**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

 *\* Indicates, please stand if able.*

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 18, 2022. 9am.

 Liturgist: Daniel Brauner

WELCOME, PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 & Luke 1:26-38 Eric & Kyle Zenz

We live on the brink every day. We stand on the threshold between this world and the next one. We live and move between the ordinary and divine, between the mundane and the mystery. Too often, we forget to look up and see the angels in our living room. We forget that the love we give and live is a sign of eternity, God with us, right now. We forget that company is coming.

Luke tells us that God’s favor came to a girl, an ordinary girl. It might have been you or your daughter; it might have been the girl down the street or your grandchild. But the messenger of God came and greeted her and said, “The Lord is with you.” What a gift and a promise: Emmanuel, God is with us.

We light these candles with peace in our hearts for the promise of proximity, the nearness of God. Even when we forget to listen, to lean into that presence, God is as close as our own breath. This, in a confused and confusing world, is a peace that passes all understanding. It is the peace that knows that company is coming.

CONGREGATION: ***Come, O Come, Emmanuel*** (v. 4) #211

**\***CALL TO WORSHIP

L: This is the fourth Sunday of Advent, a time to rejoice in the wondrous things that God is doing.

**P: Our hearts are filled with the hope that is coming into the world.**

L: The time is fast approaching, not for parties or presence, but for the awareness of God’s loving gift

 to us--the gift of the Christ child.

**P: Help slow us down, Lord, that we may realize that your gift of love is at the center of our lives**

 **and our celebrations.**

L: Thanks be to God who again reminds us of God’s eternal love.

**P: Open our hearts, O Lord, to receive your blessed gift. AMEN.**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!' Amen.**  - Henri J.M. Nouwen (1932-1996)

**\***OPENING HYMN ***Angels from the Realms of Glory*** #220

CHILDREN’S TIME Roxie Hostrawser

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Lord, we confess that we are rushing headlong into Christmas. It’s only seven days away and we still have so much to do. Our preparations are far from complete, and we are exhausted. We wish this whole thing were over so that we could rest. Forgive our shortcomings and our short-sightedness. You have poured upon us blessing after blessing, daily reminding us of your love and presence; yet we have chosen to jump onto this “greased slide” into Christmas. Give us patience. Slow us down. Remind us of the ways in which you are present with us--not in the wrapped packages, the abundance of food, but in the love and compassion that is brought to all. Forgive us, we pray. Make us truly ready to receive your love and the gift of the Christ Child. AMEN.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The light of God’s love shines upon each of us in the gift of God’s love, Jesus Christ. This is given for you. Rejoice! You are loved by God, now and forever. AMEN.

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Shon

THE LORD’S PRAYER *(In Unison)*

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 who 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.

BRINGING OUR GIFTS TO GOD WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS

SPECIAL MUSIC ***I Wonder as I Wander*** by John Jacob Niles Channing Goldsmith, Flute

**\***DOXOLOGY ***Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow***  #95

\*OFFERTORY PRAYER Rev. Shon

SCRIPTURE Matthew 1:18-25

\*HYMN OF PRAISE  ***Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine*** #2099

MESSAGE ***God’s Plan vs Your Plan*** Rev. Shon

\*CLOSING HYMN***Angels We Have Heard on High***#238

**\***BENEDICTION Rev. Shon

POSTLUDE Kathleen Peterson

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 1:18-25 (NIV)

18This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

22All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

24When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

 The Large Poinsettia on the altar is in loving memory of Carl & Muriel Lind, from Mike & Betty Lind.

**PRAYER FAMILIES:** Pray for all those who need healing, or have health issues. Specifically, pray for Clarine Nelson who is struggling with Cancer, Karen Dolsey and others. Also continue to pray for those in Ukraine and other areas of the world where people are suffering.

**ADVENT BIBLE STUDY: “ROOTS” -** today at 10:30 am after service at Keefe Room.

**DISCIPLESHIP CLASS 201:** Dec. 22, 5–6:30 pm. Dinner will be served.

**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE:** December 24, 5 pm

**NEW YEARS EVE COME AND GO COMMUNION:** December 31, 4-6 pm.

 **MISSION OUTREACH:** Is collecting bingo prizes for nursing homes in BRF. Suggested prizes can be found by

 the gift box & on the Mission Outreach bulletin board. Donations will be collected through January 4. Thank you

 for sharing the spirit of the season.

 **MISSION OUTREACH:** Collected 82 pounds of donated canned goods. Thank you to all who gave.

**JANUARY NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:** Newsletter articles for January are due Tuesday December 20.

**SCRIP CARDS:** When you are thinking of ideas for gift giving or personal use, consider Scrip cards.Stop at the

 gathering area on Sundays or call Marcia at 715-284-3346

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT CONNECTIONS:** Will resume on January 11th.

**USHERS/GREETERS:** Alan & Paula Voskuil

**THIS WEEK AT THE CHURCH:**

Sunday: Advent Bible Study 10:30 am

Wednesday: Choir/Bell Choir Practice 6:15-6:15 pm

Thursday: Class 201 5-6:30 pm

Saturday: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 5:00 pm

**Black River Falls**

**United Methodist Church**



**UMC Mission Statement:**

"To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

 PASTOR Rev. Inwha Shon

 PIANIST Matthew Schluntz

 MUSIC DIRECTOR Amanda Lang

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