

Advent 2020 “I Believe Even When ... Fill the Night with Music and Light”
Welcome to Worship with Memorial United Methodist Church

Third Sunday – Dec. 13, 2020, Worship Guide
(On-line Worship Video available any time after 8:30 a.m. Sunday, www.gladstonechurch.org)

We Gather to Worship God: “I Believe in God: Ode to Joy”

Music to Center Ourselves: “Mary, Did You Know?”

Joy Large

Lighting the Advent Wreath with Prayer

Praise Team

Holy One, we thank you for the glimpses we catch of your gift of the depths of joy. Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle—even when we are not sure of your presence, ignite the flame of joy within us, that we might glow with its brilliance from the inside out. Help us face the silence of unknowing and embrace it as the pregnant pause before joyful new beginnings. Amen.

Now is the time to light three candles of your Advent wreath—the candle of Hope, the candle of Love, and the candle of Joy, where you are.

Children’s Time to Shine

“Grandma” Joy Jorgensen

Learning “This Little Light of Mine,” in sign language.

Children of all ages are invited to join us today, after the 4:30 p.m. Advent Wreath Lighting, to gather outside the church building to video record everyone signing “This Little Light of Mine,” for our Christmas Eve virtual pageant. We’ll also ring the multi-colored bells.

We Share the Story of God

Sharing from the Prophet Isaiah 57:14-19

Berta Johnson

The one who is high and lifted up, who lives forever, whose name is holy, says: I live on high, in holiness, and also with the crushed and the lowly, reviving the spirit of the lowly, reviving the heart of those who have been crushed.

Isaiah 57:15 from Common English Bible.

Sung Response: “In the Bleak Midwinter” UMH 221

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign. In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there, cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; but his mother only, in her maiden bliss, worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Words: Christina G. Rossetti, 1872.

Sharing from the Gospel of Luke 1:26-56

Sharon Block and Lisa, Teresa, and Sarah Myers

... God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David’s house. The virgin’s name was Mary. ... The angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ...

Luke 1:26-27, 30-31 from Common English Bible.

Witness of Music: “Christmas Comes Close (Magnificat Now)” Jim and Jean Strathdee video
Christmas come close in a child’s crumpled face, in the ragged and raw, in a harsh birthing place, in a surging of joy, in a bundle held tight, in a breath, in a cry, through the dark of the night.

Christmas come close to the place where we are in our longing for peace, for a sign, for a star, for a certainty born in uncertainty’s space, for a mystery grasped that our blindness can trace.

Christmas come close to the world that is bleak giving hope a new home, making prophecy speak, so the angels will sing and the wise will be heard, and the powers will take heed of this child and his word.

Christmas come close into focus and frame, to humanity’s heart for the child to make claim: for poor to be served, for the rich to kneel low, for Magnificat now, in the Christmas we know.

Words: Shirley Erena Murray © 2014 Hope Publishing Co.

Message for Today

Pastor Cathy Rafferty

We Respond to God

Sung Response: “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” UMH 224

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: News, news! Jesus Christ is born today! Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today, Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy, joy! Jesus Christ was born for this! He hath opened heaven’s door, and ye are blest forevermore. Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; now ye need not fear the grave: Peace, peace! Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall. Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save.

Words: 14th cent. Latin; trans. By James Mason Neale, 1855. Public Domain.

Offering Our Gifts and Commitments

Please give online at www.gladstonechurch.org

Or mail checks payable to: Memorial UMC, 1920 Lake Shore Dr., Gladstone, MI 49837

Offering Our Stillness, Prayers and The Lord’s Prayer

Please email prayer requests to mumc@gladstonechurch.org or call (906) 428-9311

We Go, Blessed to Serve

Sung Blessing: “Believe” (to the tune of “Give Thanks” TFWS 2036)

Praise Team

Believe, with a joyful heart! Believe, and shine your light! Believe, because the song we sing is sung for all! And now, let the weak say, “I am strong;” let the poor say, “I am rich because of what our God has done for us.” Believe!

W&S (Worship & Song), TFWS (The Faith We Sing), UMH (United Methodist Hymnal), UMBOW (United Methodist Book of Worship).

Please join us at 4:30 Today, Dec. 13

- To light our outside Advent Wreath with prayers and singing
- To record children of all ages signing “This Little Light” and ringing carols for our virtual Christmas Eve pageant (outside, so bundle up)
- To walk through our indoor display of Nativity sets with live music and time to sit quietly in our decorated sanctuary.