

Music of the Season

Presented by the Chancel Choir Section Leaders

Arias from Handel's oratorio Messiah

String Quartet

Loretta McCray – First Violin;

Chris Johnston – Second Violin

Thomas Shaw – Viola;

Stephanie Barrett - Cello

Comfort Ye

Joel Coreas – tenor

*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,
saith your God.*

*Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her,
that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.*

Isaiah 40:1-2

He Shall Feed His Flock Like a Shepherd

Regan Sprenkle – alto

*Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.*

*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: and he shall gather the lambs with his arm,
and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*

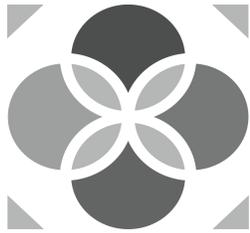
Isaiah 35:5-6; 40:11

But Who May Abide the Day of His Coming?

Sam Cook – bass

*But who may abide the day of his coming and who shall stand when he appeareth?
for he is like a refiner's fire.*

Malachi 3:2



Centenary

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 24, 2020

Christmas Eve

(As the Prelude begins, you are invited to enter a time of prayer and meditation as we prepare to worship God together.)

The Prelude

Overture-Allegro (from Messiah)

Georg Frederic Händel

The Welcome

The Opening Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: Glorious God, who presents us with the most precious of gifts,
we praise you for all your blessings in our lives.**

**Tonight we have come to this place,
in the midst of a busy time.**

**We might not even have everything ready at home,
yet we have come, because we ourselves need to be ready.**

**Work in our hearts this night,
preparing us for your presence.**

**Work in our lives that we may reach out
to others in comfort and compassion;
work in our world that the darkness that has encompassed it
may be dispelled by the brightness of your love and your Gift.
In faith and expectation, we pray. Amen.**

The Hymn No. 234, stanzas 1-3, 6

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

1. 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;

Refrain

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

2. True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created; ***Refrain***
3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; ***Refrain***

6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

Leader: We light this candle as a symbol of Christ, the light of the world.
As the angels of heaven gave glory to God in the highest for peace
on earth, may we allow Christ to be born in us to bring us his peace.
People: **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

The Scripture Lesson

Luke 2:1-20 and Titus 2:11-14

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Homily

The 30,000 Foot View

Dr. Matthew D. Bates

The Invitation

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.

The Confession and Pardon (in unison)

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, Amen.

All pray in silence.

Leader: Hear the good news:
Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
that proves God's love towards us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

People: **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.**

All: **Glory to God. Amen.**

The Offertory Prayer

The Offertory Solo

Panis Angelicus

César Franck

Emily Downey, soprano; Stephanie Barrett, cello

<i>Panis angelicus</i>	The bread of angels
<i>Fit panis hominum.</i>	is the bread of men.
<i>Dat panis coelicus</i>	the bread of heaven
<i>Figuris terminum.</i>	gives end to all fears.
<i>O res mirabilis.</i>	Oh, what a marvel!
<i>Manducat Dominum</i>	The poor, the slave, the humble
<i>Pauper servus et humilis.</i>	now partake of the Lord.

The Great Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts,

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The pastor gives thanks appropriate to the occasion, remembering God's acts of salvation, and concludes:

And so,
with your people on earth
and with all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

William Mathias



Ho - ly, ho - ly,
5 ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might.
8 Heaven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in the high - est.
12 Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the
16 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

The Congregation is seated and the pastor continues the thanksgiving. The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled. The pastor concludes:

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 ris-en, Christ will come a-gain!
Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and then praises the Trinity, concluding:
All honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and for ever.



A - men, a - men, a - men.
Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

The Lord's Prayer No. 895

**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,
forever. Amen.**

The Giving and Receiving of Communion

The Hymn No. 239

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

1. 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.
2. 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!

3. 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.

4. 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!

The Benediction

The Postlude

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!

Johann Sebastian Bach

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We thank these persons who helped us in worship this evening.

Senior Pastor:	Rev. Matthew D. Bates
Minister to Young Adults:	Rev. Drew Willson
Director of Music:	Stanley M. Baker
Pianist:	Lee Covington
Soloist:	Emily Downey

Scriptures

Luke 2:1-20

The Birth of Jesus

² In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.