



Hope

Worship Celebration

First Sunday of Advent
United Methodist Student Day

November 29, 2020 + 11 AM

Welcome to The United Methodist Church of Berea!

*As followers of Jesus Christ, who reveals a God whose love knows no boundaries, we are committed to welcoming and affirming every person as a beloved child of God. Every person—of every sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, age, economic status, health, ability, or any other identifying label—is welcome to participate fully in our ministries and life together as church. We hope The UMC of Berea will become a home for you, your family, and your friends as together, **we make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.***

Join us in worship, this week and every week:

Sunday at 11 AM online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)

Monday—Friday at 9 am (Morning Prayer) via Zoom (meeting id: 518 014 483)

Wednesday at 7 pm (Evening Prayer) via Zoom (meeting id: 848 4741 1964; passcode: 195510)

In preparation for worship, you are encouraged to light a candle as a reminder of God's presence.

We Gather as God's Children

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Opening Prayer

Loving, Gracious, Life-Giving God, you keep your promises.

You promise to walk with us and send us Emmanuel, your eternal presence.

*You promise to save us and send us Jesus, who heals the suffering, raises the dead,
eats with outcasts, and blesses despised ones.*

*As we wait for the Light of the Word, the Hope of Creation, to come again,
help us to place our hope and our life in you.*

And then give us the strength and courage to share our hope with this waiting world. Amen.

Hymn

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

UMH 196

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign is us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.*

Lighting the First Advent Candle

We will light these Advent candles, praying that our preparations for Christmas may help us to look outward in love and look forward in hope.

Living Christ, light of the world, give us the warmth of your love.

In Isaiah, chapter 64, a prophet cries out to God:

“O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,...to make your name known....

You have hidden your face from us....

Yet...we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.”

Today, we light our first candle as a prayer for this world, that God, who is often hidden, may be revealed to us and to all.

Living God, come to our world.

Help us to trust your promises and wait in hope.

Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 1)

UMH 211

***O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

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We Grow in God's Word

Leader: With disciples of every time and place, let us listen for the word of God among us.

People: *Our ears and hearts are open.*

First Lesson—Isaiah 64.1-9 (CEB)

¹ If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!

Mountains would quake before you ² like fire igniting brushwood or making water boil.

If you would make your name known to your enemies,
the nations would tremble in your presence.

³ When you accomplished wonders beyond all our expectations;
when you came down, mountains quaked before you.

⁴ From ancient times, no one has heard, no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any god but you who acts on behalf of those who wait for him!

⁵ You look after those who gladly do right; they will praise you for your ways.
But you were angry when we sinned; you hid yourself when we did wrong.

⁶ We have all become like the unclean; all our righteous deeds are like a [filthy cloth].
All of us wither like a leaf; our sins, like the wind, carry us away.

⁷ No one calls on your name; no one bothers to hold on to you,
for you have hidden yourself from us, and have handed us over to our sin.

⁸ But now, LORD, you are our father. We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.

⁹ Don't rage so fiercely, LORD; don't hold our sins against us forever, but gaze now on your people,
all of us.

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel Lesson—Mark 13.24-37 (CEB)

²⁴“In those days, after the suffering of that time, the sun will become dark, and the moon won’t give its light. ²⁵The stars will fall from the sky, and the planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and splendor. ²⁷Then he will send the angels and gather together his chosen people from the four corners of the earth, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

²⁸“Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that he’s near, at the door. ³⁰I assure you that this generation won’t pass away until all these things happen. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

³²“But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the angels in heaven and not the Son. Only the Father knows. ³³Watch out! Stay alert! You don’t know when the time is coming. ³⁴It is as if someone took a trip, left the household behind, and put the servants in charge, giving each one a job to do, and told the doorkeeper to stay alert. ³⁵Therefore, stay alert! You don’t know when the head of the household will come, whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the early morning or at daybreak. ³⁶Don’t let him show up when you weren’t expecting and find you sleeping. ³⁷What I say to you, I say to all: Stay alert!”

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

People: ***Thanks be to God.***

Children’s Message

Sermon

Hymn

View the Present through the Promise

WS 3048

***View the present through the promise, Christ will come again.
Trust despite the deepening darkness, Christ will come again.
Lift the world above its grieving through your watching and believing
in the hope past hope’s conceiving: Christ will come again.
Probe the present with the promise, Christ will come again.
Let your daily actions witness, Christ will come again.
Let your loving and your giving and your justice and forgiving
be a sign to all the living: Christ will come again.
Match the present to the promise, Christ will come again.
Make this hope your guiding premise, Christ will come again.
Pattern all your calculating and the world you are creating
to the advent you are waiting: Christ will come again.***

View the Present through the Promise / Thomas H. Troeger / 1994 Oxford University Press. Inc.
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Prayers of the People

Hymn

Star-Child (v. 1)

TFWS 2095

***Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God, love Child, Christ Child, heaven’s lightning rod,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!***

Star-Child / Shirley Erena Murray, Carlton R. Young / 1994 Hope Publishing Company
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The Lord’s Prayer

Opportunities for Ministry and Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings

Some of us may be experiencing financial hardship or uncertainty during this season, but our generosity through the life of the church remains crucial as an expression of our discipleship and to ensuring that we can maintain our commitments to mission and ministry during this uncertain time. If you already give financially online (www.umcb.org/donate) or by mailing a check to the church office, thank you! If you do not do so already, please consider giving through one of these methods now as we continue to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Doxology

UMH 95

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

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Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment

***Generous and loving God, you give us everything we need.
Surrounded and supported by your love, there is nothing we lack.
As we bring our offerings to you, may they support your work of peace and justice,
bringing hope to all the world.
As we bring ourselves to you, mold and shape us as you will,
and then send us out to serve. Amen.***

We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

Hymn

Soon and Very Soon

UMH 706

***Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King;
soon and very soon, we are going to see the King;
soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We're going to see the King.
No more dying there, we are going to see the King;
no more dying there, we are going to see the King;
no more dying there, we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We're going to see the King.
No more crying there, we are going to see the King;
no more crying there, we are going to see the King;
no more crying there, we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We're going to see the King.***

Soon and Very Soon / Andrae Crouch / 1978 by Communique Music, Inc. / Used by permission. CCLI License #2333566

Benediction

Let us stay awake, for God is coming.
Let us be prepared, for God is near.
Even in the darkness, a candle of hope burns brightly.
Even in the quiet, God still is speaking.
Grace and peace to each of us and to all the waiting world,
in God, our Creator, and our Way, Jesus Christ.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Postlude

***Our service of worship is ended.
Our worship through service now begins.***

United Methodist Student Day

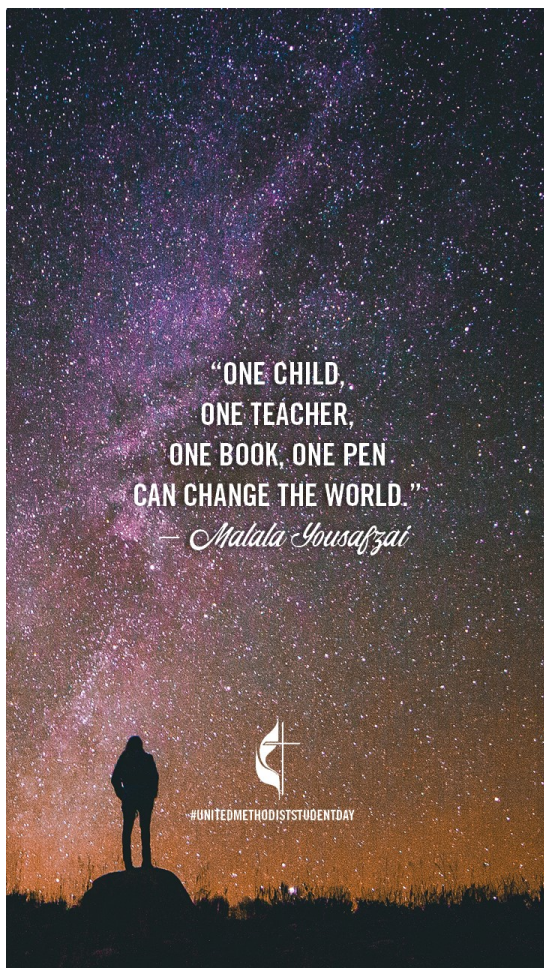
Today, we will have an opportunity to lift up our college students and others across the globe during worship. We give thanks for who they are and the ways they are growing into strong leaders.

We are mindful that many students struggle financially, spiritually, or emotionally. They are preparing themselves to face a world that in many ways is broken and hurting. Together, we can support them and remove some of their anxiety to make space for them to experience God's peace.

We also join with other churches in the denomination to receive a special offering. While many young people have the privilege and resources to attend college, many others do not. With today's special giving, we come together as a community to invest our resources in education.

We are indeed one body, but investing in our individual members will take us to the next stage in building the beloved community. When you support United Methodist Student Day, you make it possible for students to change the world in the name of God's love—to live out their dreams for a better world.

Please consider giving generously because . . .
. . . together we do more.



Morning Prayer

Thank you, God, for the gift of life today.
I give thanks that your face shines upon me
for you are my salvation.
lead me like a shepherd through this day.
Strengthen me for whatever lies ahead.
Grant me the gifts
of peace, patience, kindness, and gentleness,
for I want to show your love,
in word and deed, in Christ's name. Amen.

Evening Prayer

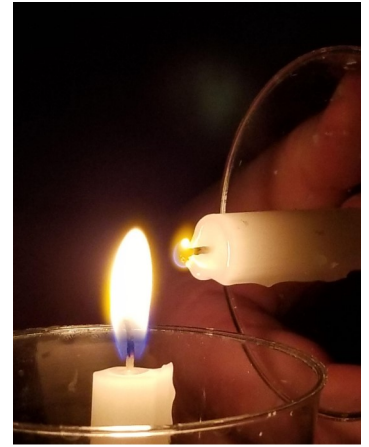
Though you have told us to stay awake, O God,
you have also blessed us with rest and sleep.
Grant me such rest in the hours ahead
that I may awaken with eager longing
for a new day,
ready for you to be revealed
in mundane moments and ordinary encounters.
By your grace prepare me,
whether awake or asleep, to greet you.
All times are in your hands,
and I, too, am in your hands, faithful God.
In Jesus' name, I rest and pray. Amen.

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The Longest Night
Monday, December 21
5 PM in Wesley Hall and 7 PM Online
(www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)

The holiday season can be especially difficult for some of us, a painful reminder of what has been lost or of what has never been. All are welcome to join us on Monday, December 21 at 5 PM in Wesley Hall or 7 PM online for a worship service of scripture, prayer, candlelight, and Holy Communion. Invite others, also, and join us as we affirm together God's presence with us, even in the loneliest of times.



Christmas Eve Worship Services
Thursday, December 24

Worship with us on Thursday, December 24, in Wesley Hall, on the lawn and sidewalk outside our building, and/or online. Each service will include music, a message of hope, and the traditional sharing of candlelight. Invite your friends, family members, and neighbors, and join us as we celebrate the gift of God's presence with us in Jesus Christ.

4 PM in Wesley Hall

Please pre-register at www.umcb.org/worship-registration or by calling the church office at **440-234-3525 x100** as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly. (Attendance will be limited to 50 individuals.)

7 PM online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)

This worship service will conclude with an invitation to join us outside or on Zoom at 8:30 PM to light candles and share in the hymn, "Silent Night".

8:30 PM on the Porch and Seminary Street yard & sidewalk

We will read the Christmas story, light candles, and join our voices in singing "Silent Night".

11 PM in Wesley Hall

Please pre-register at www.umcb.org/worship-registration or by calling the church office at **440-234-3525 x100** as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly. (Attendance will be limited to 50 individuals.)

Face coverings and safe physical distancing (minimum of six feet) from members of other households are required at all times for in-person gatherings and while you are in the building. If you are ill, experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, or recently have been in contact with someone experiencing symptoms, please stay at home and join us for our live-streaming worship service at 7 PM.

Please note that plans for in-person gatherings, both inside and outside, may be subject to change based on advisories and guidance from public health officials.

Any changes will be communicated through our website (www.umcb.org) and through email communications (sign up at www.umcb.org/online-resources).



Additional Worship Opportunities:

Morning Prayer

Mondays through Fridays at 9:00 AM

via Zoom

(<https://zoom.us/j/518014483>)

Evening Prayer via Zoom

Wednesdays at 7:00 PM

via Zoom

(Meeting id: 848 4741 1964,

Passcode: 195510)

All are welcome to join us Wednesday evenings for brief worship services to re-center and re-focus together around scripture and prayer in the middle of the week.

For more information, contact
Pastor Nathan at nhowe@umcb.org or
440-234-3525 x101.



Book Discussion: *The Anatomy of Peace - Resolving the Heart of Conflict*

Monday, November 30, 6:30 PM, via Zoom

What if conflicts at home, conflicts at work, and conflicts in the world all stem from the same root cause? What if we systematically misunderstand that root cause? And what if, as a result, we systematically perpetuate the very problems we think we are trying to solve?

In a current context that feels increasingly divided and contentious—around partisan politics and responses to our public health emergency and systemic racism and countless other issues—**The Anatomy of Peace** by the Arbinger Institute seeks to instill hope and inspire reconciliation by encouraging us to understand and then resolve conflicts at every level by addressing the heart of that division.

On Monday, November 30 at 6:30 PM, all are welcome and encouraged to join us for a discussion of this book. Books can be found through most online sellers and through our local library system. We will meet via Zoom, so you can join the conversation by phone or online.

To express your interest in participating and to receive Zoom login information, please contact Pastor Nathan at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x101.



Women's Bible Study

Thursdays, 6:30 PM, on Zoom

Thursday Night Bible Study has started a new book, **Matchless** by Angie Smith. *Who is Jesus? Why did He come to earth? How can I know Him? We live in a world where there's a lot of confusion about Jesus. Too often people want to shape Him and His message to fit their personal needs or agendas. So how can we know the truth?* Please join us!

For more information, please contact
Mary Lynn Swartz at 440-409-5931 or marylynn482@gmail.com.



Children's Sunday School

Request Your Faith Formation Packet by December 15

Children and their families received Advent devotional books this month and are growing in Christ together as they prepare for Christmas.

Beginning in January, children will receive a reading list of Bible stories, and Bible study, prayer notes, and worship note pages for each Sunday. Stories will also be read in worship and posted online. This is a great way for families to grow together. Grandparents can even share these stories and resources if they'd like.

To request a faith formation packet, please contact Pastor Carrie at cantczak@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x105 by **December 15**.



Advent Study

Tuesdays, 7 PM, via Zoom

Join us Tuesdays at 7 pm on zoom to share our reflections on the book ***Keep Watch with Me: An Advent Reader for Peacemakers***. The book is available through Amazon or Cokesbury. We suggest ordering it for yourself and having it delivered directly to your home.

For the Zoom link or help with ordering, contact **Pastor Carrie** at cantczak@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x105.



The Giving Tree is Here Now!

There are still a lot of stars left on the Giving Tree! If you would like to "adopt" a needy child, call **Pastor Carrie (440-665-8306)** or **Betsy Meikle (440-243-5767)**. When you are ready to return the gift, do not wrap it! Place it in a bag with the child's family number and the name of the gift on the outside. Betsy Meikle will be in the church parking lot in a silver Toyota on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 11 AM to 1 PM to receive the gifts.

Thank you for considering helping a needy child have a happy Christmas!



Remember or Honor a Loved One by Helping Others

The Magi came bearing gifts, and began the tradition of gift-giving to celebrate the birth of Christ. We join them this year, offering our gifts to support our community. In lieu of poinsettias this year, we invite you to make a financial gift to support three of our mission partners - OhioGuidestone, Grindstone Elementary Emergency Fund, and Nehemiah Mission of Cleveland. While we will have some poinsettias for our Christmas services, we will also have a tree decorated with stars, in honor or memory of your loved ones or families. Make any size donation and a star will be put on our tree with the name your request.

Donations may be mailed to the church, marking "Magi" in the other box. Donations can also be made and forms completed at www.umcb.org/donate. Forms and donations must be returned /submitted online by **December 13**.

A full list of those remembered or honored will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin as well as the January Caller.



Food Collection for Local Food Pantries

Wednesdays, 4:00-7:00 PM, In Front of the Red Doors on Seminary Street

Collections of food for local food banks will continue with some changes. When you drop off your donation pull up to the red doors, flash your lights and beep your horn. A masked church member will come out to accept your donation. If you are not planning already to make a trip to the grocery store, please feel free to participate with a monetary donation instead, either by mailing a check to the church office or online at www.umcb.org/donate. Please note "food pantry" on the description line. Thank you for supporting this effort.



Do Your Holiday Shopping at ButterPear.com.

ButterPear is a social enterprise supporting artists in East & West Africa and Refugees here in Cleveland. 100% of our items are HANDMADE and support the artists first. After we sell our products, we use the profits to support various programs. One program includes a house for orphans in Ganta, Liberia which sprung up after the Ebola outbreak. Other programming includes supporting school scholarships in various communities and working with young refugee entrepreneurs here in Cleveland.

We have ornaments, skirts, bags, and baskets! Perfect for a gift with a purpose! Sustainable, Ethical, & Eco-friendly!

Pastoral Care, Prayer Requests, and Care Leaders

Please reach out to **Pastor Nathan** (nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x101) if you would like to schedule an individual time to talk or if you have a specific prayer request. Likewise, if you find yourself needing food or other supplies and unable to get them, please contact me, and we will do our best to care for you. While we are apart from one another physically, we remain connected through our common mission and through our mutual concern and care. As an expression of our connection, we now have a team of "care leaders" who are making phone calls throughout the course of the week to check in, be in conversation, and share prayer requests.

If you have not heard from a "care leader" yet and would like to connect this way, or if you would like to serve as a "care leader," please contact **Pastor Nathan** at 440-234-3525 x101 or nhowe@umcb.org.

Staff & Office Hours

For the protection of all, our staff continues to work from home whenever possible. If you contact the staff by email or phone message, please be assured they will respond as quickly as they are able. If your business requires a visit to the church building, please call in advance to ensure a staff member will be available.