



Christmas Eve

WHY DON'T YOU STAY

DECEMBER 24, 2023 + 4 PM

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.**

Worship Celebration

We Gather as God's Children

Prelude

He Is Born, the Holy Child

David Paxton

Words of Welcome

+ Call to Worship

We have been waiting for weeks.

We rejoice because the day has arrived!

Because God invited us in,

we have extended those invitations to others.

Because God set forth the plan for our salvation,

we have extended grace to those around us.

Because God prepared us for this moment,

we are prepared to share the good news.

Because God welcomes us,

we have sought to welcome all God's children.

The day has arrived, and now we celebrate!

The day has arrived, and we will stay awhile!

*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;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O, sing all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

Tune: John F. Wade, 1743/ Text: John F. Wade, 1743; trans. Frederick Oakley, 1841 / Public Domain

We Grow in God's Word

Children's Message

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 9.2-7 (NRSVUE)

- ² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

- ³ You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
- ⁴ For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned
as fuel for the fire.
- ⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- ⁷ Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

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

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Second Lesson—John 1.1-8, 14 (NRSVUE)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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

People: *Thanks be to God.*

+ Gospel Lesson—Matthew 28.16-20 (NRSVUE)

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

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

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Sermon

Stay Awhile

+ Hymn

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

UMH 240

***Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"***

***Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"***

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"

***Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.***

***Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th' incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.***

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"

***Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.***

***Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.***

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739; alt by George Whitefield, 1753, and others (Lk 2.8-14)

Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr by Williams H. Cummings, 1856/ Public Domain

Prayers of the People

Opportunities for Ministry and Giving 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!

Hand Bell Choir Anthem

Carol of the Bells

Leontovych, DeWalt

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. *And also with you.*

Lift up your hearts. *We lift them up to the Lord.*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,

always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You create the whole world and call it good.

You fill us with the breath of life and give us the gift of community.

In a world of violence, fear, and division,

you send your love among us

in the form of a vulnerable child, to heal us and make us whole.

And so, with your people on earth and your whole creation,

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 the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Word made flesh in Jesus Christ.

He was born among excluded, overlooked people.

He grew in wisdom and love,

and his ministry proclaimed your good news:

freedom for captives, justice for the impoverished,
welcome for the shut-out.

By the baptism of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection,

you give birth to your church,

deliver us from slavery to sin and death,

and make with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night we betrayed and abandoned Jesus,

he gathered with the disciples, took bread, gave thanks to you,

broke the bread, shared it, and said:

"Receive, eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this to remember me."

When the supper was over, Jesus took the cup,

again gave thanks to you, shared it, and said:

"Drink this, all of you; this is my love,

poured out for you and for all.

Do this to remember me."

And so, in remembrance of these

and all your mighty acts of grace,

we offer ourselves now 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 has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Make them be for us the body and blood,

the life and love, of Christ.

Make us, through them, the body of Christ for the world,

redeemed and renewed by your grace.

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other,

and one in ministry to the world,

until Christ comes again, welcoming all people

to feast together at your table.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
*all honor and glory are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Choir Anthem

Carol of the Angels

Ruth Artman

Prayer following Communion

*Holy One, you come to us in the seemingly simple:
flesh and blood, bread and wine.*

Yet when you come to us, you change our lives.

Help us to receive you so fully this night

that through our lives,

all will know your love and welcome,

in Christ's holy name. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Choral Introduction

Preparing Our Hearts

Ruth Elaine Schram

Today, we light all four candles,

Remembering that God has invited us all.

Today, we will bring in the light of Christ,

knowing that God came in human form to stay awhile.

Today we celebrate that Jesus comes into this world,

and we rejoice that God wanted to be among us.

May we share in God's generosity,

And invite all people to share in God's love.

Choral Response

Preparing Our Hearts

Ruth Elaine Schram

Entrance of the Christ Candle

Hymn

All Is Well

The first verse will be sung by a soloist as the Christ candle enters the worship space. The congregation is invited to sing verses 2 & 3.

*All is well, all is well, angels and men rejoice.
For tonight, darkness fell into the dawn of love's light.
Sing alle, sing alleluia.*

***All is well, all is well, let there be peace on earth.
Christ is come, go and tell that He is in the manger.
Sing alle, sing alleluia.***

***All is well, all is well, lift up your voice and sing.
Born is now Emmanuel, born is our Lord and Savior.
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia.***

Michael W. Smith, Wayne Kirkpatrick / © 1989 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Songs (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.), Sony/ATV Milene Music (Admin. by Sony/ATV Music Publishing) / CCLI Song # 355008 / CCLI License # 2333566 / Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH 239

The light of Christ will be shared through the congregation while we sing this hymn. The soloist will begin our hymn by singing the first verse in German; the congregation is then invited to join in singing the following verses.

*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.*

***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!***

***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.***

***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.***

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1818; sts. 1-3 trans. John F. Young; sts. 4 trans. anon. (Lk. 2.6-20) /
Tune: Franz Gruber / Public Domain

+ Proclamation of the Light—John 1.1-5 (NRSVUE)

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.
*All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.*

What has come into being in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.
*The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overtake it.*

+ Hymn

Joy to the World

UMH 246

*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.*

*Joy to the earth, 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.*

*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.*

*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.*

+ **Benediction**

God, creator of all things,
we know that Jesus was in the beginning with you.
We have waited in darkness, but now a light shines,
and the darkness will not overcome it.

We will testify to the light,
because we have seen a great light.

A child of many names has been born to us;
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Parent.

And now we celebrate the birth of Christ,
ringing in endless peace, justice, and righteousness.

God, your mighty zeal has done these things,
and we will carry our light of love into the world.

Postlude

Toccata on "Adeste Fideles"

David Hegarty

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

Worship Participants

Pastors

Dr. Stephen J. Knisely, Ph.D.
Rev. Carrie Antczak

Advent Candles

Julie Keslar
Shelly Simmons

Music

Carmen Massaro, *Organist*
Tori Penfound, *Handbell Choir Director*
Courtney McClain, *Choir Director*
Margaret Proctor, *Choir Director*
Marlynda Dziak, *Guitar/Vocalist*
Sarah Reams, *Vocalist*

Liturgist

Condit Dibble

Audio Video Elements

Mark Williams
Marlynda Dziak
Debbie Haas



HYMN SING

Sunday, December 31

10 AM in the Sanctuary and www.facebook.com/UMCBAREA

The Sunday after Christmas, we will have a hymn sing at 10 AM, instead of our usual two services.

Please join as we lift up our voices
and sing our favorite hymns together!

Join us in worship on Sundays
(resuming on January 7, 2024):

Sunday at 9AM - Traditional Worship, Sanctuary and online
(www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)

Sunday at 11AM - Modern worship, Wesley Hall

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