

ADVENT

a season of preparation

HOPE PEACE JOY

LOVE

O how lovely, O how pure, gracious gift to human kind.



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 19, 2021 + 9 AM

We Gather as God's Children

Prelude

Of the Father's Love Begotten

setting by Wilber Held

Words of Welcome

+ Call to Worship

Can you feel something powerful at work in the world?

We catch glimpses of it here and there.

We need to perceive beyond the hustle and bustle of Christmas
to notice what is coming and where we are heading.

Faithful women giving birth to freedom. A child who will transform the world.

The birth quakes are almost here. We can feel it.

Come, then, let us prepare ourselves in this time of worship,
that we may be ready when the world is turned upside down.

+ Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vv. 1-4)

UMH 211

Lighting the Fourth Candle on the Advent Wreath

Sometimes, when we are trying something new or facing a difficult decision,
when we want to celebrate something or feel lost and alone and uncertain:
sometimes, we need a blessing.

Maybe we do not use the word, "blessing."

We call it "advice" or "support" or "companionship":

someone to come along beside us, so even if our problem is not "fixed," at least we're not alone.

Mary, facing an incomprehensible burden and gift, runs to her cousin's house,
searching for someone who knows something about what she's facing, looking for a place to hide.

And there, with Elizabeth, Mary receives a blessing.

The prophet Micah spoke of a blessing coming in an unexpected place.

Yet, by God's grace, the little town of Bethlehem would be a little town of blessing.

We light this fourth candle as a sign of our love, trusting that God's blessing is with us
—holding us and covering us— as we make our way back home.

(The fourth candle is lit)

Living Christ, give us faith to trust you, hope to follow you,
love to live for you, and wisdom to perceive you.

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

Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 5 and refrain)

UMH 211

***O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home.
The captives from their prison free,
and conquer death's deep misery.***

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—Micah 5.2-5a (CEB)

² As for you, Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
though you are the least significant of Judah's forces,
one who is to be a ruler in Israel on my behalf will come out from you.

His origin is from remote times, from ancient days.

³ Therefore, he will give them up
until the time when she who is in labor gives birth.
The rest of his kin will return to the people of Israel.

⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

They will dwell secure,
because he will surely become great throughout the earth;

⁵ he will become one of peace.

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

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel Lesson—Luke 1.39-56 (CEB)

³⁹ Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. ⁴⁰ She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. ⁴³ Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ Happy is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill the promises he made to her."

⁴⁶ Mary said,

"With all my heart I glorify the Lord!

⁴⁷ In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.

⁴⁸ He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant.

Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored

⁴⁹ because the mighty one has done great things for me.

Holy is his name.

⁵⁰ He shows mercy to everyone,
from one generation to the next,
who honors him as God.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm.

He has scattered those with arrogant thoughts and proud inclinations.

⁵² He has pulled the powerful down from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty-handed.

⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,
remembering his mercy,

⁵⁵ just as he promised to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants forever."

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her home.

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

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Sermon

+ Hymn

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

UMH 216

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.

Choir Anthem

Like a Child, I Wait

Ruth Elaine Schram

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.***

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+ Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment

***We offer to you, O God, not what we have left over
after all our Christmas spending;
we offer to you our whole selves for the work of transforming the world.
May what we offer make a difference, not only in our community
but also in our church and in ourselves.
In the spirit of the One who leads us home, Amen.***

We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

+ Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UMH 230

+ 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

Savior of the Nations Come

Setting by Paul Manz

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

Worship Participants

Pastors

Rev. Nathan Howe
Rev. Carrie Antczak

Liturgist

Barb Evans

Music

Megan Denman, *Organist*
Courtney Popp, *Choir Director*
Margaret Proctor, *Choir Director*

Audio Video Elements

Mark Williams
Marlynda Dziak

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 United Methodist Church of Berea will become a home for you, your family, and your friends as together, in our relationship with God, with each other, and with all creation, **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 9AM in-person in the Sanctuary and online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)

Sunday at 11AM in-person in Wesley Hall

Monday—Friday at 9AM (Morning Prayer) via Zoom
(1-888-788-0099, meeting id: 518 014 483; passcode: 170)

In accordance with CDC guidelines and our county's current "high" transmission risk, we require that all persons, regardless of vaccination status, wear face masks throughout their time in our building.

Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, December 19):

Thank you, good and gracious God,
for the morning light,
for another day in which to live out
what it means that you have magnified my soul.
Teach me the meaning of "Let it be."
Show me how to trust; in Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, December 19):

Good and gracious God,
we give you thanks
that you have made incarnate in your world
the breath of life, the life of hope.
Keep us safe throughout the night
that in the morning we may again rejoice
and live in peace with all creation. Amen.

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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, & "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.



The Longest Night Worship Service

Tuesday, December 21, 7 PM in the Sanctuary and Online

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 Tuesday, December 21 at 7 pm in the Sanctuary or online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/live) for a worship service of scripture, prayer, candlelight, and Holy Communion. Invite others, also, and join us as we re-affirm together our faith in God's presence with us, even in the darkest and loneliest seasons of our lives.



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

#Truth (for youth) - free

Please place your cash or check inside the lock box located on the table.
Exact change will be needed.



Griefshare Support Group

Beginning Tuesday, January 4, 2022, 6:30 PM, via Zoom

We will be starting up a new session in January. It is a thirteen week session filled with some reading, some questions, some laughter, and a few tears - all in the comfort of your home. Come meet some new friends who share the same concerns and thoughts as you might have. We will talk about feelings, about doubts, and about problems getting back to a new normal way of life.

For more information and Zoom details, contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at marylynn482@gmail.com or 440-409-5931.



Thursday Night Bible Study

Thursdays, 6:30 PM, via Zoom

This month we will continue and complete our study of the women of the Bible. We are currently deciding what we will study next. Please join us.

For more information and Zoom details, contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at marylynn482@gmail.com or 440-409-5931.



Messy Church Christmas

TODAY!, 4-6 PM, Wesley Hall

A Very Merry Messy Christmas to you as we play out the nativity story in different creative ways, find ourselves in the story of God's love, and celebrate together! Come join us and bring a friend to this fun celebration!

Questions or want to volunteer? Contact **Pastor Carrie** at cantczak@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x105.





EQUAL Exchange Offered Today!

TODAY!, 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 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*



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.



December Loose Change Offering Supports Missions in Guatemala

All this month, loose change offerings will support our mission partners serving in Guatemala. Jingle all the way to the offering plate to make a joyful noise for Guatemala as they seek to empower and encourage women community leaders. 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!



Your Generosity is Appreciated

Thank you, congregation, for your generosity in supporting the Giving Tree again this year! So many needy children and families throughout this area will have a better Christmas because of your thoughtfulness!



Information Regarding COVID-19 Vaccinations

As an expression of love for our neighbors and for the well-being of our entire community, each of us is encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine when we are eligible to do so. All Ohioans age 5 and over are eligible to receive one of the vaccines. Visit <https://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov/> or call 2-1-1 (United Way's 211 HelpLink) on weekdays between 8AM and 4PM to find information about where you can receive the vaccine once you are eligible.

If you have additional questions or can use assistance navigating this process, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Nathan at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x101.

Happening at The UMCB this week:

Sunday, December 19

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

Messy Church

4 PM / Wesley Hall

Monday, December 20

Morning Prayer via Zoom

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

Survivorship Fellowship

11 AM / Parlor / Lunch at Falls Family Restaurant

Tuesday, December 21

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 22

Morning Prayer via Zoom

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

Wednesday Evening Advent Study

7 PM / Room 13 and via Zoom / [Contact Pastor Nathan](#)

Thursday, December 23

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 24

Christmas Eve - Offices Closed

Morning Prayer via Zoom

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

Christmas Eve Worship Service

4 PM / Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Worship Service

7 PM / Sanctuary or Online at

www.facebook.com/umcberea/live

Christmas Eve Worship Service

8:30 PM / Porch and front lawn on Seminary St.

Christmas Eve Worship Service

11 PM / Sanctuary

Saturday, December 25

Christmas Day

Sunday, December 26

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

Church Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9 AM – 3 PM

Tuesday, Friday: Beth works from home

When working from home, Beth can be reached by email (ebarnar@umcb.org) or cell phone (440-710-4498).

She will also return voicemails left on the church office phone (440-234-3525 x100).

Many of our staff members have hours based on need.

If your business requires a visit to the church, it may be helpful to call in advance to ensure the staff member you wish to see will be available.

Office Mask Policy

As an expression of love for our entire community, especially those with compromised immune systems or who are unable to be vaccinated, visitors to the staff offices are required to wear face masks regardless of their vaccination status. Masks will be provided for those who do not have them.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Contact Pastor Nathan at

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

Contact Pastor Carrie at

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