

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# Bethel United Methodist Church

**Welcome to worship at Bethel United Methodist Church!** We are delighted that you have chosen to worship with us this Christmas Eve. We invite you to worship with us again on Sunday at 11am for our Special Blessing of the Gifts worship service. We will sing carols and bless gifts given to young and old to be used to the glory of God.

**Christmas Eve Offering** – This evening we will receive our special Christmas Eve offering. Each year we give our Christmas Eve offering to Epworth Children's Home. Since 1896, Epworth Children's Home has been a place for children to grow, learn and be loved. Children throughout SC are nurtured and loved by Epworth's staff, and volunteers through education, counseling, medical care and spiritual enrichment. We are giving our Christmas Eve offering to others because we understand that Jesus has come to bring light into our darkness, hope to our moments of despair and salvation and deliverance to all who are burdened, bound and oppressed

## Merry Christmas!

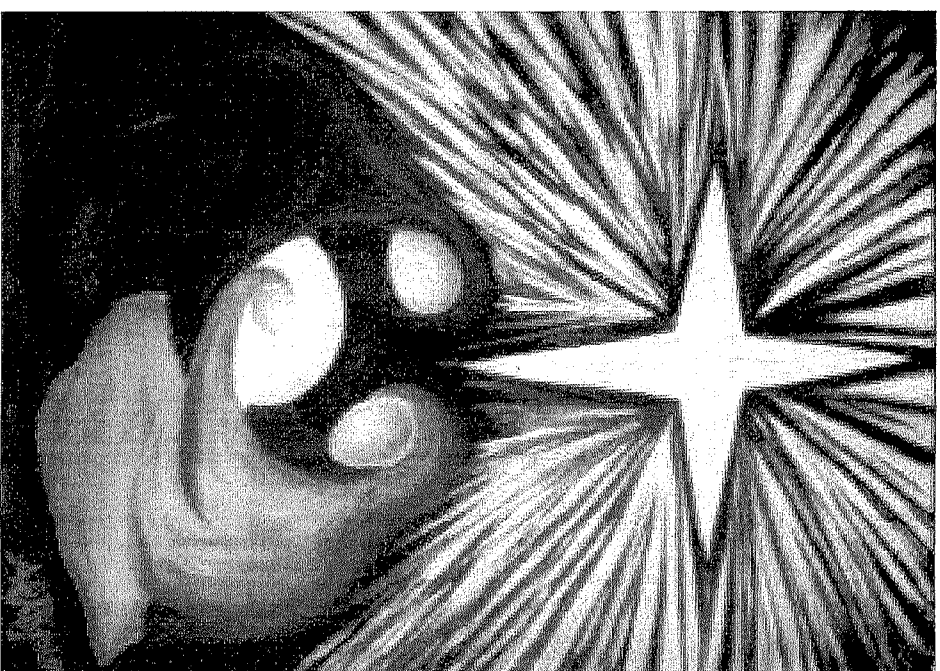
Marc, Isabella, Alexandra and I wish you all a Merry Christmas! As we celebrate Christmas this year with two little girls; Marc and I recognize that the gifts, time with family and memories that will be created will be something we will cherish for years to come. However, we also realize that these wonderful memories are not the real reason we celebrate Christmas. Our hope as parents is that we will teach Isabella and Alexandra about Mary and Joseph and how the angels, shepherds, and wise men came to worship and sing praises to God for the one who was born to save us. As your pastor I pray that you too will see that Christmas is all about the greatest gift, Jesus Christ our Savior.

On this Christmas Eve, I also recognize this is my first Christmas without my Dad. For many of us this Christ things are different and we miss our loved ones. Tonight, we come one again to receive the hope, joy, love and peace of Christ. As we pass the light of Christ one to the other, we recognize that Christ is the light of the world. I hope you are reminded that each of us are invited to receive the light of Christ and let shine it for others to see. That is what makes a bright and merry Christmas – the light of Christ shining through you and me!

Tonight, as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child, my deepest prayer is that you will find Christ and you will invite Him to bring you His hope, joy, love and peace on this Christmas night. I hope you have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

With love in Christ and wishes of a Christmas filled with the joy of Christ,

*Marc, Emily, Isabella and Patton*



*December 24th, 2021*

***Knowing, Loving, Serving God***

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Pianist ♦ Dena Wade

Becky Moon ♦ Administrative Assistant

Pastor ♦ Emily Sutton

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve

5:00pm

## GATHERING

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

Reverend Emily Sutton

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Augustus and Quirinius--ancient names that seem odd to today's ears.

**People: characters in an ancient story that we long to hear.**

Leader: Nazareth and Bethlehem--distant towns we know little about...

**People: places our hearts long for, because of the One who traveled there.**

Leader: We gather to hear once more, a story so ancient and yet so current, so distant and yet so near.

**People: We come to hear the story of God coming to us.**

**Immanuel, God with us.**

*\*\*Adapted from Soapstone UMC Christmas Eve Call to Worship.*

OPENING PRAYER

Holy God, in days of old you sent your angels to tell shepherds the good news: "To you is born this day a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord." Help us hear with the shepherds this good news, that we too may glorify and praise you for all that we have seen and heard. Amen.

\*GATHERING HYMN

**Angels We Have Heard on High** UMH #238

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary,

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, died and was buried;

He descended to the dead. On the third day, He rose again;

He ascended into Heaven. Is seated at the right hand of the Father,

And will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy catholic church,

The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the

Resurrection of the body, and of life everlasting. AMEN.

Response: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the

Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world

without end. AMEN, AMEN.

## PROCLAMATION

HYMN

**Go, Tell It on the Mountain**

UMH #251

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Reverend Emily Sutton

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Luke 2:1-14

Lector: This is the word of God, for the people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Reverend Emily Sutton

## RESPONSE

\*HYMN

**O Come, All Ye Faithful**

UMH #234

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERING

*Our Christmas Eve offerings will be given to Epworth Children's Home.*

\*DOXOLOGY.....**Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow...** UMH #95

## THE EUCHARISTIC FEAST

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Reverend Emily Sutton

CONFESSION AND WORDS OF ASSURANCE

SEE INSERT

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

SEE INSERT

COMMUNION HYMNS

The First Noel 245

Away in a Manger 217

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

## SENDING FORTH

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

John 1:1-14

CELEBRATING THE LIGHT IN THE WORLD

*During the candle lighting, the pastor will light a candle from the Christ candle and pass the light on. Watch the light grow as we share it with one another. Let us remember this is the light of Christ that shines brighter and brighter as we share God's love with*

*one another.*

HYMN

**Silent Night, Holy Night**

UMH #239

\*DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

\*HYMN

**Joy to the World**

UMH #246

\*POSTLUDE

\* As you are able, please stand for these parts of the liturgy.

## HOLY COMMUNION

### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

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 WORDS OF ASSURANCE

**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.**  
*(All are invited to pray in silence)*

Here the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven!  
**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God! Amen.**

### \*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 created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. In the fullness of time you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and at his birth the angels sang: "glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth." And so, with your people on earth and 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.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago, so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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 has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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