

ADVENT

a season of preparation

HOPE

Hope of all the earth thou art.



First Sunday of Advent

November 28, 2021 + 9 AM

We Gather as God's Children

Prelude

Words of Welcome

+ Call to Worship

Awake! Rejoice! A new world is being born! Prepare for creation's homecoming!

Christ came at Christmas to live as one of us.

Christ comes among us still, to love us and to lead us.

***Christ will come again, wherever we may be,
to welcome us and all creation home.***

Invited or uninvited, Christ is coming, returning everything to God.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come!

+ Hymn

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

UMH 196

Lighting the First Candle on the Advent Wreath

The Advent ring is a circle, reminding us of God's unbroken love.

There are four candles, marking the weeks from now until Christmas.

As we light our candles,

may they welcome us home in the light of God's unending love.

The prophet Jeremiah speaks to us today about a branch that will be raised.

The Gospel of Luke speaks about a Son of Man who will descend.

Both point us to hope—a hope that calls us home:

our truest home, where we are welcomed and loved and included, just as we are—
where justice and equity and peace are made real.

It is time now, in this Advent season: time to prepare to go home.

We light this first candle as a sign of our hope,

trusting that Christ is alive on earth and that the Spirit of Christ lives among us now.

(The first candle is lit)

Living Christ, give us faith to trust you.

We trust you, we love you, we praise you. Amen.

Hymn

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

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.

O Come, Come, Emmanuel / Tune: Thomas Helmore, Public Domain / Text: Henry Sloane Coffin, Laurence Hull Stookey,

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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—Jeremiah 33.14-16 (CEB)

¹⁴The time is coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people of Israel and Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from David's line, who will do what is just and right in the land. ¹⁶In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is what he will be called: The LORD Is Our Righteousness.

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

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Second Lesson—Psalm 25.1-10 (adapted from UMH 756-757)

To you, O Lord, I offer my life.

O my God, in you I trust;

do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.

Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;

instead, let those be ashamed who are treacherous without excuse.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord;

teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth, and teach me,

for you are the God who saves me; for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,

for they have been from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my wrongdoing;

according to your steadfast love remember me,

for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!

Good and upright is the Lord, instructing sinners in the way.

God guides the weak to justice, teaching them the way.

All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,

for those who keep the Lord's covenant and instructions.

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

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

Gospel Lesson—Luke 21.25-36 (CEB)

²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. On the earth, there will be dismay among nations in their confusion over the roaring of the sea and surging waves. ²⁶The planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken, causing people to faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world. ²⁷Then they will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with power and great splendor. ²⁸Now when these things begin to happen, stand up straight and raise your heads, because your redemption is near.”

²⁹Jesus told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. ³¹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that God's kingdom is near. ³²I assure you that this generation won't pass away until everything has happened. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

³⁴“Take care that your hearts aren't dulled by drinking parties, drunkenness, and the anxieties of day-to-day life. Don't let that day fall upon you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. It will come upon everyone who lives on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Stay alert at all times, praying that you are strong enough to escape everything that is about to happen and to stand before the Son of Man.”

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

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

Sermon

Vocal Duet??

+ Hymn

View the Present through the Promise

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 / Tune: Traditional Welsh Melody, harm. Luther Orlando Emerson / Text: Thomas Troeger,
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Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

As we join our hearts to lift our prayers to God, we invite you to share your concerns and joys. You can submit your prayer request any time during the week to Pastor Nathan (440-234-3525 x101, nhowe@umcb.org), the church office (440-234-3525 x100), or online at www.umcb.org/worshipresources

Opportunities for Ministry and Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings

You are invited to give your tithes and offerings online (www.umcb.org/donate), by mailing a check to the church office, or in one of the offering plates located just inside the back wall of the Sanctuary, either on your way into or out of the worship space. Through whatever means you give, thank you for your generosity and ongoing commitment to making and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

+ Doxology

My Soul Gives Glory to My God (vv. 1, 5)

UMH 198

***My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.
Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress.
Remembering past promises with present faithfulness. Amen.***

Text used with permission of the Medical Mission Sisters (© 1978, 1987).

+ Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment

***How can we thank you, God, for all you have given us?
Turn our gratitude into generosity through our resources and our lives.
Bless our gifts, and send us out into your world
as signs of your hope and your love.
In your name, we pray. Amen.***

We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

+ Hymn

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

UMH 213

+ Benediction

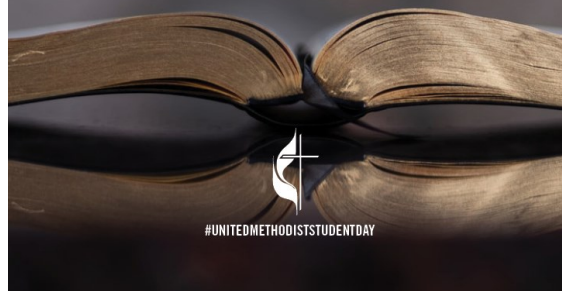
*May the door of God's welcome swing wide open in our hearts and in our lives.
May the humility of Christ's birth in Jesus remind us of all we have to offer.
And may the Spirit lead us into more possibility and more hospitality
than we could imagine, as we go out to share God's welcome with all.
May it be so. Thanks be to God. Amen.*

Postlude

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

"ALL SCRIPTURE IS
INSPIRED BY GOD AND IS
USEFUL FOR TEACHING."

—2 Timothy 3:16. NRSC



This Sunday is United Methodist Student Sunday. Your gifts for this special offering invest in a channel of hope for young leaders who bring their Wesleyan values into their schools and professions. Please consider giving generously to help deserving, young adults continue their education and their faith journeys.

For more information, visit <https://youtu.be/tsQ4CSmxBo>.

(Taken from <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/umcgiving/special-sundays>)

Worship Participants

Pastors

Rev. Nathan Howe
Rev. Carrie Antczak

Music

Megan Denman, *Organist*
??, Vocalist
??, Vocalist

Liturgist

Sandy Marek

Audio Video Elements

Mark Williams
Marlynda Dziak

The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by Laura Rushton.

Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, November 28):

Thank you for this new day
to watch for signs of your advent.
By your Spirit, let me abound in love for you
and for your children.
In my living and my loving,
may I point to your coming reign. Amen.

Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, November 28):

Thank you for all the signs of your work
and for the saving power of your love.
Bless all whom I will meet this day,
and strengthen our hope in your grace.
Help me to relinquish my anxieties and fears
and to trust in your providence and mercy. Amen.

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At Home "Hanging of the Greens"

Today (Sunday, November 28), 6:30 PM, via Zoom

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88423067293>, meeting id 884 2306 7293)

On Sunday, November 28 - the First Sunday of Advent - you are invited to participate in an at-home "hanging of the greens." We will meet via Zoom at 6:30 PM for a time of fellowship including sharing some of our favorite Christmas decorations, any stories connected with those decorations, and other traditions that help us prepare for the Christmas celebration.



Light Candles on the Advent Wreath

The season of Advent is beginning soon, and one of our worship traditions during Advent is to light candles on the Advent wreath to mark time as we move toward the Festival of Christmas. You will be asked to lead the congregation in a short reading and then light the candles on the Advent wreath. This is a great opportunity for individuals, couples, friends, and/or families with children to help lead in worship.

If you would like to help lead in worship in this way on December 5, 12, or 19, please contact Pastor Nathan (nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x100).



Advent and Christmas Worship Series: "Coming Home"

Beginning Today (Sunday, November 28)

9 AM in the Sanctuary and online, 11 AM in Wesley Hall

The season of Advent marks the beginning of a new church year and focuses our attention on an invitation - the invitation to remember and to act like we are heading home, toward God's beloved community. Beloved community is the home where all are family, where peace resides and justice abides. Advent reminds us that we should not be complacent or satisfied about the way things are but, instead, anticipating and working toward God's dream for this world—a beloved community, in which all can come home. Join us—and invite family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to join us, too—as we "come home" to God's hope, peace, joy, and love.



Stocking Stuffer Swap

Monday, December 6, 8 PM, Fellowship Hall

Partnering with Buy Nothing Berea, The UMCB will host this fun event for parents of young children, Monday, December 6th at 8 PM in Fellowship Hall. Participants may bring your small toys and trinkets their kids no longer play with and swap for new! Paired socks, mittens, etc. are also great! Hot cocoa and snacks provided - masking required when not actively eating/drinking. This is a great way for our church to support young families and create a more sustainable world.



Sunday Afternoon Walk

December 12, 3 PM, Lake Isaac

All are welcome to join us for a walk near Lake Isaac, part of the Big Creek Reservation, located just south of Fowles Road in Middleburg Heights. We will gather in the parking lot at Lake Isaac and, from there, have access to a 1.2-mile trail through the woods and the all-purpose trail that runs alongside Big Creek Parkway. If you plan to join us, please RSVP by the end of the day on **Thursday, December 9** to **Pastor Nathan** (nhowe@umcb.org, 440-234-3525x101).



Read & Grow Book Discussion Group

Monday, December 13, 6:30 PM, Fellowship Hall

We will be discussing "The Orphan's Tale" by Pam Jenoff. If anyone has questions, please contact either **Betsy Meikle** at 440-243-5767 or **Janet Mallarnee** at 440-235-7331.



Advent Study - Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas

Wednesdays, December 1 - December 22, 7 PM, Room 13 - OR -

Tuesdays, November 30 - December 21, 9:30 AM, Room 13 - OR -

Sundays, November 28-December 19, 10 AM, Fellowship Hall

All are welcome to join us for this four-week Bible study experience to help prepare us to celebrate God's presence with us in Christ during the upcoming Christmas season. In the midst of so much cultural uncertainty and conflict, we will reflect together on the significance of the Christ child who brings us together, heals our hearts, and calls us to bring light into the darkness. For more information, please contact **Pastor Nathan** at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x100.



Advent Calendars Available for All Ages

At the back of each worship space

At the back of each worship space, pick up your *Advent Around the World* kit! Create a paper chain to count down the days - learning each day of another country and their Christmas traditions. Pray for that country and then place a star sticker on your included world map. A great reminder of God's expansive love for all of creation!

Ecumenical Youth Group Holiday Party



December 12, 5-6:30 PM, Wesley Hall

There will not be a November Ecumenical Youth Group meeting, but we'll have a great Holiday Bash on Sunday, December 12 at 5 PM. White elephant gifting tradition, snacks, games, and more. Join us in the Youth Room for all the fun. Questions? Contact **Pastor Carrie** at cantczak@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x105.



Bookstore Inside Room 12

Need to pick up a book for a study or a devotional? The table inside room 12 currently has: **A Disciples Journal** - \$15, **2022 Disciplines** - \$10, **Incarnation** (Advent Study) - \$12, **#Truth** (for youth) - free, Please place your cash or check inside the lock box located on the table. Exact change will be needed.



Support Our Local Food Pantries

Donations can be left in the cupboard between the Narthex and the Library

Over the past year, food insecurity has been on the rise. As the holidays approach, please consider making a donation to support our local food pantries. Especially appreciated at this time of year are non-perishable to make holiday meals. For example, stuffing, instant mashed potatoes, gravy mixes, green beans, mushroom soup, dried onions, pie crust mix, canned pumpkin (spices already added, please), and cranberry sauce.

Please place donations of non-perishable food in the cupboard between the Sanctuary and the library anytime you are in the building. (If you need help finding the right location, talk to one of the pastors or other staff.) If you prefer, 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.



The Giving Tree

Return Unwrapped Gifts and Gift Cards by Sunday, December 12

The Giving Tree in the Narthex contains items from the children's wish lists that we obtained from Berea Community Outreach. If you decide to "adopt" a child and bring in a gift, please do not wrap it. Put it in a bag with the bell taped on the outside. You may donate wrapping paper and a card, if you wish. If you get a gift card, place it in an envelope with the bell taped on it, and put it in the finance director's mail slot on her door. All gifts and gift cards must be returned by **December 12**. Thank you so much for participating in this ministry!



EQUAL Exchange Offered TWO Sundays in December

Sundays, December 5 & 19, 10-11 AM, by the Parlor

Try a new Equal Exchange product - Dairy free milk chocolate! We are now offering a new product - milk chocolate made with coconut (vs. cow's) milk! Stop by on the first or third Sunday of December to inquire and purchase some for a Christmas gift . . . or one for yourself! Of course, we will also have our other chocolate bars and minis, hot cocoa, tea and coffee available for purchase. Learn more about Equal Exchange at equalexchange.coop and thank you for helping others by purchasing fairly traded, organically grown products. May you each have a blessed Christmas and peace in the new year. Submitted by Wendy Jelinek, Church and Society



November Loose Change Offering Supports The Giving Tree

You can support this mission by either mailing in an offering, or donating electronically at www.umcb.org/donate using the "other" box and marking it "loose change offering". Thank you for your generosity!

Happening at The UMCB this week:

Sunday, November 28

Traditional Worship

9 AM / Sanctuary or Online at

<http://www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos>

Fellowship Hour via Zoom

10 AM / [Join online](#)

Formation for All Ages

10 AM / [Contact Pastor Carrie](#)

Sunday Morning Advent Study

10 AM / Fellowship Hall, on Zoom / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Modern Worship

11 AM / Wesley Hall

At Home "Hanging of the Greens"

6:30 PM / via Zoom - See Page 6 for details

Monday, November 29

Morning Prayer via Zoom

9 AM - 9:30 AM / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Survivorship Fellowship

11 AM / Parlor / Lunch at Perk Cup

Tuesday, November 30

Morning Walk

7:30 AM / Wallace Lake / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Morning Prayer via Zoom

9 AM - 9:30 AM / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Tuesday Morning Advent Study

9 AM / Room 13, on Zoom / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Wednesday, December 1

Morning Prayer via Zoom

9 AM - 9:30 AM / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Wednesday Evening Advent Study

7 PM / Online at

<http://www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos>

Thursday, December 2

Morning Prayer via Zoom

9 AM - 9:30 AM / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Handbell Choir

6:00 PM / Sanctuary / [Contact Tori Lero](#)

Women's Bible Study via Zoom

6:30 PM / [Contact Mary Lynn Swartz at marylynn482@gmail.com](#)

Choir

7:00 PM / Sanctuary /

Contact [Courtney Popp](#) or [Margaret Proctor](#)

Friday, December 3

Morning Prayer via Zoom

9 AM - 9:30 AM / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Saturday, December 4

UME Executive Board

10 AM / Fellowship Hall

Sunday, December 28

Traditional Worship

9 AM / Sanctuary or Online at

<http://www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos>

Fellowship Hour via Zoom

10 AM / [Join online](#)

Formation for All Ages

10 AM / [Contact Pastor Carrie](#)

Modern Worship

11 AM / Wesley Hall

Contact Pastor Nathan at

440-234-3525 x101 or nhowe@umcb.org

Contact Pastor Carrie at

440-234-3525 x105 or cantczak@umcb.org

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Friday, December 24

4 PM in the Sanctuary

7 PM in the Sanctuary and Online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/live)

8:30 PM on the Porch and front lawn (will include the Christmas story, candles, and "Silent Night")

11 PM in the Sanctuary

Worship with us on Friday, December 24 for the Great Festival of the Incarnation, the celebration of God's presence with us in Jesus Christ. Opportunities will be provided to gather inside, outside, and online, so please join us—and invite others to join us, too—in whatever setting is most comfortable to you as we celebrate God's gift together. Each service will include beautiful music, a message of hope, and the traditional sharing of candlelight.