239

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!

Homily

Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help!

Dr. Matt Bates

Offertory Prayer

Offertory Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High

UMH No. 238

1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

- Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.
2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? **Refrain**
 3. Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the new-born King. **Refrain**
 4. See him in a manger laid, who the choir of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise. **Refrain**

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.

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.

Passing of the Peace

Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts,
People: We lift them up to the Lord.
Leader: 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:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, god of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

(The congregation may be seated.)

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.

Christ had died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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.

Amen.

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.**

Giving and Receiving of Communion

Carol

Joy to the World

UMH No. 246

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.
2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
3. No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Christmas Blessing

Leader: The peace of Christ goes with us as we leave this place.

People: The light of Christ surrounds us as we go.

Leader: The love of God was born among us,

People: And has been rekindled in us here this night.

Leader: Go in peace, to share the love of God with all you meet.

People: We are sent in the name of Emmanuel!

God is with us indeed!

All: Alleluia! Amen.

Postlude

Postlude on Hark! the Herald Angel Sing

David Willcocks

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

Welcome!

Centenary United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation, extending hospitality and encouraging full participation of all, regardless of age, race, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, education, economic background, and physical or mental ability.

We are glad that you have joined us today! If you are a new guest, we hope that you experience a warm welcome! Please return soon and consider us for your church home. If you are interested in church membership, please speak with a pastor.

Announcements

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY –We are taking a break over the holidays. We will be back on January 10 and look forward to seeing you then!

2024 ALTAR FLOWERS - It's that time of year again, the 2024 weekly altar flower calendar is being set up. Time to choose that special date to honor or remember friends and family or recognize a special event. You may sign up in any of the following ways:

1. Select a date from the list placed by the bulletin board across from the kitchen.
2. Request a date using our online form. You will be contacted to confirm the date.
3. Call Mary E Vetrovec at 804-615-8175 and chose your date the "old fashioned way" in person.

You may select any date that is open. First come is first served. Cost is \$44.00 for the first Sunday Communion Sunday (2 arrangements). \$22.00 for all other Sundays. (1 arrangement)

ILLNESS, SUFFERING, DEATH, AND MEANING – Join us for a six week course that will draw upon the Health Humanities to help us wrestle with those challenges. The course will be led Rev. Barry Penn Hollar and begin with a lunch after worship on January 7. It will then meet at 9:00am each Sunday thereafter concluding on Sunday, February 11. Please see the newsletter for more detailed information. Contact the church office to register for the course, or for the lunch where you can find out more.

Poinsettias 2023

In Loving Memory of:

John Ochs by Rochelle & John Adams
Stuart & Ellis Mylum by Dennis Allen
Alma Garrett & Betty Heifert by Dennis Allen
Merle Brown by Florence Clay Bishop
Our parents by Bob Blinn & Kathy Talley
John Dillehay by Bette Dillehay
Michael Dobbs by Mary & Les Dobbs
Our fathers, Edwin Golod and H. B. Rhame, Jr. by Mitzi Golod
My brother, H. B. Rhame III, "Tripp" by Mitzi Golod
Our parents by Vic & Nancy Grand
My parents, John & Dorothy McNaught by Gwynn M. Henderson
John & Janice Keller and Robert Hundley by Nancy & Bob Hundley
Herman Daly by the Junker family
Harry W. Lee by Nancy Lee
Our parents by Troy & Jan Nelson
William G. Ray on his December birthday by Suzanne Ray
Al Thrower by Mary Sue Sanderlin

My parents, Jim & Jennie Nobles by Charlene Seitz
Nancy Penman by Wendy Smith
Melva “Bette” Fitting by Wendy Smith
Our parents, Percy & Nonie Lee and Randall & Emma Speidel
by Penny & Joe Speidel
My husband, Richard by Sharon Steele
Our parents and brother – John & Earlene Pippin, Oscar & Kathryn
Thomsen and John T. Pippin by Glenn & Peggy Thomsen
Al Thrower by Meredith, John, and George

In Honor of:

Matt & Amy Bates by Florence Clay Bishop
The Administrative Council by Florence Clay Bishop
Carina, T. J. and Norah Brackin by Florence Clay Bishop
Our dear friends at Centenary United Methodist Church
by Rex & Mary Anne Dazey
Stephanie Petty and family by Mary & Les Dobbs
Our mothers, Monique Golod and Libby Rhame by Mitzi Golod
Centenary’s church family by Nancy Hill
Leah Hundley by Nancy & Bob Hundley
My great-grandsons, Ozzy, Zeke, and Dax by Leah Hundley
Marcia Daly by the Junker family
The young people of Change the World RVA by Natalie May
Our grandchildren by Troy & Jan Nelson
My family by Mary Sue Sanderlin
My grandchildren, Sloane, Desmond, Elodie, Emmie, and Olivia
by Sharon Steele
Mary Sue Sanderlin by John, George, Teddy, Henry, and Reid
Our sons, Eric & Kyle by Glenn & Peggy Thomsen
Our families back in Colorado by Ben & Carri Toro