



Christmas Eve 2020

Thursday, December 24

11:30 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.

“Light Shines in the Darkness”

This year I am really glad that Christmas comes at the end of the year. We need to be reminded again of the “good news of great joy for all people.” “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.” It seems this has been a year of relentless tragedy in our world. From a pandemic, natural disaster, floods, hurricanes, fires, and earthquakes, to a frightening anger fueled by political division and social injustice. As tragic as this year has been, the reality is that it’s probably no different than the world into which Jesus was born. Suffering, fear, anger, sickness, violence, and injustice are not new. We need to be reminded again that there is a light that still shines in the darkness. That light is Jesus the savior of the world, the gift of the Father’s love for us. It is Emmanuel, God with us and for us. This is a season of incarnation and the world still needs the love of God to be manifest in bodily form. It is up to us to bring the love of God into the world today. As the mystic Meister Eckhart wrote, “We are all meant to be mothers of God, for God is always needing to be born.” Or as Paul reminded the church, “You are the body of Christ.”

Today we gather for worship on Christmas Eve to remember that “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son...” We gather to remember with humble and thankful hearts that the baby born in Bethlehem whose birth changed history, grew up to be the Savior who gave his life as a ransom for sin. As we gather for worship in this season of gifts, I am always reminded of the final verse of the carol, “In the Bleak Midwinter”; *“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 can I give him: give my heart.”* To give Him my heart, maybe I first need to ask Him to give me something. In the words of the Psalmist, “give me an undivided heart, that I may revere your name.” We pray this Christmas will bring peace, hope, joy, and love to each of you. Merry Christmas from your staff at Wesley Monumental UMC, you are a gift to us.

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WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ben Martin

Thank you for joining us. Please remember to silence your cell phones and refrain from flash photography during the service.

Nursery: *If needed, the nursery for infants to 3 years old is located on the first floor.*

Please register your attendance: *If you are a Wesley member or regular attendee, text @wmumc316 to phone number 81010 to join the Worship Service Attendance thread. If you have already joined, you will receive a text message reminding you to text the total number of household members worshipping and the service you are attending or if viewing online. If this is your first time using Remind, you may be asked to complete your name, phone number, and select "parent.") If you are visiting, please text your name and total number of attendees to Rev. Ben Martin, 912-547-1835.*

Communion Offering: *Today's Communion Offering is designated for the Christmas Mission Fund which will help people in the community who have been affected by the pandemic. If you would like to give, please place in the offering/tithe boxes located in the Sanctuary or you can donate online. pushpay.com/g/wesleymonumental Select "Give One Time" then "Christmas Mission Offering."*

Prayer Requests: *Please email your prayer requests to Rev. Ben Martin, ben@wesleymonumental.org.*

OPENING VOLUNTARY (11:30)

Do You Hear What I Hear

Parker Hunt, pianist

HYMN Hark, the Herald Angels Sing **MENDELSSOHN**
(11:30) Ella Hayes, chorister Michael Cooler, chorister
(4:00) Sara Livingood, chorister Emily Hart, chorister

* **LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE** Luke 2:1-20

Jim, Allison, Alli Mac, and Hattie Willis (11:30)

Joe, Jennifer, Lilly, and Drew Marler (4:00)

VOLUNTARY (11:30)

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Thomas Schandolph, trombone

VOLUNTARY (4:00) Silent Night Sarah Cate Green, pianist

THE GIFT OF JESUS

(11:30) Ella Hayes, soprano Michael Cooler, chorister

(4:00) Sara Livingood, soprano Emily Hart, soprano

Introduction to the Story

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Mary and Joseph Arrive in Bethlehem

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Jesus is Born

The Friendly Beasts

Away in a Manger

The Shepherds Hear the Good News

The First Noel

Angels We have Heard on High

The Wise Men Arrive

We Three Kings

Gifts for Jesus

Joy to the World

REFLECTION

Ben Martin

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We will all take communion in our pew. If you did not receive a cup on your way in, please raise your hand and an usher or staff member will bring one to you.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come; thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory; For ever. Amen.

* PROCESSIONAL TO CALHOUN SQUARE / CANDLE LIGHTING

Once dismissed by the Ushers, please proceed to Calhoun Square. Following the Service, please take your candle home with you.

* VOLUNTARY arr. Keith Chapman

Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabella!
Bring a torch, to the stable call.
Christ is born, tell the folk of the village.
Jesus is born and Mary's calling.
Ah! Ah! Beautiful is the Mother!
Ah! Ah! Beautiful is her Child.

* HYMN Silent Night STILLE NACHT

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.

* BENEDICTION Ben Martin

Staff

Rev. Ben MartinSenior Pastor
Rev. Nelle BordeauxOutreach & New Members
Rev. Jennifer ThompsonCongregational Life
Dr. Monica Dekle Director of Music and Organist
James P. OwensDirector of Student Ministries
Charli WeeksDirector of Children’s Ministry

Children participating in “The Gift of Jesus”:

11:30 Service:

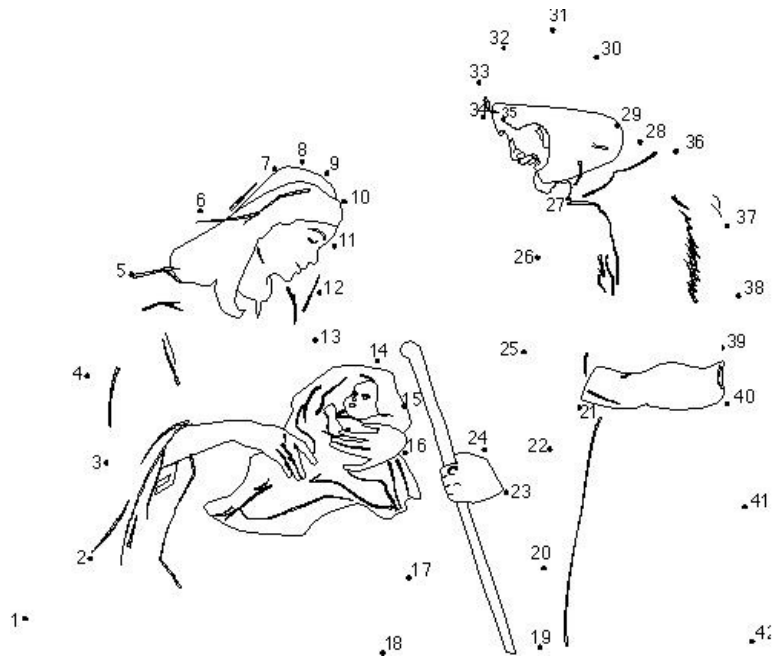
Emerson Aimar, Hampton Aimar, Sebastian Brown,
Willa James Coley, Ellie Cremeans, Evie Kate Cremeans,
Anna Wren Daniel, Harrison Daniel, Lynwood Herrington,
Jay Hitt, Charlotte Lee, Hudson Lee, Jake Maxwell,
James Maxwell, Emma Mobley, Hudson Mobley,
Mary Shor, Millie Shor, Banks Vance, Gracen Vance,
Charlotte Williams, Lanier Williams

4:00 Service:

Fielding Anderson, Alexander Childers,
Victoria Childers, Abby Fleiner, Heather Haubein,
Natalie Hoey, Olivia McKenzie, Sophi McKenzie,
Jackson Merritt, Riley Merritt, Ansley Pedigo,
Marshall Pedigo, Wesley Pedigo, Grayson Pennington,
Teagan Pennington, Emerson Skinner, Jackson Skinner,
Caden Valdez, Cole Valdez

Ushers

11:30 Harper Wilcox, Lyla Wilcox, Jim Willis
4:00 Evan Hart



Help the shepherds find the path to Jesus.

